Supported Employment/Individual Placement & Support (SE/IPS) is an evidence-based practice that helps people with mental illness and other disabilities identify and acquire part-time or full-time jobs of their choice in the community with rapid job-search and placement services. There are eight core principles of SE/IPS.

1. **Zero Exclusion**
   All people who want to work are eligible for employment services and receive help even if they:
   - Have experienced job loss in the past
   - Lose a job(s) while enrolled in SE/IPS
   - Are still experiencing symptoms of mental illness
   - Experience cognitive impairments (e.g., memory, problem solving difficulties)
   - Are still using alcohol or other drugs
   - Have a criminal history
   - Do not know how to fill out an application or talk to employers
   - Do not have previous job training or work experience
   - Are afraid they might not learn the job fast enough
   - Are afraid they might not fit in with others
   *The use of alcohol or other drugs might limit job choices because many employers test for drug use.

2. **Integrated Employment & Treatment**
   SE/IPS is integrated with (embedded in) mental health services. Employment specialists attend team meetings and work closely with case managers, psychiatrists and other professionals to help people achieve their employment goals. Team members openly discuss and find solutions for issues that affect work and recovery, such as the following:
   - Medication side effects (e.g., drowsiness)
   - Persistent symptoms (e.g., hallucinations)
   - Cognitive difficulties (e.g., problem-solving skills)
   - Other rehabilitation needs (e.g., social skills, transportation, child care)

3. **Competitive Jobs**
   Competitive employment is the goal of SE/IPS services. Competitive jobs are regular jobs that anyone in the community can apply for. They are not jobs set aside for people with disabilities. Employment specialists help individuals find regular part-time or full-time jobs that pay minimum wage or more.
   - Individuals are paid the same as other people who perform similar work. SE/IPS endorses competitive jobs for several reasons:
     - Individuals like them more than sheltered work.
     - They reduce stigma and discrimination by enabling consumers to work side by side with people who do not have psychiatric disabilities.
     - They promote self-sufficiency, financial stability, and career development over time.
     - They support positive self-worth.

4. **Rapid Job-search**
   As soon as people express an interest in employment, service team members connect them with employment specialists. In two to three weeks, specialists are helping individuals explore the job market, fill out applications, and interview with potential employers. Specialists do not require individuals to complete pre-employment assessments, training, workshops, and intermediate work experiences. A rapid job-search honors each person’s desire to work.

5. **Systematic Job Development**
   Getting to know employers helps people find jobs that meet their strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences. Employment specialists build relationships with employers through planned in-person contacts over time. The face-to-face time enables specialists and employers to work together to find the right fit (or match). Employment specialists keep in mind the job preferences of the people they represent and ask about and listen for many different opportunities at each worksite. Specialists keep themselves attuned to the quality of work environments, the potential for flexible hours, and the potential for workplace adjustments that will accommodate individual strengths, skills, symptoms, and coping skills.

6. **Time-unlimited Support**
   Follow-along services help people through their work and recovery journeys for as long as they want or need them. These supports are provided by employment specialists, case managers, other service providers, and by natural supports, including family members, friends, co-workers, and other peers. Examples of follow-along services include:
   - On-the-job supports (e.g., job coaching)
   - Job transitions (e.g., to new roles within a business, to new jobs at different businesses)
   The goal of time-unlimited support is to help individuals become as independent as possible.

7. **Individual Preferences**
   Service providers keep their attention focused upon the employment goals of people they serve and do not impose their ideas or plans. Service providers utilize motivational approaches to help individuals identify their personal strengths, skills, and job interests. People who find jobs that they want tend to experience a higher level of satisfaction and tend to keep their jobs longer. Individual preferences guide all aspects of the employment process, such as:
   - Job searches
   - Decisions to disclose personal issues to employers or not (e.g., disabilities, symptoms)
   - Level of ongoing support from service providers

8. **Work Incentives and Benefits Planning**
   It is important for individuals to know how their jobs (earned income) might impact benefits such as Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and housing subsidies. To help people make informed choices about their financial futures, employment specialists and other service providers learn the basics of benefits information. They also:
   - Help individuals understand benefits requirements (rules) and other regulations related to benefits & employment
   - Help find benefits planners, who calculate the impact that income from employment will have upon various benefits
   - Assist with reporting of income to different benefits providers
   - Assist with identifying and documenting available work incentives
   - Provide long term, ongoing support to understand the impact when changes occur in a person’s job