



TIMOTHY BURKLOW



Submitted by Steve Upchurch, Training and Professional Development Manager

Tim had most recently been a machine operator, but could no longer perform that job due to complications from degenerative disc disease and resulting nerve damage that resulted in excruciating lower back pain and numbness in the lower right leg.

Tim underwent several back surgeries, but still suffered pain and bouts of incapacitation. "If I did yard work, I would typically have two days in bed after that," Tim said.

When he came to VR, he wasn't sure exactly what he wanted VR assistance with. He knew he wanted to either go back to school or work "even one day a week," as he said "not working has been a big shock to my system."

Tim's VR Counselor, Melissa Voegel, had him complete some discovery at Goodwill and decided on a goal of Business Operations Specialist. Most of his previous work experience was as a production supervisor, so this seemed like a good fit. With VR assistance, Tim enrolled at the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville and earned his Bachelor's Degree in Business Management in the spring of 2017.

For the next several months, VR provided hourly job placement assistance to Tim through Assist, Inc., and in March of 2018, Tim accepted a position as the Food Safety & Quality Coordinator at Midwestern Pet Foods in Evansville. He is salaried and receives insurance, retirement and paid time off benefits. Midwestern sent Tim to trainings and meetings in several states, including New York, Pennsylvania and Colorado for business.



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Tim said he very pleased with VR's assistance in helping him get back into the workforce. "VR helped put me in the right direction. When I first met with Melissa, I didn't even know college was an option." He is grateful for the assistance that VR has provided, and the career path that has opened up for him. "VR helped me get to where I am now."