

People in recovery are coming together across the country as key individuals in the delivery of treatment and recovery services.

Video Course Session 1

Welcome! Computer Skills and Advocacy

provides some information about what to expect during your Peer Training, an overview of some basic computer skills that will facilitate your navigation of the training components, and some helpful tips on how to advocate for yourself as a peer in the work setting.

Welcome

Congratulations on your choice to become a Certified Peer Specialist! Peer Specialists bring a unique perspective and set of skills to treatment programs, complementing the expertise of other professionals and contributing to more holistic and effective care for individuals struggling with mental health or substance use challenges. For example, consider the following:

1. **Shared Experience:** Peer specialists have personal experience with mental health or substance use challenges, which allows them to relate to and empathize with individuals undergoing similar struggles. This shared experience can create a sense of connection and trust that may be harder to establish with professionals who haven't gone through similar experiences.
2. **Role Modeling:** Peer specialists serve as living examples of recovery and resilience. Seeing someone who has successfully overcome similar challenges can provide hope and motivation to others in treatment, showing that recovery is possible and achievable.
3. **Understanding and Validation:** Peer specialists understand the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of individuals in treatment because they've been there themselves. This understanding helps them provide validation and support in a non-judgmental way, creating a safe space for individuals to share their struggles and successes.
4. **Advocacy and Empowerment:** Peer specialists advocate for the needs and preferences of individuals in treatment, helping them navigate the system and access appropriate resources and support services. They empower individuals to take an active role in their recovery journey, offering guidance and encouragement along the way.
5. **Enhanced Engagement and Retention:** Research has shown that the inclusion of peer specialists in treatment programs can lead to higher levels of engagement and retention among participants. Having someone who understands their experiences and can offer support and encouragement can motivate individuals to stay committed to the treatment process.
6. **Reducing Stigma:** Peer specialists help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health and substance use disorders by openly sharing their own stories of recovery. By challenging stereotypes and misconceptions, they contribute to creating a more supportive and accepting environment for individuals seeking help.

Are you ready to get started? Let's begin with an overview of what to expect from your peer training.

Overview of the Peer Training Process

1. Between now and when your live or virtual training begins, you should complete the Certified Peer Specialist video course.
2. The Missouri Credentialing Board will check for completion of this part of the training on the day that you start your virtual (Zoom) or live training. If you have not completed it, you will be reminded that it is required and have until the end of your virtual/live training week to get it completed.
3. Prior to your live or virtual training dates, you may also review your training materials using the link you received in the confirmation email. If you prefer to have a hard copy of some or all of the sessions, it is okay to print them out.
4. The week before your scheduled training, you will receive an email with the information needed to access the virtual training. (This is not applicable if you are attending live training.)
5. Attend and actively participate in your virtual or live training during the designated dates and be an active participant.
6. After completing both components of the Peer training, you will need to take and pass the exam. You will have more than one chance to pass it if needed.
7. Once you've passed the exam, you will need to submit your CPS credential application with supporting documents in order to be issued the CPS credential. This will be explained again at the end of the training.

Helpful Hints for the Video Course

1. The MCB website works best in the Chrome web browser.
2. If you have trouble getting a video to play, or getting the quiz to load after you have watched a video, it is most likely because the cache needs to be cleared. ("Cache" refers to a type of high-speed memory that stores frequently accessed data or instructions. Its purpose is to speed up the retrieval of information by providing quick access to data that is likely to be needed again in the near future.)
3. **The best way to clear the cache is to turn off/reboot your computer.**
4. If having any trouble with the performance of the website or videos, please turn off your computer, then go back to the website and try it again, preferably in the Chrome web browser, before contacting the MCB office.
5. You can also try using a different device if you have one available, such as a tablet, phone, or alternate computer.

Computer Skills

There are some basic computer skills that you should be competent with in order to navigate through the CPS training process. These same skills will also be needed if employed as a CPS. The skills include:

1. **Typing:** Being able to type efficiently is crucial for many computer-related tasks. Practice touch typing to improve your speed and accuracy.
2. **Using Email:** Know how to create, send, receive, reply to, and organize emails. Familiarize yourself with email etiquette and how to attach files.
3. **Web Browsing:** Understand how to use a web browser to navigate the internet, search for information, and use bookmarks.
4. **Word Processing:** Learn how to use a word processing software like Microsoft Word or Google Docs to create and format documents.
5. **File Management:** Know how to organize and manage files and folders on your computer. This includes tasks like creating folders, moving files, and renaming items.
6. **Power Point:** Learn how to create a slide presentation that can be used to relay information to others.

