

Job-Driven Technical Assistance Center (JD-VRTAC): Illinois Department of Human Services- Division of Rehabilitation

The JDVRTAC Project in Illinois: "We're on a Mission"!

John Marchioro

Staff Development NET Point of
Contact



Webinar Objectives

- To provide the context for Illinois' JD-VRTAC project
- To share Illinois' Business Engagement approach
- To share JD-VRTAC project implementation, accomplishments, challenges & lessons learned.
- To provide current status, next steps, future direction, & goals of JD-VRTAC project.
- To share insight on the role of TA and the Learning Collaborative throughout this process



JD-VRTAC Goals

Improve skills of state VR agency staff, other rehab professionals & providers of VR services, who are trained to provide “job-driven” VR services & supports to PWD, employers & customized training providers.

Four Topic Areas:

1. Business Engagement
2. Employer Supports
3. Labor Market Information (LMI)
4. Customized Training Providers

www.explorevr.org



JD-VRTAC Partners

Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI), Univ. of Massachusetts/Boston

In Partnership with:

- Jobs for the Future (JFF)
- Univ. of Arkansas/CURRENTS
 - Univ. of Washington
- Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR)
 - United States Business Leadership Network (USBLN)
 - Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)

In Collaboration with:

- National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB)
 - Technical Assistance Center Collaborative



VR Background and Services

Illinois Department of Human Services- Division of Rehabilitation

- 45 VR offices
- 5 regions
- General VR and BBS separate
- 230 VR counselors, 40,000 customers
- 5 Employment Resource Specialists (ERS)
- No Statewide Business Relations Manager
- 1 NET Point of Contact



JD-VRTAC Project Background

- Role of the ERS has changed and has not been consistently defined over the years
- ERS positions have not been filled
- Centralized business unit was eliminated
- Counselor knowledge and comfort level with business relations was inconsistent
- Needed a more comprehensive strategy for business relations



JD-VRTAC Project Purpose and Goals

- **Purpose:**

- Develop a demand-driven strategy for providing VR services
- Increase ability to build and maintain relationships with employers
- Identify appropriate services to employers
- Identify areas of integration with our workforce partners in order to work more efficient



JD-VRTAC Project Purpose and Goals

- **Goals:**

- Determine roles and functions, learning objectives and performance measures of BR team statewide
- Develop training curriculum and provide training to at least 45 DRS field-level staff.
- DRS intends to develop relationships with at least 20 businesses
- DRS staff will achieve at least 50 successful employment closures resulting from the project



JD-VRTAC Project Implementation

- Identify Core Team
- Identify field staff for training
- Develop marketing materials
- Develop data tracking system
- Communicate project pre-implementation



JD-VRTAC Project Implementation

- Communicate and get buy in from workforce partners
- Survey staff
- Develop curriculum
- Host initial webinar sessions
- Host statewide face-to-face kickoff
- Conduct regional trainings
- Follow up



JD-VRTAC Project Accomplishments

- Develop training curriculum and provide training to at least 45 DRS field-level staff.
 - **Accomplished!**
- DRS intends to develop relationships with at least 20 businesses
 - **Accomplished!**
- DRS staff will achieve at least 50 successful employment closures resulting from the project.
 - *In progress*



Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Challenges:
 - Framing and buy-in
 - Resources (i.e., marketing materials)
 - Fitting everything in
- Lessons learned:
 - Consolidation of early overview
 - Better messaging early on regarding business outreach
 - Maximize role play/minimize content in face-to-face meetings



JD-VRTAC Project Today (current status)

- Ongoing business relations
- Improved partnerships and integration with workforce partners
- Updates to business engagement screen
- Ongoing meetings in each region
- Sharing of business intelligence
- Increasing network opportunities
- Marketing materials



What was most helpful about receiving TA?

- Getting the ball rolling
- Focusing attention on business relations
- Ability for staff and leadership to hear perspectives outside of Illinois
- Support in the face to face trainings



Next Steps, Future Directions, and Goals

- Continue to provide initial training to all staff
- Research more ideas around marketing materials/social media
- Distribute follow-up evaluation to assess competency of material
- Continue to improve communication to field staff from leadership and between leadership
- Develop action plans based on counselor and employer feedback



Illinois DRS Business Card

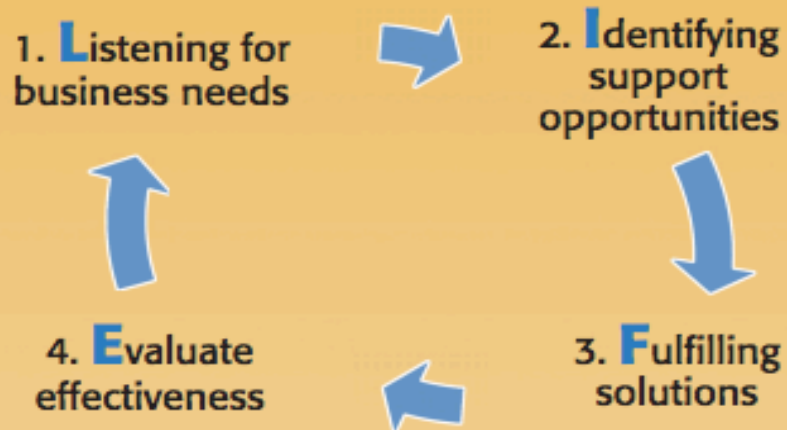


Working together, we can build a stronger and more diverse work place!

We know that you are faced with the daily challenge of sourcing qualified applicants. As a business customer of DRS you gain access to job ready candidates who are:

Qualified ■ Productive ■ Dependable ■ Conscientious

The Division of Rehabilitation Services provides solutions for the workforce needs of business customers while preparing talented, qualified job seekers with disabilities for their chosen careers. Our business mission is accomplished by:



Employer Testimonial in Illinois DRS Brochures

Employer Testimonial

"The purpose of CVS Health is 'helping people on their path to better health'. The collaboration of our corporation and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) partnership mirrors that purpose. More importantly, it represents our commitment to disability awareness and supports our efforts to train, mentor, and hire diverse candidates throughout our enterprise."

Lena Barkley
Lead Manager, Workforce Initiatives



Questions?



Contact Information

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