

# **A Critical View on the Adaptive Processes and the Support Methods as Opposed to a Sole “Train on-the-Job” Approach to Supporting Employees with a Learning Disability**

## **Author:**

Angelos G. Koutoumanos<sup>1</sup>  
*Social worker*

<sup>1</sup> Lecturer in Social Work, Head of the Work Placement Unit at “Margarita” Vocational Training Centre, in Athens, Greece.

## **Abstract:**

The paper focuses on the process by which workers with a learning disability adapt to work settings whilst making use of available sources of support. It describes a sum of parameters that affect the outcomes of the workers’ adaptive skills and the trainers’ support methods when put to practice during a new work placement.

The paper entails real models of practice and case studies of workers with a learning disability in Greece. It attempts to describe the balance between the worker’s needs and aims of training process, on the grounds of a guided tour for the employee, the co-workers, the parents, and the trainer.

The author’s argument is based on a working hypothesis that the more a training process focuses on the person, the job description or the work environment rather than the needs of a system (worker, work setting, family and friends) the more the system is manipulated to adapt to a worker’s needs. Although this pattern may lead to long-lasting placements, it contradicts the author’s constitutional assumption regarding the training process in supported employment, that in a global market it’s not viable to develop the right worker for the right job as is to develop motivated workers who may flourish in given work settings. Thus, the work of placement officers involves employees themselves, together with their friends and families, co-workers and managers.

The paper aims to help trainers comprehend the underlying mechanisms of Supported Employment methods and bring attention to key points that help establish a support system featuring an on-site upon-demand support, past the on-the-job training period.