If you are challenged by technology, it is highly recommended that you practice these computer skills prior to the training. Some ways to practice are listed in the following pages.

IMPORTANT for virtual training format: If by your training date you still aren't comfortable with your ability to navigate the technology of the virtual training (Zoom), it is highly recommended that you make plans to be with someone who can assist you with it, especially on the first day of the virtual training, until you get the hang of it.

Practice Using Email

Practicing using an email system can help you become more efficient and organized in your communication. Here are some steps you can take to practice using your email system effectively:

1. Sending Emails:

- Compose emails to friends, family, or colleagues.
- Practice writing clear and concise subject lines.

2. Organizing Emails:

- Create folders or labels to categorize your emails (e.g., work, personal, finance).
- Archive or delete emails that you no longer need.

3. Managing Contacts:

- Add new contacts to your address book.
- Practice creating groups or lists for easier email distribution.

4. Replying and Forwarding:

- Practice responding to emails promptly.
- Use proper etiquette when replying or forwarding emails.

5. Using Attachments and Links:

- Practice attaching files to emails and sending them.
- Learn how to share links or documents via email.

6. Mobile and Desktop Access:

- Practice accessing your email from different devices (e.g., computer, smartphone, tablet).
- Familiarize yourself with the features and layout of your email app or client on each device.

By regularly practicing these tasks, you can become more proficient in using your email system and manage your communication more effectively.

Practice Using Zoom

Practicing using Zoom can help you become more comfortable with its features and functionalities, whether you're hosting meetings, attending them, or just exploring its options. Here's how you can practice using Zoom:

1. Install Zoom:

- If you haven't already, download and install the Zoom application on your computer or mobile device. You can also use the web version without downloading any software.

2. Familiarize Yourself with the Interface:

- Open Zoom and explore the interface. Familiarize yourself with the various buttons and options available, such as mute/unmute, start/stop video, chat, participants, and share screen.

3. Join a Test Meeting:

- Zoom provides a test meeting option that allows you to join a meeting by yourself to test your audio and video settings. Join one of these meetings to ensure your microphone, camera, and speakers are working correctly.

4. Practice Screen Sharing:

- Test the screen sharing feature by sharing your screen with your mock meeting participants. Practice switching between different applications or sharing specific windows.

5. Attend Zoom Webinars or Workshops:

- Look for Zoom webinars or workshops that cover different aspects of using Zoom effectively. These sessions often provide tips and best practices for hosting and attending meetings.

6. Attend Zoom Meetings:

- Attend Zoom meetings hosted by others to experience different meeting formats and settings. Pay attention to how hosts manage the meetings and interact with participants.

By practicing these steps, you'll become more proficient in using Zoom and feel more confident when attending meetings.

File Management

If you want to save the training materials onto your device, rather than continuing to access them at the website (Dropbox), this is how you would do that:

1. Create a Folder:

- Open File Explorer (Windows) or Finder (Mac).
- Navigate to the location where you want to create the folder. This could be on your desktop, in the Documents folder, or any other location.
- Right-click (Windows) or Control-click (Mac) in the desired location and select "New Folder" from the context menu.
- Give the folder a name by typing in the desired name and pressing Enter.

2. Access Dropbox:

- Use the link you received (either in your confirmation email or the email from the MCB staff to access the peer training materials) to go to the Dropbox folder.

3. Locate the Document:

- Navigate to the document you want to save to your computer.

4. Download the Document:

- Click on the document to select it.
- Once selected, you should see options to download or preview the document.
- Click the download option (usually represented by a downward arrow or a "Download" button).
- The document will be downloaded to your computer, typically to your Downloads folder by default.

5. Move the Document to the New Folder:

- Open the folder you created on your computer in File Explorer or Finder.
- Locate the downloaded document in your Downloads folder (or the folder where it was saved).
- Drag the document file from its current location and drop it into the folder you created.

6. Verify the Document:

- Once you've moved the document to the new folder, double-click on it to ensure it opens correctly.

7. Repeat for Additional Documents:

- If you have more documents you want to save from Dropbox to your computer, repeat steps 3-6 for each document.

