Career Pathways and Guided Group Discovery: Paving the Way to Employment

Supporting the path to employment and careers

The LEAD Center is led by National Disability Institute and is funded by the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor, Grant No. OD-23863-12-75-4-11
TODAY’S SPEAKERS

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AGENDA/OBJECTIVES

- Explore the inclusion of TANF recipients in Inclusive Career Pathways systems
- Discuss the rationale for using Guided Group Discovery as a Universal Design approach
- Engage in a review of the Guided Group Discovery Process, Materials and its role in promoting Customized Employment
- Explore options for cross-system collaboration through discussion with a pilot project partner
OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY

- Created as a sub-cabinet level agency in 2001.
- Develops and promotes policies and coordinates with employers and all levels of government, both Federal and state, to increase workplace success for people with disabilities.
- Specific focus includes Return-to-Work for individuals with barriers to employment.
The National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities (LEAD) is a collaborative of disability, workforce and economic empowerment organizations led by National Disability Institute with funding from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy, Grant No. #OD-23863-12-75-4-11.
LEAD CENTER MISSION

To advance sustainable individual and systems level change that results in improved, competitive integrated employment and economic self-sufficiency outcomes for individuals across the spectrum of disability.

www.leadcenter.org
INCLUSIVE CAREER PATHWAYS
WHAT ARE INCLUSIVE CAREER PATHWAYS?

- Programs and approaches designed to support people whose career options have been limited.
- They are designed for people who may lack the academic and/or technical skills necessary to complete the credentialing requirements of many key high-demand high-growth career opportunities.
WHO BENEFITS FROM INCLUSIVE APPROACHES?

- People with disabilities, returning citizens, people without a high school diploma and/or little-to-no post-secondary education, English language learners, and others who might require additional support.

- Inclusive approaches bring together employers in key industries with community colleges, disability partners, government agencies, community partners, and social service agencies to develop and implement strategies for overcoming the workforce barriers.
DOL’S COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION IN WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

- LEAD Center and Disability Employment Initiative
- Investment in Employment First through the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP)
- Promotion of Customized Employment as a Universal Design
- Promotion of Universal Design Strategies and Practices
INCLUSIVE CAREER PATHWAYS

Using the Six Key Elements of Career Pathways, identify promising practices for including people who face barriers to employment in education, training, retraining, and advancement in systems that:

1. Build cross-agency partnerships
2. Identify industry sectors and engage employers
3. Design education and training programs
4. Identify funding needs and sources
5. Align policies and programs
6. Measure systems change and performance

CAREER PATHWAYS KEY ELEMENTS

1) Build Cross-Agency Partnerships & Clarify Roles
2) Identify Sector or Industry & Engage Employers
3) Design Education & Training Programs
4) Identify Funding Needs & Sources
5) Align Policies & Programs
6) Measure System Change & Performance

Career Pathways: Six Key Elements
TANF-RELATED CAREER PATHWAYS RESOURCES

- Information Memorandum on Supporting Career Pathways for TANF Recipients
- Promising Occupations Achievable Through Short-term Education or Training for Low-Income Families
- Resources for Connecting TANF Recipients and Other Low-Income Families to Good Jobs
- Using Data to Connect TANF Clients to Good Jobs: An Opportunity to Foster WIOA Partnerships
RATIONALE FOR GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY
ODEP CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT GRANTS 2001 TO 2006

- Chronic Homeless
- Customized Employment
- Workforce Action
- Technical Assistance Resources
PROJECT DATA OUTCOMES

Hourly Salary:
96% earning above minimum wage

Average wage
$8.60 (range $2.38 to $37.00/hour)
40% earning > $8.15/hour

Hours worked per week:
33% worked full time (35+ per week)
46% worked less than 21 hours per week
20% worked 21 - 34 hours/week.

Fringe benefits: 27% offered at least one fringe benefit.

Career Advancement: 63% had a position with career advancement potential
FOR INDIVIDUALS

- Customized Employment produces high-quality employment with increased wages, benefits, and level of integration into the community for people with disabilities who were previously considered unemployable by some systems.

- Customized Employment can reduce reliance on public benefits.

- Use of Customized Employment strategies can result in employment or re-employment for other groups of people considered “hardest to serve” by the workforce system.
FOR SYSTEMS

- The integrated Customized Employment model increases efficiency through new partnerships and funding sources.

- Use of Universal Strategies in employment systems can change the way these systems are organized and operated, both for customers with disabilities as well as others with barriers to employment. This produces more effective services and outcomes.

