The Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center (JD-VRTAC) presents:

Skills for Business Engagement: Part 1
Tuesday, May 10, 2016

Presenters:
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Job-Driven VR Technical Assistance 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 people with disabilities, employers & customized training providers.

Four Topical Areas:

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

For more information visit: www.explorevr.org

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Job-Driven TA 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
- United States Business Leadership Network (USBLN)
- Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
- Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR)

*In Collaboration with:*
- National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB)
  - Technical Assistance Center Collaborative
Webinar Objectives

Upon completing this webinar, participants will:

• Be familiar with the matrix of competencies involved in business engagement
• Be able to explain how the competencies in each of the categories contribute to engaging business in the VR process
Poll: Which of these activities would you define as business engagement?  
(Select all that apply)

- Researching online about a company
- Going on a tour and/or informational interview
- Emailing a client’s resume to HR
- Walking in the front door and chatting with the receptionist
- Attending a business after hours event
- Hanging a plastic bag full of VR materials on the doorknob of the business
Poll: How much of your time do you currently spend in business engagement?

- None
- Less than half
- More than half
- All (or almost all) of it
Poll: What is most challenging about business engagement?

- Talking to people you don’t know
- Dealing with employer objections
- Describing the services you have to offer
- Figuring out which businesses to contact and pursue
- Finding time to do it on top of everything else you need to do
What’s the difference?

- Business Engagement?
- Job Development?
- Employer Supports?
One model: the Centralized Business Relations Unit
The Regional Model
Local Staff and/or CRPs
## Competency Table in Business Engagement Toolkit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETENCY</th>
<th>STATE- CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL</th>
<th>AREA OFFICE OR DISTRICT LEVEL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Labor Market Needs</td>
<td>Access and utilize information regarding economic trends and opportunities in the labor market</td>
<td>• Knowledge of state labor market **</td>
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<td>• Incorporate regional economic conditions, industries, and cultural diversity dynamics (i.e. businesses with proactive and public presence involving diversity issues) into a strategic plan concerning business engagement.</td>
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**Explore VR**
Competencies outlined at two levels

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<td>Knowledge of Labor Market Needs</td>
<td>(Single Points of Contact, Business Relations Coordinators, etc.)</td>
<td>(Business Cadre, Employment Specialists, Counselors, etc.)</td>
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- Knowledge of local labor market **
- Awareness of key local employers **
Business Engagement: Three Key Components

Knowledge of labor market needs

Communications strategy

Internal management strategy
Knowledge of Labor Market Needs

- Assess/utilize information economic trends & labor market opportunities
- Create opportunities and relationships
Why Labor Market Information (LMI)?

• Keep track of new types of business entering the area, key local employers, and other opportunities
• Stay aware of skills sets necessary to meet business needs in your area
• Know what types of training programs will likely lead to employment outcomes
• Learn what business may be ideal in terms of internships or On-the-Job-Training opportunities
Knowledge of Labor Market Needs

**STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL**

- Know about state labor market
- Develop strategic plan for Business Engagement
- Data base of positions in demand & associated skill sets
- Employer recognition

**AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL**

- Know about local labor market
- Awareness of key employers
- Negotiate customized positions
Communications

- Marketing VR
- Assessing Needs
- Speak the language of business
- Networking & Connections
Why Communications?

- Business may not be aware of VR
- Listen and learn about business needs
- Articulate the benefits of VR
- Use business connections to reach other businesses
Communications: Marketing VR Services

**STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL**

- Understand VR niche
- Produce marketing materials in various media
- Use respectful language/images
- Participate in Chamber and other associations

**AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL**

- Understand VR niche
- Promote VR as hiring resource while accurately explaining services
- Use respectful language/images
- Address employer objections
Communications: 
Marketing VR Services (cont.)

**STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL**
- Social media presence
- Promote VR as hiring resource
- Explain financial incentives
- Address employer objections
- Promote brand identity
- Reach out to HR professionals

**AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL**
- Present to groups of individuals, families, advocacy groups, etc.
- Participate in Chamber and other associations
- Understand and explain financial incentives
Communications: Assessing Business Needs

STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL

- Communicate effectively through active listening
- Accurately identify business needs
- Provide resources on accommodation strategies and disability issues

AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL

- Communicate effectively through active listening
- Accurately identify business needs
- Consult on accommodation strategies and disability issues
- Understand work flow and work processes
Communications: Speaking Business Language

**STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL**

- Create standardized approach using business language and explaining features and benefits
- Develop/articulate an “elevator pitch” that can be used across the agency

**AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL**

- Use business language and articulate VR features and benefits
- Develop/articulate an “elevator pitch”
- Understand:
  - Professional and responsive contact with businesses
  - Typical personnel procedures
  - How to “close the sale”
Communications: Connections and Networking

STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL

• Use business connections to reach others at HR or management level
• Communicate disability related workforce development trends to businesses

AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL

• Use personal/professional networks to link with other businesses
• Work effectively with CRPs or other contracted agencies
• Present to groups of individuals, families, advocacy groups, etc.
• Reach out/present to HR professionals
Internal Management

• Tracking marketing outcomes and connections
• Internal communication to share potential opportunities
Why Internal Management?

• Track contacts to avoid redundancy and promote professionalism
• Evaluate which marketing/outreach efforts lead to outcomes
• Develop and maintain an internal system to effectively communicate key information
Internal Management

STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL

- Develop/use system for tracking business data
- Evaluate marketing plan via business awareness & satisfaction
- Develop/maintain internal infrastructure for sharing information and opportunities
- Communicate LMI and business info/issues to staff

AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL

- Track/report impact of marketing activities on job placement & retention
- Access, utilize, and contribute to internal infrastructure for sharing information and opportunities
Summary/ Conclusions

• Increase your business perspective by developing your Labor Market intelligence
• Improve your communications and increase opportunities with business by speaking the “language” they are accustomed to
• Tracking your business relations activities will help you focus your efforts productively
• What’s next?
Poll: What would you like to know about engaging businesses and potential job development?

• How to “get in the door”
• Ideas for networking strategies
• How to respond to employer apprehension/objections
• How to maintain long-term relationships
• How to repair and/or reconnect to past employers
• How to use the employer as a resource, even if they are not hiring
Contact Information

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For information on Business Engagement Competencies, visit:
http://www.explorevr.org/toolkits/business-engagement-toolkit/staff-competencies-skill-development