By following these steps, you can create a folder on your computer and save documents from Dropbox into that folder. This allows you to organize and access your documents locally on your computer. As you start to acquire more resources and training materials, you can create more file folders to store and organize the information.

Note: Save the email with the link to the Dropbox folder, because the training materials in Dropbox will continually be maintained to the most current version. Saving the materials to your own computer is fine, but be aware that if they are updated to a newer version in Dropbox, this does NOT carry over to what you have saved in a personal folder on your own device. But if you also save the email and/or the link to the Dropbox folder, then you will always have access to the current version of the materials and can resave them at any time.

Word Processing and Power Point

While these skills are not necessarily needed to complete the FSP basic training, they most definitely would be helpful, possibly needed, if employed somewhere as a Family Support Provider. Therefore, here are some basic instructions for creating a word document and a Power Point presentation.

What is a Word Document Used For:

A word document is a digital file format used for various purposes, including:

1. **Word Processing:** Creating and editing text-based documents such as letters, memos, reports, essays, resumes, and more.
2. **Formatting Text:** Applying formatting options like font styles, sizes, colors, alignments, and paragraph spacing to enhance the readability and appearance of the document.
3. **Inserting Objects:** Adding images, charts, tables, shapes, and other visual elements to complement the text and convey information effectively.
4. **Collaboration:** Sharing documents with others for collaborative editing, reviewing, and commenting, often facilitated by features like track changes and comments.
5. **Documentation:** Creating documentation for projects, processes, procedures, manuals, guides, and instructions.
6. **Presentation:** Designing slides for presentations, either directly within the word processor or by exporting the content to presentation software.
7. **Desktop Publishing:** Designing various print materials such as flyers, brochures, newsletters, posters, and more.

How to Create a Word Document:

Creating a word document typically involves the following steps:

1. **Choose a Word Processing Software:**

- Select a word processing software or tool that suits your needs. This could be Microsoft Word, Google Docs, LibreOffice Writer, or other alternatives.

2. **Open the Software:**

- Launch the selected word processing software on your computer or access it through an online platform.

3. **Create a New Document:**

- Within the software, locate the option to create a new document. This is usually found in the file menu or through a prominent button/icon.

4. **Enter Content:**

- Begin typing or pasting your content into the blank document. This could include text, headings, paragraphs, lists, and other elements.

5. **Format Text and Layout:**

- Use the formatting options provided by the software to format the text, adjust fonts, styles, alignments, and add other formatting elements as needed.

6. **Insert Objects:**

- Insert images, charts, tables, and other objects into the document to complement the text and convey information visually.

7. **Save the Document:**

- Once you've created and formatted your document, save it to your computer or cloud storage by choosing the "Save" or "Save As" option. Select a location, provide a file name, and save the document in the desired format.

By following these steps, you can create a word document using various word processing software and tools, enabling you to produce professional-looking documents for different purposes.

What is a Power Point Presentation Used For:

A PowerPoint presentation is a digital slideshow created using Microsoft PowerPoint or similar presentation software. It's a versatile tool used for various purposes in both professional and personal settings. It is frequently used as an educational tool and is a great visual aid when giving a lecture or presentation.

Creating a PowerPoint presentation involves several steps. Here's a basic guide to help you get started:

1. **Plan your content:** Determine the purpose of your presentation and what information you want to convey. Create an outline or storyboard to organize your ideas.
2. **Open PowerPoint:** Launch the PowerPoint application on your computer. You'll typically see a blank slide to start with.
3. **Choose a design/template:** PowerPoint offers a variety of pre-designed templates to choose from. Pick one that fits the style and tone of your presentation. You can also customize the design later.
4. **Add slides:** Click on the "New Slide" button to add slides to your presentation. Choose the layout that best suits the content of each slide (title slide, bullet points, images, etc.).
5. **Add content to slides:** Click on the text boxes and placeholders on each slide to add your content. Include text, images, charts, graphs, videos, or any other media that will enhance your presentation.
6. **Format your content:** Use PowerPoint's formatting tools to customize the appearance of your text and visuals. Change fonts, colors, sizes, alignments, and styles to make your content visually appealing and easy to read.
7. **Add transitions and animations:** To make your presentation more engaging, you can add slide transitions between each slide and animations to individual elements on the slides. However, use these sparingly and purposefully, as too many can be distracting.
8. **Practice and rehearse:** Once your slides are complete, rehearse your presentation to ensure smooth delivery. Pay attention to your timing, pacing, and delivery of key points.
9. **Review and revise:** Take some time to review your presentation for any errors or areas that need improvement. Make revisions as necessary to clarify your message and enhance the overall quality of your presentation.
10. **Save and present:** Save your PowerPoint presentation on your computer or in the cloud. When you're ready to present, connect your computer to a projector or display, open the file, and start your presentation in slideshow mode.

