



**Rural Communities Initiative
Career Coaching and Team Building Training
Newport and St. Johnsbury Districts
March 25th and 26th, 2009**

Prepared for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance





This Rural Communities Initiative Summary Report was prepared under ICF International Contract No. 233-02-0094, Task Order HHSP233200700009T "Individualized Training and Technical Assistance for the TANF Program and Tribal TANF/Child Welfare Demonstration Projects".



Table of Contents

I. Overview	4
II. Day One: March 25th	4
II. Day Two: March 26th	5
II. Conclusion	6
Appendix A: Agenda	7
Appendix B: Participant List	9
Appendix C: Evaluation Summary	13



I. Overview

In recognition of the needs of rural communities and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) agencies, the Office of Family Assistance (OFA), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is sponsoring the Rural Communities Initiative. The Rural Communities Initiative provides States, Tribes, and local TANF agencies in 16 nominated rural sites from across the United States the opportunity to share information and promising practices on critical rural issues and barriers to employment such as education, job skills, transportation, and child care. The Initiative is providing a variety of technical assistance to rural sites beginning with the Rural Communities Academy which occurred in Kansas City, Missouri on September 3rd through September 5th, 2008.

As part of their Technical Assistance Action Plan, developed at the Academy, the Newport and St. Johnsbury Economic Service Districts decided to alter the way their staff performs case management functions with TANF participants. Through a series of meetings, the team sketched out a new case management structure which included a team approach in place of one-on-one case management. In addition, the team decided that their current staff has many strengths but could benefit from additional training in career coaching. To this end, the team requested to hold a training for all staff around career coaching and team-based case management.

As a result, Mr. Charles Modiano was contacted to work with the team to present a training to the two districts. Mr. Modiano is a youth development and employment initiative trainer who has previously worked with the U.S. Department of Labor, National Partnership for Community Leadership and many other national organizations.

The training was attended by three of Vermont's Economic Services Districts as well as the Vermont Economic Services central office. The third district that attended (Morrisville) was not part of the Rural Communities Initiative. However, the district is in the process of implementing the same types of changes that Newport and St. Johnsbury are working on and decided that they could also benefit from the training. Present at the training from each district were representatives from: the Economic Services (TANF) office, the Department of Labor, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Parent Child Center, which is a key community partner in each district.

II. Day One: March 25th

The training was attended by total of 35 Vermont representatives (for a list of participants see Appendix B). After introducing himself, Mr. Modiano explained the objectives of the training were to explore:



1. Creating a culture of employment and academic achievement that emphasizes soft skills;
2. Incorporating Experiential Learning into the program;
3. Moving toward a case management approach that emphasizes efficient and effective “group work”; and
4. Fostering optimal teamwork through team building both within and across teams.

After describing the objectives, Mr. Modiano had participants write three to five things that they would like to improve in their district. These suggestions were displayed anonymously around the room and after the training, transcribed for each district.

CREATING A CULTURE OF WORK

Mr. Modiano then spoke about creating a culture of work for TANF participants as soon as they walk in the door the office. He gave suggestions about how agencies can do this by changing their language and restructuring their case management and work readiness programs to more closely resemble actual employment. Mr. Modiano stressed soft skills as being key to employment, especially as many manufacturing jobs are no longer in existence and available work is increasingly service oriented.

INTAKE INTERVIEW

Next, Mr. Modiano spoke about the intake interview that is completed with TANF participants when they first come into the TANF office or partner program. A suggestion was made that the terminology be changed to reflect a more person-friendly approach. The term “welcome interview” was decided by the group to be more appropriate. Mr. Modiano then took a volunteer and role played a welcome interview in which the TANF participant was made to feel warm and in turn would be more likely to come back and attend the next step towards employment. After the role play, training participants were instructed to role play in groups. Afterwards, a group discussion of how interviews made the “participants” want to return.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

To demonstrate the concept of Experiential Learning, Mr. Modiano used a saying by Confucius: “Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember but, let me and I understand.” He then described how to sign the quote using sign language and a few participants were able to sign. Next, he showed everyone how to do it and then he had all the participants sign along with him. Mr. Modiano used this exercise to enforce the concept that people need to learn by doing things themselves in order to become self-sufficient.