- Leadership personnel are critical change agents for increasing employment for people with disabilities.
FOR EMPLOYERS

- Use of Customized Employment strategies can assist employers in retaining valuable staff.

- Use of Customized Employment strategies can assist employers to address specific conditions within their business that require attention.
WHAT IS DISCOVERY?

- A first step in Customized Employment
- A universal strategy for job seekers with multiple barriers to employment
- Discovery seeks to find who a person is right now
  - Interests and preferences
  - Skills and contributions
  - Conditions of employment
- Used to match job seekers to employer needs
DEFINITION OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT IN WIOA

- Competitive integrated employment for an individual with a significant disability
  - that is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests of the individual with a significant disability,
  - is designed to meet the specific abilities of the individual with a significant disability and the business needs of the employer, and
  - is carried out through flexible strategies...

Section 7(7) of the Rehab Act, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
CE CIRCUMVENTS A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

Traditional job development strategies:
- Vocational Assessment
- Resume development
- Interview practice
- Responding to posted jobs (the public workforce, want ads, Craig’s List, etc.)
- Applications and Interviews

A Customized Approach:
- Discovery
- Profiles. May include portfolios, picture or video résumés, etc.
- Informational interviews/connections
- Match skills and employer needs
- Employment Proposals
WHO BENEFITS?

Customization is **NOT** specific to disability.

A wide range of employers and job seekers can and are using the approach.
OVERVIEW OF GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY PROCESS & MATERIALS
COMPONENTS OF A CUSTOMIZED APPROACH

- Discovery (Gathering Information)
- Profile or “Employment Blueprint” (Written summary of what was learned in Discovery)
- Customized Employment meeting and plan development
- Informational Interviews & Networking (Discovering employer and community needs)
- Proposing and/or negotiating employment opportunities
FORMATS FOR DISCOVERY

- Facilitated Discovery
- Self-Discovery
- Group Discovery

Callahan, Shumpert, and Condon (2009). *Discovery: Charting the Course to Employment*, pp. 13-14
GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY

- Adapted from the work of Marc Gold & Associates; Griffin Hammis Associates; and TransCen, Inc.
- Involves self-reflection
- Offers the opportunity to learn and receive feedback from others
- Potentially for anyone, but not for everyone.
PARTICIPANT PROFILE FOR GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY PARTICIPANTS

- Enjoys working with others
- Has one or more barriers to employment
- Has specific conditions of employment that need to be addressed
- Has been unsuccessful with traditional approaches
- Can stay focused on a topic for at least 20 minutes (with support as needed)
USES OF DISCOVERY

- Useful for initial assessment of skills, contributions and conditions of employment
- Identifies supports needed and partners to bring in (e.g., TANF, AJC, VR, DD, CILs, etc.)
- Creates a Blueprint for Employment that guides plan and job development
- Promotes braiding and leveraging of resources across systems
- Leads to successful outcomes for all!
PILOT SITE EXPERIENCE IN PHILADELPHIA
GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY MATERIALS ON LEAD CENTER WEBSITE

- Comprehensive Power Point
- Participant Workbook
- Facilitator Manual, including
  - Participant workbook
  - Tools for facilitators
  - Discussion ideas and facilitator tips
- Blueprints for Employment

GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY LESSONS

- Lesson 1 – Introduction to Guided Group Discovery and Identifying Employment Team
- Lesson 2 – Interests & Contributions
- Lesson 3 – Conditions, Accommodations & Disclosure
- Lesson 4 – The Art & Science of Networking
- Lesson 5 – Putting it All Together: Taking Action
EACH GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY
LESSON STRUCTURE

- Materials are arranged for 5 weekly lessons, lasting 1½ - 2 hours

- Lessons:
  - Overview
  - Review of assignments from previous session
  - Content & activities
  - Summary and review of assignment.

- Lessons can be adapted in length and frequency
HIGHLIGHTS FROM LESSON 1 – INTRO TO GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY

- Get to know each other.
- Discuss different ways to approach job search
- Present the concept of Discovery and the Blueprint for Employment
- Identify your personal employment network
- ASSIGNMENT: Interview people in your personal employment network.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM LESSON 2 – INTERESTS & CONTRIBUTIONS

- Identify interests
- Identify skills and tasks
- Focus on Positive Personality Traits
- Identify Vocational Themes™

ASSIGNMENT: Review Contributions Chart with at least one member of your team. Identify a few local businesses that could match your themes & benefit from your contributions.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM LESSON 3 – CONDITIONS, ACCOMMODATIONS & DISCLOSURE

