

WORK-ABLE NEWS

October 2015

Profile on: Sandra Ott

Sandra has worked as an occupational therapist for over 15 years in the public sector, in both inpatient and outpatient settings with individuals experiencing a wide variety of health conditions. She is an engaging speaker, with an interest in promoting injury prevention, active living and educating adults about managing their chronic health conditions. Sandra's experience, creativity and solution focused approach allows her to be particularly effective with complex medical situations.

Sandra completed her Bachelor of Medical Rehabilitation degree in Occupational Therapy at the University of Manitoba in 1996. Throughout her career she has gained experience a variety of areas including, acute care, discharge planning, self care assessment, home assessment, cognitive assessment, and wellness education such as relaxation training, energy conservation skills, body mechanics and goal setting.

Sandra has shared her clinical experience as an instructor to occupational therapy students at the University of Manitoba. She is a leader in her profession, having held various positions on the executive of the Manitoba Society of Occupational Therapists, including president in 2002.



Happenings

Jenifer Gerard, OT has completed the *Matheson Functional Capacity Certification Program* - an industry-leading five day training program, providing clinician's with advanced skills to conduct a safe, objective, practical and customizable FCE.

Sandra Ott has completed *Enabling Occupation Through the Assessment and Treatment of Cognitive Impairments in Adults*—a two day training course reviewing evidence-based assessment, treatment methods, and accommodation strategies for adults with cognitive impairment.

Leslie Johnson presented at the *2014 Manitoba Occupational Therapy Research and Innovation Symposium* regarding two research projects she has been involved in related to ergonomics.

Elaine Huzel presented at the *2015 Manitoba Massage Therapy Association Conference* on Office Ergonomics, and Ergonomics and Injury Prevention for Massage Therapists.

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Can this individual return to work and stay at work?

Spotlight on: Cognitive Demands Analysis

Case Study: Ray has worked as an IT Professional for 10 years. He has been off work for 12 months, on a long term disability leave for depression. Three months before he left work, his performance declined. His coworkers noticed that he was not completing his work, he was missing project deadlines, and his attendance was increasingly sporadic. Previously, Ray had been a good performer in his department, had mentored other employees, taken initiative with projects, was well-liked by his peers, and was moving in the direction of a management position within the corporation. When he was no longer able to function at work, he went on leave, and for 4 months was suicidal and unable to manage daily activities. With medication and treatment, he was able to regain function. His Physician has suggested that a RTW is an appropriate next step, and recommended permanent work restrictions including reduced and flexible work hours, more time to complete work, a reduction in tasks with deadline pressures, and limited exposure to stress. Should Ray return to his pre-disability job or another position? How exactly will these restrictions be implemented? What specific job tasks should be included, modified, or eliminated to meet the restrictions?

The answers to these questions can be obtained through the use of a **Cognitive Demands Analysis**.

What is a Cognitive Demands Analysis (CDA)?

A Cognitive Demands Analysis (CDA) is an objective evaluation of the cognitive, emotional and psychological skills required to perform a job. At *Work-Able Solutions*, we use specific assessment tools and processes, combined with workplace observations to complete a CDA. Our CDA's include analysis of the type and intensity of cognitive demands in areas such as:

- Supervision given and received
- Social process and interactions
- Responsibility and accountability
- Enactment of job responsibilities
- Cognitive functions
- Exposure to emotional and sensory demands
- Communication and literacy

Common uses for a Cognitive Demands Analysis (CDA)

Determine work readiness or the match between an individual's functional abilities and a job

Plan appropriate workplace accommodations for persons with mental health conditions or medical conditions affecting cognition

Enhance the Human Resources' job description

Facilitate employee selection and training

As a companion document to a Neuropsychological or Cognitive/Psychological Functional Abilities Evaluation

When the seasons change, many people run into sleep difficulties. Here are our top 10 sleep tips:

1. Get up at the same time every morning,...even week-ends! Did you know that your wake-up time sets your internal sleep clock? It is best to not vary this by more than an hour or so.
2. Avoid long naps late in the afternoon.
3. Exercise daily.
4. Keep your room cool, dark, and comfortable
5. Avoid bright light in the evening. This includes computer screens, tablets or iPads. Devices that emit a bright light close to the eyes are thought to suppress melatonin.
6. Expose yourself to sunlight in the morning.
7. Use a wind down routine before bed.
8. Stay away from large meals right before bed.
9. Avoid watching TV in the bedroom.
10. Watch what you eat, and when you eat it. Caffeine and nicotine act as stimulants, and although alcohol can make you feel sleepy initially it can disrupt deep sleep later in the night.



Happy Sleep 101

Work-Able Services **Enhancing Function. Preventing Injury.**

- Office and Industrial Ergonomic Assessment
- Ergonomics Workshops
- Employee Training and Wellness Workshops
- Physical Demands Analysis
- Cognitive Demands Analysis
- Workplace Accommodation Assessment
- Functional Capacity Evaluation
- Return to Work and Stay at Work Programs
- Community and Workplace Mental Health Services
- Cognitive Assessment
- Brain Injury Rehabilitation
- Chronic Pain/Functional Restoration Programs and PGAP
- Personal Care Assistance Needs Assessment
- Home / Activities of Daily Living Assessment

Our Consultants



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