II. Day Two: March 26th

To begin the second day of the training Mr. Modiano had training participants list takeaways from the day before. Some of the takeaways listed included the “Confucius”



experiential learning example, it is important to create a united team for best client service, and that by incorporating more human elements into an initial contact they will help a TANF participant decide to return.

GROUP INTERVIEW

Next, Mr. Modiano discussed the group interview or in Vermont terms: the orientation. A TANF participant attends the group interview after they have had their welcome interview and received all the appropriate screenings and assessments. Mr. Modiano explained that framing the orientation as a group interview where participants need to be “hired” before beginning the job readiness training or work program is another way to create a culture of work. In addition, it gives the impression that TANF participants earn their way into the job readiness training and that there are specific expectations of participants if they decide to attend the training. To demonstrate this, Mr. Modiano used the training participants and performed a mock group interview as the interview facilitator. Afterwards, training participants were able to ask questions and give suggestions about ways to further engage the TANF participants during the group interview.

TEAM BUILDING EXERCISE

Training participants were split into teams, and each team had a representative from each district or office with a total of five or six people on a team. Mr. Modiano gave instructions to all teams to build a plane, and teams were given tools such as paper, markers, and paper clips. There were four roles that each team had to assign to some of its members. The roles were Designer, Observer, Leader, and Presenter. Teams were given half an hour to construct their plane. Twice, one team member was taken out of the group and given different directions by Mr. Modiano. The first change was that there had to be multiple planes and one of the planes had to be able to fly ten feet. The second person that was taken out of the group was given instructions to be antagonistic when they returned to the group.

Once groups were finished creating their planes, each group presented their planes to the larger group. Then each group’s observer was asked to comment on the types of interactions they observed between group participants. This exercise concluded the training.

II. Conclusion

Throughout the training, representatives from all districts as well as the central office were actively engaged and voiced many positive takeaways. Based on the evaluations submitted by participants (see Appendix C), participants had a high level of satisfaction with the training and believe it will have a positive impact on their ability to serve TANF participants.



Appendix A: Agenda

March, 25th 2009

8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.	Welcome / Introductions / Warm-up <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>Vermont EDS Central Office</i>▪ <i>Katie Caldwell, Rural Communities Initiative</i>▪ <i>Charles Modiano</i>
9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	The Intake Interview: Where Employment Training Begins
10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m. – 12:00p.m.	“Everyone is a Career Development Trainer”: Creating a Culture of Work: Theory
12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)
1:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	“Everyone is a Career Development Trainer”: Creating a Culture of Work: Practice
2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Break
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Implementing Soft Skills Training into your Program (Incorporating the 3 Principles of Experiential Learning)
4:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	Closing/Wrap Up



March 26th 2009

8:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Ice Breaker
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Modeling Professionalism in “Real Time”
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	The Employment Training Orientation
10:30 a.m. – 10:45 p.m.	Break
10:45 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Team-Building & Collaboration
12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Closing Activity



Appendix B: Participant List

Trainer

Charles Modiano

President
Skills4Youth Consulting
8830 Piney Branch Road, Suite 204
Silver Spring, Maryland 20903
301- 806 - 2712
cmodiano@skills4youth.org

ICF International Staff

Katie Caldwell

Associate
ICF International
10530 Rosehaven Street, Suite 400
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
703-279-6282
kcaldwell@icfi.com

Vermont Central Office

Diana Carminati

Reach Up Program Administrator
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, Vermont 05676
802-241-2834
Diana.carminati@ahs.state.vt.us

Pam Dalley

Benefit Program Administrator
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, Vermont 05676
802-241-2994
Pam.Dalley@ahs.state.vt.us

Paul Dragon

Reach Up Program Director

Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, Vermont 05676
Paul.dragon@ahs.state.vt.us

Jane Foote

RU Benefit Program Assistant Administrator
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, Vermont 05676
802-479-1041
jane.foote@ahs.state.vt.us

Patty Strader

RU Benefit Program Assistant Administrator
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, Vermont 05676
802-241-2997
Patricia.Strader@ahs.state.vt.us

Vermont- Morrisville District

Becky Baker

Reach Up Case Manager
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
63 Professional Drive, Suite 4
Morrisville, Vermont 05661
Rebecca.baker@ahs.state.vt.us

Betsy Choquette

Reach Up Case Manager
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



63 Professional Dr
Morrisville, Vermont 05661

802-888-5976

Besty.choquette@ahs.state.vt.us

Jen Olson

Job Developer
Vermont Department of Labor
63 Professional Dr
Morrisville, Vermont 05661