- Conditions of Employment
- Job Accommodations
- Disclosing personal information
  - Personal decision
  - When to disclose
  - How to disclose
- Assignment: Personal decisions about disclosure and framing personal information
HIGHLIGHTS FROM LESSON 4 – THE ART & SCIENCE OF NETWORKING

- The importance of personal contacts in the job search
- Mapping out your own network (friends, family, “helpers,” community members, etc.)
- Developing a networking pitch
- ASSIGNMENT: Fine tune and practice your networking pitch.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM LESSON 5 – TAKING ACTION

- Practice Networking Pitch
- Review of previous lessons
- Update Blueprint
- Design Action Steps
- Optional employer engagement and/or supplemental content
- Congratulations!!!
AFTER GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY…

Need to think through upfront:

➤ Who are possible partners?
➤ How will agencies partner?
➤ Who takes the lead?
➤ How are services coordinated?
➤ How might funding and resources be braided and leveraged?
COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYMENT FIRST RESOURCE SITE

National Snapshot

- 2014 National Population: 318,857,056
- Change from 2013 to 2014: 0.86%

- 2014 Number of people with disabilities (all disabilities, ages 18-64): 20,460,136
- Change from 2013 to 2014: 0.68%

- 2014 Number of people with disabilities who are employed (all disabilities, ages 18-64): 7,030,317
- Change from 2013 to 2014: 1.23%

- 2014 Percentage of working age people who are employed (all disabilities): 34.36%
- Change from 2013 to 2014: 0.55%
Historical DEI Projects

There have been seven (7) rounds of projects funded to date.

**Key to population focus:** Adults with disabilities = A; Youth with disabilities = Y; Individuals with significant disabilities = S.

- Alabama (Round 4-Y)
- Alaska (Rounds 1-A, 4-A and 6-Y)
- Arkansas (Round 1-Y)
- California (Rounds 2-A, 5-A and 7-A)
- Connecticut (Rounds 4-A and 7-Y)
- Delaware (Round 1-Y)
- Florida (Round 3-A)
- Georgia (Round 6-S)
- Hawaii (Rounds 2-A and 6-S)
- Idaho (Rounds 4-Y and 7-Y)
- Illinois (Rounds 1-A, 4-A and 5-Y)
- Indiana (Round 3-A)
- Iowa (Rounds 3-A and 6-A)
- Kansas (Rounds 1-A and 5-A)
- Louisiana (Round 3-A)
- Maine (Rounds 1-A and 4-A)
- Maryland (Round 7-S)
- Massachusetts (Rounds 3-A, 5-A, 7-Y)
- Minnesota (Rounds 3-Y, 5-A and 7-Y)
- New Jersey (Round 1-Y)
- New York (Rounds 1-A, 4-A and 6-A)
- Ohio (Round 2-A)
- Rhode Island (Round 3-A)
- South Dakota (Rounds 2-Y and 5-A)
- Tennessee (Round 2-A)
- Virginia (Rounds 1-A and 4-A)
- Washington (Rounds 2-A and 6-A)
- Wisconsin (Round 2-A)
RESOURCES

- DEI Career Pathways Readiness Assessment Tool
- Integrated Resource Team (IRT) Model
- DEI Business Engagement Community of Practice
WHAT CAN YOU DO?
PARTNER, PARTNER, PARTNER

- Identify partners who can support employment and career pathways outcomes (e.g., American Job Centers, vocational rehabilitation, Centers for Independent Living, behavioral health organizations, developmental disabilities organization, etc.)

- Familiarize yourselves with your state’s WIOA State Plan and Career Pathways State Plan

- If your state has a Unified State Plan or if TANF is not part of your state’s Combined State Plan, reach out to your state Workforce Development Board for inclusion in the next update

- Ensure that TANF staff know about requirements for physical and programmatic accessibility for career pathways partners so that TANF recipients can receive accommodations, if needed, to complete credentialing programs
WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO?

- Identify initiatives that are happening in your state to promote employment and career pathways outcomes
- Join with partners to develop strategies for the inclusion of TANF recipients in career pathways program
- Track disability data, directly and/or through partnerships
- Participate in Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs)
- Provide training for staff on disability-specific topics, support available from partners, assistive technology, materials in accessible formats, materials that address different learning styles and reading levels, Universal Design, captioning and interpretation services, etc.
CONNECT WITH THE LEAD CENTER

- Website: [www.leadcenter.org](http://www.leadcenter.org)
- Workforce GPS AJC Customer Flow Scenarios: [https://ion.workforcegps.org/resources/2017/07/19/10/02/AJC_Customer_Flow_Scenarios](https://ion.workforcegps.org/resources/2017/07/19/10/02/AJC_Customer_Flow_Scenarios)

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