Priming Strategies – Applying for a Job

*Consider creating a graphic organizer that portrays **My Strengths** and **My Needs** with regard to "Applying for a Job." Consider using specific self-assessments under this heading as a starting point to define the student's self knowledge with regard to skills of obtaining information, locating and completing applications, producing a cover letter and completing pre-employment screening assessments. You may need to compare the student's self assessment with the instructor's assessment, completed after some portion of the application process. Be careful not to overwhelm the student with multiple tasks and self-evaluation around multiple issues. A major key here is cutting down how much you present so that the student can embrace a goal in instruction.*

How many skills can the student consider at one time?

For instance, one individual may be able to deal with multiple features, such as listing his personal information, relevant work experience, employers, dates of employment, educational history, etc. while another may need to focus only on listing personal information. Another individual may need to focus only on locating applications at business websites. The instructor is encouraged to review student self-assessments, such as Applying Skills - Cover Letters, to determine whether the student can address both content and format of a business letter at one time. Consider whether the student can look at only one part of a self-assessment, a whole self-assessment or multiple self-assessments at one time.

Can I compare the student's self assessment with the instructor/coach's assessment?

The next step is visually setting up a comparison of self-assessment vs. instructor assessment. The instructor assessment has fewer questions because specific problems in applying for a job are combined within questions. The instructor's responsibility is to rate the student's performance and specify the issues or problems in detail on the blank line following the question. Then the instructor can work with the student's self-assessment and point to the specific questions in the student self-assessment where there may be need for instruction.

After a student completes even one application or possibly even one element of the application process, such as obtaining information or completing a cover letter, the instructor may want to point to relevant portions of the self-assessment and the instructor's assessment to identify targets for instruction. The instructor and the student can meet to compare their impressions. If there are differences and the student disagrees with the instructor, can the instructor encourage the student to ask someone else to review the student's information or applications and make suggestions (a trusted member of the student's network, an employer, etc.)? Your goal is to set up comparison that supports the student in recognizing what he needs to do differently. Getting agreement on a goal involves self-assessment, comparison with trusted experts and re-assessment of what to do next.

Define clearly the areas of need

*Does the graphic organizer of **My Strengths** and **My Needs** help the student agree on his target for skill development? One key is to identify multiple strengths within the organizer so that the student develops confidence. Just as importantly, limit the number of needs and narrow your focus so that the student can embrace the targeted goal.*

Consider creating a social narrative that defines for the student in his own words what he will work on, why it is important and how he will do it. Does the narrative state:

*I need to work on _____
This is important to me because _____
Here is what I can do to improve: _____*

*Consider scripts, role-playing, lists of instructions, etc. with the student that will help address the "how" in developing the new skill.