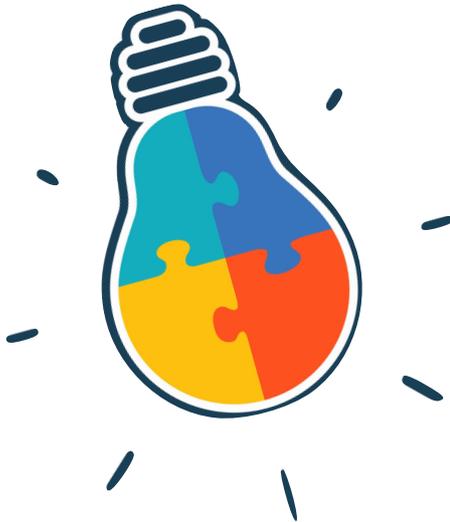


Baseline information

A quick guide to single page learner information sheets

September 2019



The information sheet on the last page should be completed to give you background knowledge of the student. We need baseline information because our learners often meet people like supply teachers and other carers who need to know a learners likes and dislikes at a glance. So the following sheet is designed to be on one sheet of A4 paper so it can be easily accessed. We could argue that there is more information needed and included on the sheet but that is information that should be available elsewhere and accessed when necessary. This sheet is about communication, likes and dislikes. It is designed to help people in contact with the learner to be able to communicate appropriately, give meaningful experiences and be respectful to the learner.

The main thing about a baseline sheet, whether it's called a passport, baseline sheet or skills assessments, is that it is easily readable and up to date. It could be a document which is passed on to the next term's teacher or an assistant. So don't make your sheet too complex. If you need something more in depth, Chris Barson links to these from his website, which may help you gain information when working with people who have autism.

http://www.ct.gov/dds/lib/dds/autism/scott_bellini_handoute.pdf

<http://www.positiveaboutautism.co.uk/resources/37.2-Sensory-assessment-checklist.pdf>

Most of the information required could be gained from parents, therapists and past teachers. So ask around and don't forget that different people will have very different views about a persons abilities, so put down what you think is the right information.

My baseline information sheet has an emphasis on light and sound because I am interested in sensory skills, so I want to ensure that people understand a learners communication and sensory needs. However, different sheets could be designed for different things. If you are a music teacher then you may wish for more information about hearing skills and favourite music, the best position for listening and access to instruments. If you are working with a learner who has autism then you could document the likes and dislikes of the student for example hypersensitive & hyposensitivity to a stimulus. If you cannot answer any of the questions on your sheet that's not because it's wrong, it's just that you haven't got the information yet. So you need lots of ongoing assessment, in other words - observe, observe, observe. If possible use a video camera or your phone camera which is a fantastic tool often in your pocket when you need it.



Here are the guidelines for the sheet....

Name and what somebody likes to be called. Different people like to be called different things by different people and this should always be respected. For example close friends call me Rich, others call me Richard, if somebody calls me Mr Hirstwood it's a policeman, a doctor or the bank, who all get a different response to those who call me Rich or Richard.

The section about my **communication** is not actually that easy because it is a really complicated subject. However, get the main points detailed that people need to know. The reason there is a section for receptive and expressive communication is because people's communication skills are often very different. So it could read...

'Expressive... I will shout when I'm not happy and I like to make choices with symbols. I am also learning some sign language so if I try to sign, give me time. See my list of my symbols and signs'.

'Receptive... I will still when I am listening and I will look for any signs or symbols you present. Make sure you stand slightly to the side as I don't have good central vision.'

Next are **visual skills** and as I write this I know that sometimes the information about somebody's vision can be scant, so if you know there is a visual loss try to find out more about it. You could use assessments like the ACA in the book 'Communication Before Speech' available on Amazon or you could use one of my visual investigations (link at the end of the document or search Google for 'Sensory Investigations' and there you will find a ACA style assessment). But for now lets presume that you know something about the learner's vision and the comment could read something like...

Vision... I have macular loss which means I cannot see directly in front of me. So please communicate and show things a little off centre.

Hearing falls into the same category as vision except there is much less information about people's hearing than there should be. When people are non verbal its difficult for them to tell you that they have tinnitus or can't hear on the left side today very well. So, again you could try some investigations of your own with the sheets I mentioned in the vision paragraph.

The sensory investigations are here...

<http://www.hirstwood.com/course-notes/sensory-room-environments-course-notes/290-2/>



Taste and smell are next and are really important. One line for each, but like and vision and hearing there may not be enough detailed information. So if there is a feeding issue or dysphagia a person will need to know where to get further information. However the information on our document could be as simple as

Taste... See speech therapy notes before giving me any food!

or the situation may be a lot let complex:

Taste... I hate fish but love sweet things but not too much!

Smell is one which there are few assessments for so look for preferences and find out.

Smell... I don't like the smell of fish and can react badly! I like some aromatherapy smells.

My favourite people... Should be easy but if you are a teacher who is new to the learner you may need a little time to find out. All the other favourites are the same, if you don't know find out!

The best time! For many people time is important and we are all better or worse at certain times of day. Yes, I know it changes from day to day but we can generalise a little. For example I am one of those annoying morning people. I am at my best just after I wake but by 4 o'clock I'm not at my best. So for me it would be...

Best time for work... I'm at my best in the morning.

So it's obvious to say...

Best time to relax... In the afternoon

Positioning is very important for some people. It may be a visual or hearing issue or the fact that the physiotherapist has asked for some particular exercise. This could be stated in this section. For example...

Best position for working... Make sure I can see to the left and right don't put me in position which blocks my peripheral vision. I need to be out of my chair every day - see my manual handling plan.

Best position for relaxing... Just give me 20 minutes on a comfy bean bag.

Lastly things **I just don't like** and **things which you really should avoid** need to be pointed out.

Lastly review your information when something changes, not every six weeks or weekly.



Here's what you need to know about me...

My Name is

I like to be called

My communication

Expressive

Receptive

Vision

Hearing

Touch

Taste

Smell

My favourite people

Favourite things

Favourite music

Favourite videos

Best time to work

Best time to relax

Best position for work

Best position for
relaxing

I don't like

I will be seriously angry
if you...

Other things you need
to know about me

An alternative format
could be as follows on the
next page.

This is me



Picture here

My name is

and this is what you need to know about me.

This was completed on

I communicate with you by

I prefer you to communicate with me by

My vision is

My hearing

My sense of touch

I like to taste

I like to smell

I like to play or explore

My preferred relaxation position is

My preferred working position is

My best friends are

My favourite things are

My favourite music is

My favourite iPad app is

I like to watch or look at

The best time of day to work with me is

The best time of day to relax is

You also need to know this