

## Priming Strategies - Organization and Self-Direction – Dependability and Responsibility

### Arriving on time/Leaving on time

*Sometimes I have trouble arriving (or leaving from) at work (school, class) on time. I have had trouble with this because: \_\_\_\_\_*

*(Identify specific events or activities that have made this difficult.)*

**Instructor:** Consider adding a statement of why this is important to arrive or leave on time from supervisor's perspective. Or provide a statement that addresses the student's motivation, such as "I do not want to lose my job" or "I do not want my co-workers to get in trouble because I am keeping them from doing their work."

*What I can do to arrive on time: \_\_\_\_\_*

*(Hints: Set my alarm on my phone or watch, get my materials ready the night before, follow a written list for morning routine, set aside specific times for talking with \_\_\_\_\_, set aside other times of day for important activities from the student's perspective so that those activities do not interfere with arriving or leaving on time.)*

### Clocking in/Clocking out

*Right before I begin working, I must clock in. My supervisor expects me to work while I am 'on the clock.' Immediately after I clock in, I will start working. This will help me keep my job. To 'clock in,' here is what I am supposed to do:*

*(Specify what you have to do at this job - Use a time card, fill out a timesheet, tell my supervisor that I have arrived).*

*Immediately after I stop working, I will go to the clock and clock out. My supervisor wants to pay me for when I work. If I forget to clock out (or talk to \_\_\_\_\_ before clocking out), my supervisor will not be pleased.*

*I clock out when I finish work and then I can \_\_\_\_\_*

## Calling in sick

*My supervisor and co-workers depend on me to be at work. If I am feeling sick before work (possibly specify time before work that student should call), I need to \_\_\_\_\_ (contact supervisor by phone, call specific person, etc.).*

*Instructor: Consider providing a specific script that will assist the student in giving all information needed when calling or notifying supervisor. This can also involve leaving a message on an answering service.*

## Requesting time off

*If I wish to take a vacation day (may need to specify examples of appropriate reasons or activities for vacation days), I need to let my supervisor know \_\_\_\_\_ (specify amount of time prior to expected vacation day). Letting my supervisor know \_\_\_\_\_ (amount of time before) helps him to find someone else to complete my job. By doing this, I can keep my job and have the day off.*

## Arranging and using transportation

*I need to identify a reliable form of transportation. Here is how I plan to get to and from work each day: \_\_\_\_\_*

*(A parent or friend, drive myself, bus, subway, walk)*

### **Instructor:**

*Consider the use of a written list to support transportation planning, navigating, paying or canceling transportation. Canceling may require a script card or narrative to support the student in providing exact information.*

*Being prepared at the correct time can also be addressed through the use of a written list or phone alarms and reminders.*

*Engaging in appropriate behaviors during public transportation may be supported by a social narrative, a script or reminder card with specific instructions on what to do or what to discuss.*

## Grooming and dressing

*My supervisor expects me to: \_\_\_\_\_*

*(Hints: Wear specific clothes, be clean, provide specifics on cleanliness or clothing as needed!)*

*I can keep my job and keep my co-workers and supervisor happy by: \_\_\_\_\_*

*(Hints: Following a written list for dressing for work or for hygiene prior to work, following phone reminders at specific times, etc.)*

## Following the work schedule and refraining from personal tasks

*Here are the days and times I am expected to work (in the upcoming week, or in general):*

*Here are some things I wish I could do at work, but I cannot, because they are personal tasks:*

*(Examples might include playing computer games, talking on the phone to friends, etc.)*

*Instructor: Consider the use of a social narrative that helps the student connect following his work schedule to his own motivation (money from work, keeping his job, doing the job right, etc.). The narrative may need to clarify that doing specific 'personal' tasks while on the clock could lead to losing his job. Specify exactly when the student gets to engage in those specific personal tasks. Providing a clearly defined work schedule can support the student in staying on task and focused at work.*

## Navigating work areas

**Instructor:**

*Consider a social narrative that connects using a specific route to complete work with working fast, with meeting supervisor expectations, or with some motivating element that is important to the student's success on the job. The narrative should identify why this is important.*

*Consider with the student what environmental design features would enhance the student's ability to follow a specific route when moving at work. In some cases the student can be involved in creating the signs or arrows or other design features that will be added to the work site. Note that it may be worthwhile to assure the student that the added signs are not only for the student but also for others in the workplace.*

## Following safety procedures / Avoiding off limit areas

**Instructor:**

*Consider developing specific written reminders of safety procedures in specific areas of the work place. Identifying 'off limits' areas with specific signs may be necessary.*

*Does the student need a social narrative to understand why it is important to follow these procedures each time? Does the student need details in the social narrative of exactly what to do to follow safety procedures? Does the student need specific details of what exactly is unsafe and who to notify when he sees a specific situation? Does the student need to understand why an area is off limits?*

## Using workplace materials

**Instructor:**

*Consider the need for a short social narrative to clarify why workplace materials are stored in specific places, why they should always be returned to that space, how to use them, etc. The narrative may need to specify the details of why materials are always in one place (i.e., available to others so that they can work fast, available to student so that he can work fast, etc.). The narrative can then outline how labels in the work space for materials or other workplace structures can help the student keep materials in the right place. Often this issue is handled by a combination of environmental design features, visual cues or instructions and a narrative description that outlines what to do and why.*

## **Responding to unexpected events (weather, holidays, emergency closings)**

### **Instructor:**

*Consider a narrative that outlines specific situations in which the student will not go to work.*

*Consider the use of a rule card that specifies what to do in case of emergency weather conditions.*

*Consider developing a plan or schedule around emergency closings outlining exactly what to do or who to call to make a plan.*

*Consider the use of a script card for the student to use when he is called or notified of an emergency closing or weather adjustment to his work schedule.*

## **Work breaks: When to go? Where to go? What to do? When finished?**

### **Instructor:**

*Work break behaviors are historically a major issue for many individuals with an autism spectrum disorder. Identifying the details of break and specifying exactly what to do may be the best way of preventing other behaviors or conversations that could compromise the student's value as an employee. Remember that downtime is difficult for some individuals with ASD and that judgments are sometimes best handled by providing 'safe' options of what to do.*

*Consider if the student needs a narrative to understand what is expected while he is on break and why. Assure that the student's motivation (keeping his job, getting to do certain things, having money for desired activities, etc.,) is connected to the specific and expected behaviors at break.*

*Negotiate with the student on the use of a break schedule that provides specific times or time slots for choice of activities along with where these activities can be completed. The student may need a 'conversation topic' card to clarify what he can talk about at break.*

## Meal behavior

**Instructor:**

*Like work breaks, meal times can be a major issue for individuals with ASD. Where to sit, who to sit with, manners at the meal, and particularly, what to do when the meal is finished can all be problematic to different individuals. Your attention to potential problem areas before they can become problematic is crucial. Priming here can involve identifying co-workers who will assist the student in navigating the meal time, who will consistently sit with the student (consider a rotation of co-workers or a list of several who are supportive), etc.*

*Consider the use of a social narrative to connect specific expected behaviors at meal time with the student's motivation (keeping the job, money from work, time with specific people, etc.).*

*Consider the use of a meal to do list, a script card, a rule card, or a list of 'post-meal options' to engage the student in acceptable after meal activities.*