Job-Driven Technical Assistance Center (JD-VRTAC)

Sector Strategies: What are they and how can they help VR agencies?

Patricia Maguire/ Senior Program Manager, Jobs for the Future
Lindy Foley/ Employment Services Program Director, Nebraska VR
Job-Driven Center 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
Job-Driven Center Partners

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

In Partnership with:
- Jobs for the Future (JFF)
  - Univ. of Arkansas
  - 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
Presenters

Moderator:
Lois Joy, Senior Research Manager, Jobs for the Future

Presenters:
Patricia Maguire, Senior Program Manager, Jobs for the Future

Lindy Foley, Employment Services Program Director, Nebraska VR
Objectives

• Define “Sector Strategies”
• Explore what they can look like and how to approach them
• Learn how Sector Strategies can help VR Agencies by looking at how Nebraska VR develops Certificate Training programs
What is a Sector Strategy?

Patricia Maguire
Senior Program Manager, Jobs for the Future
ABOUT JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

Our Mission
JFF works to ensure that all young people and workers have the skills and credentials needed to succeed in our economy.

Our Vision
The promise of education and economic mobility in America is achieved for everyone.
ABOUT JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

OUR GOALS

1. PREPARING FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER:
   All young people graduate high school on a clear path to college completion and career success.

2. EARNING POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS:
   All students gain the skills they need to earn postsecondary credentials with high labor market value.

3. ADVANCING CAREERS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH:
   All workers obtain the education and training required to move into family-supporting careers with clear paths for advancement.
HOW JFF WORKS: SCALING SOLUTIONS

ALIGMENT ACROSS SECONDARY—POSTSECONDARY—WORKFORCE

- Develop Evidence-Based Innovations
- Build Systems and Field Capacity
- Advocate and Influence Policy
What is a Sector Strategy?
CO Regional Sector Partnership Convener Training Workbook

- Clusters of Companies
- Employers as Partners
- Industry Driven
- Regionally Based
- Employer Priorities First
- Opportunity Focused
- Focus on Industry Competitiveness and Growth
- Existing Industry Strength or Emerging Specialty
- Champion Driven
- Coalitions of the Willing
- People and Relationships
- Disciplined, Replicable Process
WIOA & Required Partners
ETA Sector Strategies Initiative

A sector strategy is a partnership of multiple employers within a critical industry that brings together education, economic development, workforce systems, and community organizations to identify and collaboratively meet the workforce needs of that industry within a regional labor market.

https://businessengagement.workforcegps.org/
ETA Sector Strategies Framework & Organizational Self-Assessment

- Industry Engagement
  - How broad and deep is the involvement of targeted industry sector employers in designing and delivering programs and services?

- Sector-Based Service Delivery
  - How well are you and your partners facilitating the delivery of workforce solutions that are responsive to the needs of workers and targeted industry sector(s)?

- Sustainability & Continuous Improvement
  - How well is your organization able to measure sector strategy outcomes?
  - Are you positioned to financially sustain sector work over time?

- Organizational Capacity & Alignment
  - Does your organization have the personnel, policies, vision, and resources in place to continually support sector strategy outcomes?

- Data-Informed Decision Making
  - Is your organization using rigorous data to make decisions about target industries and training investments?
### Figure 1. Ladder of Employer Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Relationship</th>
<th>Working Relationship</th>
<th>Strategic Partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level I</strong></td>
<td><strong>Level II</strong></td>
<td><strong>Level III</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key employer role</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>Capacity-building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage of relationship</td>
<td>Initial contact / new relationship</td>
<td>Establishing trust and credibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity examples</td>
<td>Discuss hiring needs, skills, competencies; advise on curricula; contract training; hire graduates</td>
<td>Job site tours; speakers; mock interviews; internships; needs assessment; loan/ donate equipment; recruiting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sector Intermediaries: JFF’s Expanding the Mission

- Serve dual customers: employers & workers
- Organize multiple partners & funding streams
- Provide or broker labor market services
- Project vision to guide partnership & activities
Industry Champions

- **CO Regional Sector Partnership Workbook**
  - Champions vs Representatives
  - Doers vs Talkers

- **CommCorp Partnerships Guide**
  - Business leaders that believe in our work,
  - are committed to our vision,
  - and are willing to use their power and prestige to garner support for our efforts

- **ETA Sector Strategies Guide**
  - Champions help convene the larger group of employers.
  - Invitations to the first meeting come from the workforce boards and industry champions.
Sector Strategies Resources

- ETA’s Sector Strategies Framework & Self-Assessment
- Colorado Regional Sector Partnership Convener Training Workbook
- JFF’s Resource Guide to Engaging Employers
- JFF’s Expanding the Mission: CCs and the Functions of Workforce Intermediaries
- NFWS Workforce Partnership Guidance Tool
- Commonwealth Corporation’s Partnerships: A Workforce Development Practitioner’s Guide
- Connecting People to Work: Workforce Intermediaries and Sector Strategies
The Nebraska VR Model

Lindy Foley
Employment Services Program Director, Nebraska VR
We help people with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep jobs while helping businesses recruit, train, and retain employees with disabilities.
Nebraska VR Office Locations

- Scottsbluff
- North Platte
- Kearney
- Grand Island
- Columbus
- Fremont
- Omaha
- Norfolk
- Sioux City
- Lincoln
Certificate Training Programs

Nebraska VR
Model

- Business Led
- Single Point of Entry
- Shared Investment
- Training
- Onsite Support

Diagram:
- Businesses
- Nebraska VR
- Community College

Explore VR
STEPS

✓ Initial outreach to VR teams
✓ Connect with businesses
✓ Link to Community College
✓ Bring partners together
✓ Orientation/Information Night
✓ Interviews
✓ Training begins
CLASSES

✓ 6-12 students depending on program

✓ ½ day in class from M-F

✓ ½ day at internship site from M-F

✓ Certificate achieved upon successful completion

✓ 60-70% become employed at a participating site
TRAINING

✓ Job seeking skills (interviewing)

✓ Soft skills

✓ Technical skills

✓ Coordination between VR and Community College

✓ Feedback from business partners
VR INVOLVEMENT

- Coordinate the collaboration
- Identify the potential students
- Provide or supplement soft skills training
- Facilitate business involvement with students
- Ongoing contact with businesses to provide support
- Arrange for job coaching if necessary
- Follow up to place with other employers if student is not hired at a participating business
CURRENT PROGRAMS

- Welding
- Electrical
- Automotive Technician
- HVAC
BENEFITS REPORTED BY BUSINESSES

- Reduced turnover
- Onsite support
- Getting properly trained workers to their specifications
- Financial savings (recruitment, hiring, retention)
- Diversity
BENEFITS TO THE STUDENT

- Learning usable work skills
- Immersed in work culture
- Hands on learning
- Learning from mistakes prior to employment
Learn More About Nebraska VR Certificate Programs

- http://www.vr.ne.gov/partners/certificate_programs.html
Find Nebraska VR on Social Media
Contact Information

Patricia Maguire
Senior Program Manager, Jobs for the Future
pmaguire@jff.org

Lindy Foley
Employment Services Program Director, Nebraska VR
lindy.foley@nebraska.gov