

Center on Scaling Up Progressive Employment

Promoting Competitive Integrated Employment for Job Seekers with Disabilities and Meeting Needs of Businesses in the Community

The Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts Boston houses the *Center on Scaling Up Progressive Employment* to promote competitive integrated employment for job seekers with disabilities and businesses. The Center's partners include [Mathematica](#) and the [Disability Policy Consortium](#) as well as Progressive Employment implementation sites in nine states.

Over the past decade, disability employment service providers have adopted Progressive Employment as a model for engaging businesses and building career pathways for job seekers with disabilities and other barriers to employment.

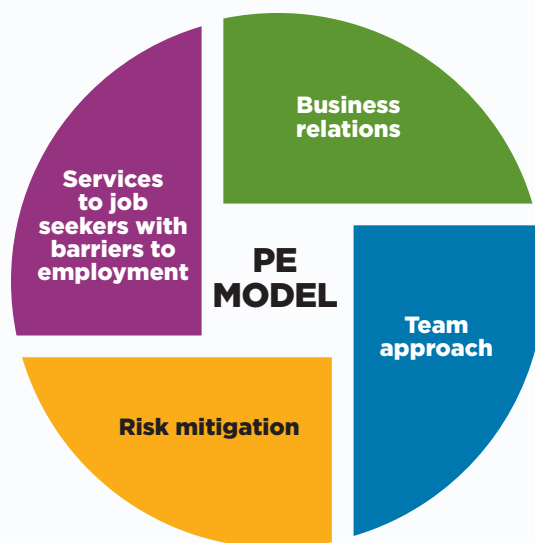
The Progressive Employment Model

Progressive Employment is a dual-customer service delivery model that uses work-based learning strategies (activities in real workplaces) to introduce job seekers to businesses and meet their collective needs. Progressive Employment rapidly engages job seekers in work settings to aid informed choice as they develop their career goal.

The Progressive Employment model offers businesses a variety of options for meeting, interacting with, and trying out a new pool of potential job applicants. The underlying premise is that "everyone is ready for something." In 2009, Vermont Division of Vocational Rehabilitation developed Progressive Employment, and numerous states across the US have since adopted it.

There are four components of Progressive Employment:

1. Services to job seekers with significant barriers to employment
2. Business relations
3. The team approach
4. Strategies to mitigate risk



The Center's Goals

The Center on Scaling Up Progressive Employment offers an opportunity to further build the evidence base for the Progressive Employment model as an intervention that improves competitive integrated employment outcomes for both job seekers and businesses. The core research activities are aligned with the four model components.

The Center has three primary goals:

Strengthen the existing evidence of the Progressive Employment model's effectiveness for both customers

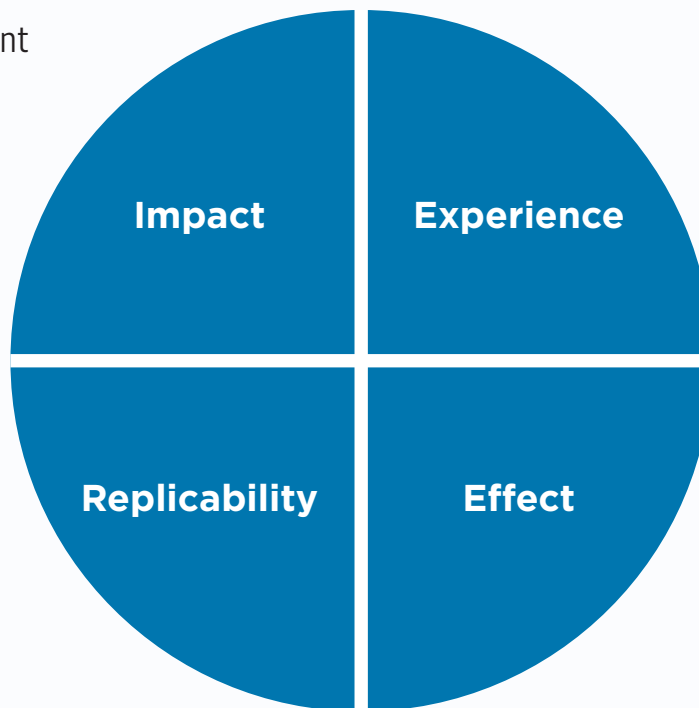
Develop evidence of Progressive Employment model feasibility to scale up and out of the VR system to a community intervention

Increase awareness and build capacity in 15-20 new sites through knowledge translation and technical assistance

With these three goals in mind and understanding the four main components of the Progressive Employment model, the proposed research strategies will examine the following four areas:

Impact on employment outcomes at the individual job seeker level through multi-site qualitative evaluation

Replicability of Progressive Employment at the cross-systems level through a modified Delphi study



Experience of businesses within the local labor market through field-based, real-time data collection

Effect of the Progressive Employment team as a community-level intervention through community conversation methods of qualitative inquiry



**For more information on the
Progressive Employment model:**

www.explorevr.org/progressive-employment

About

The Center on Scaling Up Progressive Employment is a 5-year research project based at the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston, and funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research.

Project Partners

- Mathematica
- Disability Policy Consortium
- Partner State VR agencies (ME, VT, NJ, NH, MO, KY, OR, MN, NE)

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