

Virtual Role-Players Help People with Autism or Other Disabilities Find Employment by Teaching Job Interview Skills.

SIMmersion developed a job interview training system to support the transition of youth with autism (ASD) or other disabilities to competitive employment.

COLUMBIA, MD, UNITED STATES, June 29, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The US Bureau of Labor reports that only 17% of transition-age youth with disabilities are employed. According to the U.S. Department of Education, job interview skills are a critical component of job

readiness training for transition-age youth. For these people, the interview skills present a barrier to employment. To help overcome this barrier, and with funding from NIMH and the Kessler Foundation, SIMmersion (www.simmersion.com) and Matthew J. Smith, PhD, Professor of



Role-Players Travis Bishop and Rita Muniz

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The research shows that the comprehensive training with virtual role-players will help fill a critical training gap for transition-age youth.”

Dale Olsen, Ph.D.

Social Work at the University of Michigan collaborated to create a comprehensive training system with virtual role-players, called “[Job Interview Training for Transition-Age Youth.](#)”

During development, the team partnered directly with youth with autism spectrum disorders, their parents, teachers, community employers, and employed adults with autism spectrum disorders to ensure the program

reflected the needs of the target population. Funding was also used to ensure the program reflected the needs of transition-age youth with other disabilities or involved in juvenile justice.

The training system features virtual role-play interviewers, Rita Muniz and Travis Bishop. No two interviews are alike, so students get a new and unique experience with each practice interview. The training also features a real-time coach who provides on-going feedback, so students learn as they practice. The practice and feedback prepare students for competitive job interviews. Students reported that the program was enjoyable, easy-to-use, and reduced anxiety during real

interviews.

In comparison with the expected 17% employment, a [research study with 332 students](#) showed much better results for students with various disabilities after a short 6-month period as shown in the figure below.

The study also found that the employment rate depended on the number of times the students practiced with the virtual role-players. For all categories, students who practiced 15 or more interviews gained employment 71% of the time within 6 months.

The research shows that the comprehensive training with virtual role-players will help fill a critical training gap for transition-age youth. For free educational content and to sample [role-play interviews click here.](#)

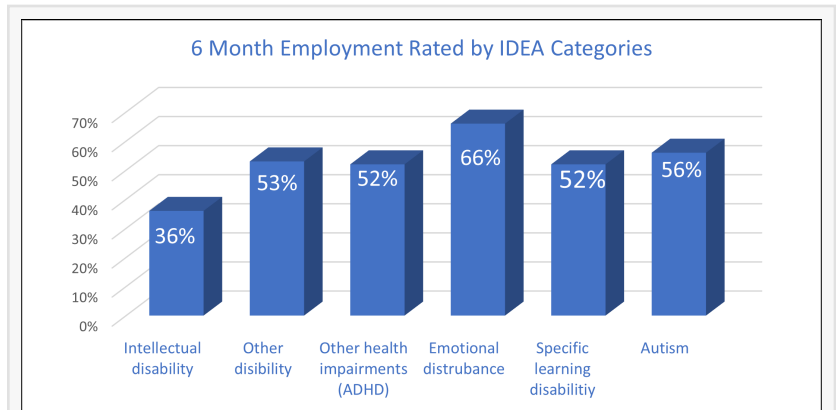


Figure 1 Employment rates for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Law (IDEAL)

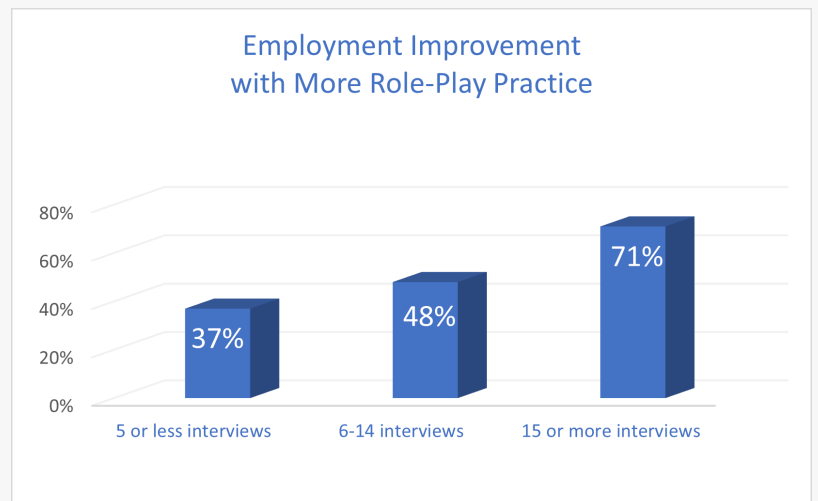


Figure 2 Employment improvement with practice

About SIMmersion

SIMmersion's mission is to train communication skills faster and more effectively by combining the world's most realistic simulation experiences with interactive training content and extensive feedback. For more information contact SIMmersion by calling 443 283 2555 or online at www.simmersion.com/contact.

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