Remember to keep your slides simple and focused, with minimal text and clear visuals.

You should now have, or be able to practice and acquire the computer skills needed to successfully complete your CPS training! Technology skills are an important part of working as a CPS. While employed as a peer, you will most likely be expected to document the services you are providing to others...and this documentation will probably be done on a computer system.

If you are not confident in your technology skills, it is definitely going to be worthwhile to take the time to practice the suggestions in this session. If you already have these skills and competencies...GREAT!! You may end up teaching another peer how to do these things as part of the services you are providing.

Now we are ready to talk about how to advocate for yourself as a peer in the workforce.

Advocating for Yourself on the Team

While the number of Peer Specialists continues to grow throughout various industries and settings (treatment programs, recovery coaching, residential living locations, treatment courts, jails, prisons, crisis response teams, etc.), unfortunately the team members and/or supervisors of some of those peers may not have a complete understanding of the true role, scope of practice and core competencies that a peer should engage in. The team members and/or supervisor may ask a peer to do something outside the realm of his or her responsibilities. They may forget to include the peer in a team meeting, discount feedback the peer is attempting to give regarding the client, or confuse the ethical standards of a peer with the ethical standards of a counselor or clinician.

Here are some ways that the peer can advocate for themselves if encountering any of these scenarios:

1. Clarify Roles and Responsibilities:
• Politely remind team members or supervisors of the peer specialist's role and responsibilities. Clearly articulate what tasks fall within the peer specialist's scope of practice and what tasks do not. Your training materials are a great resource for this...share them with your supervisor and team.
2. Communicate Boundaries:
• Assertively communicate boundaries when asked to perform tasks outside the realm of their responsibilities. Politely decline or redirect the request, explaining how it falls outside their role.
3. Request Inclusion in Meetings:
• Proactively request inclusion in team meetings to ensure that the peer specialist is informed and involved in discussions relevant to their work. Express the importance of their participation in team decision-making processes.
4. Assertive Feedback Delivery:
• When offering feedback regarding clients or program operations, express thoughts assertively and confidently. Provide concrete examples and evidence to support the feedback being given, emphasizing the value it brings to the team and clients.

5. Advocate for Ethical Standards:

- Advocate for adherence to ethical standards specific to peer support. Clarify any confusion between peer support ethics and those of counselors or clinicians. The Peer Specialist ethical code is found on the Missouri Credentialing Board's website: www.missouricb.com

6. Seek Supervisor Support:

- If issues persist, seek support from a supervisor or higher-level authority within the organization. Discuss concerns respectfully and collaboratively, seeking guidance on how to address the situation effectively.

7. Document Instances:

- Keep a record of instances where the peer specialist's role, boundaries, or feedback are disregarded or misunderstood. Documenting such instances can provide evidence to support advocacy efforts and address recurring issues.

8. Engage in Peer Support Networks:

- Seek support from other peer specialists or peer support networks within or outside the organization. Share experiences, seek advice, and collaborate on advocacy strategies.

9. Self-Advocacy Training:

- Participate in self-advocacy training or workshops to develop skills and strategies for assertive communication, boundary-setting, and effective advocacy in the workplace.

Some of this information will be covered again later in the training, however, because some of those in the training may already be employed in a peer specialist position, it is important to provide advocacy information at the beginning of the training, as well as throughout the training process.

Please feel free to ask questions and participate in discussions during the virtual/live part of the training. While you are completing the video course, write down any questions that arise for you and if they aren't answered at some point during the course of the video sessions or live/virtual sessions...be sure to advocate for yourself and ASK those questions to the trainers! They will make themselves available for questions at the beginning of each training day by opening the training format about 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.

Video Course Session 1 — Review Questions

1. What are skills/perspectives that are unique to the peer role?
2. When are you officially a certified peer specialist that can bill for peer services?
3. How can peers advocate for themselves if needed?