Interview Protocol

I. Introduce myself and state purpose of study. Consent form explained and signed. I am coming to you for your knowledge. I need your help to understand what it is like to be an individual with disabilities. I am interested in learning about your experience with and conception of employment and transition services. These questions are very broad. There are no right or wrong answers; I just want to hear your opinion on things. If you ever need to take a couple of minutes to think about a question, that’s not a problem. I’m not in a hurry.

II. Tell me a little bit about yourself.
• What did you do this past weekend? Is that a typical way to spend your time? If not, what is?
• Ethnicity and cultural values – If you had to describe yourself to someone else what would you say?
• What do you think has had an influence on shaping who you are? Now rank these from most to least important.
• Education history – Tell me a little about your education.

III. To answer this research question: In what ways can preparatory support services, transition support services, and workplace support services be improved to increase success in securing employment? In response to the agenda set forth by the New Freedom Initiative, some initial fieldwork will be done to assess the importance of proficiency in computer and Internet usage to securing employment for individuals with disabilities.

• When you look back at the process you went through to get a job, what do you think would be helpful to know about while you are still in postsecondary education/ high school?
• If you have experienced a transition from education to the workplace, what supports/activities occurred in the process?
• If you had to design a transition support program to take people from postsecondary/ secondary education to the workplace, what would it look like?
• What would you want to know if you were being trained for work? Knowing what you know, what has been/is important for you to be trained to do/know how to do your job?
• Talk about computers and your life. Are they a part of your life?
  o If yes, what have you come to learn from your own experiences?
  o If no, what would have to happen for you to support/necessitate you use of computers?
• If you could envision the perfect workplace, what would it be like? How does your vision differ from your current situation?
• What does it mean for you to be happy or successful? What do you feel you need to attain happiness and success? What is within your power? What may be dependent on others?

IV. To answer this research question: What disability-related reasons make securing employment difficult?
• Talk about your life, what makes it more challenging for you to secure employment?
• Are there elements of your life that make it easier to secure employment?
• When you are job hunting, what qualities in a job and/or employer attract you to that position? You have said A, B, C, D are the qualities you look for in a job, now rank these 1, 2, 3, 4, one being the most important reason for pursuing a specific job.
• Here is a want ad from a local newspaper.
  o What attracts you to this job?
  o What would be your concerns about applying for this job?

V. To answer this research question: What role does education level play in one’s ability to successfully secure employment?
• If the participant has a college education: Imagine your highest degree is a high school diploma, what would your adult life look like? How is that different than your life now?
• If the participant has a high school education: If you graduated from a postsecondary program, what would your adult life look like? How is that different than your life now?
• Do you see a difference, if any, between graduating from a 2-year or 4-year postsecondary institution?

VI. Do you have any questions or comments?

VII. Demographics
• Disability history
• Race and age range
• Social structure of support network (family, friends, professionals?)

VIII. Thank you, can you refer me to one or two people that might be willing to be interviewed, and You’re excused.

Possible prompting questions (general)

Tell me a little bit about that.
How is that?
Why is that?
Can you explain a little bit more about X.