Anita Suker

Reach Up Case Manager
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
63 Professional Drive, Suite 4
Morrisville, Vermont 05661

Lori Tabor

Reach Up Case Manager
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
63 Professional Drive, Suite 4
Morrisville, Vermont 05661

Karen Whitcomb

Reach Up Team Leader
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
63 Professional Drive, Suite 4
Morrisville, Vermont 05661
802-888-2558
Karen.whitcomb@ahs.state.vt.us

Morrisville Parent Child Center

Joe Collier

Making It Work
Lamoille Family Center
480 Cady's Falls Rd



Morrisville, Vermont 05661
802-888-5229

Angela Mendieta

Reach Up Case Manager
Lamoille Family Center
480 Cady's Falls Rd
Morrisville, Vermont 05661
802-888-5229

Carolyn Smiles

Making It Work
Lamoille Family Center
480 Cady's Falls Rd
Morrisville, Vermont 05661
802-888-5229

Vermont- Newport District

Renee Fortin

Reach Up Case Manager
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
100 Main St Suite 240
Newport, Vermont 05855
802-334-6504
Renee.fortin@ahs.state.vt.us

Howard Gentler

Reach Up Case Manager
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
100 Main St Suite 240
Newport, Vermont 05855
802-334-6504
Howard.gentler@ahs.state.vt.us

Ghislaine Girouard

District Director
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
100 Main St Suite 240
Newport, Vermont 05855
802-334-3914



Ghislaine.girouard@ahs.state.vt.us

Norma Gregory

Reach Up Case Manager/Job Developer
Vermont Department of labor
100 Main St, Ste. 120
Newport, Vermont 05855
802-334-4417

Norma.gregory@state.vt.us

Kathy Lantagne

Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
100 Main St Suite 240
Newport, Vermont 05855
802-334-6504

Kathy.lantagne@ahs.state.vt.us

Manon Perrault

Vermont Department of labor
Reach Up Case Manager/Job Developer
100 Main St, Ste. 120
Newport, Vermont 05855
802-334-3963

Manon.perrault@state.vt.us

Alicia Wein

Reach Up Case Manager
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
100 Main Street, Suite 210
Newport, Vermont 05855
802-888-4291

Alicia.wein@ahs.state.vt.us

Newport Parent Child Center

Kristy Bean

Making It Work

Lena Hemenway

District Director
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
67 Eastern Ave, Suite 7



Parent Child Center
32 Central Street
Newport, Vermont 05855

Merry Hamel

Worksite Supervisor
Parent Child Center North
32 Central Street
Newport, VT 05855

Laura Jacoby

Parent Child Center North
32 Central Street
Newport, Vermont 05855
802-334-4072

Vermont- St. Johnsbury District

Eric Bach

Reach Up Case Manager
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
67 Eastern Ave, Suite 7
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05843

Jane Fortin

Regional Manager
Department of Labor
St. Johnsbury, Vermont
802-748-3036
jane.fortin@state.vt.us

Kelly Greaves

Reach Up Team Leader
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
67 Eastern Ave, Suite 7
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05843
802-748-7149
Kelly.greaves@ahs.state.vt.us

St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05843
802-748-5896

lana.hemenway@ahs.state.vt.us

Michele Kudron



Reach Up Case Manager
Department for Children and

Families
Economic Services Division
67 Eastern Ave, Suite 7
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05843
802-748-5193
Michele.Kudron@ahs.state.vt.us

Nancy Simons
Reach Up Case Manager
Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
67 Eastern Ave, Suite 7
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05843
Nancy.simons@ahs.state.vt.us

Steve Smith
Reach Up Case Manager
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
67 Eastern Ave, Suite 3
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819
802-748-8716
Steven.smith@ahs.stat.e.vt.us

Marie Waring
Job Developer
Department of Labor
St. Johnsbury, Vermont
[St. Johnsbury Parent Child Center](#)

Shelley Hale
Reach Up Case Manager
802-748-3177
marie.waring@state.vt.us



Parent Child Center
115 Lincoln Street
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819

Deanna Lyford
Associate Director of Work and Training
Programs
Parent Child Center
115 Lincoln Street
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819
802-748-6040
dlyford@nekavt.org

Katie Resnick
Family Support Worker
Parent Child Center
115 Lincoln Street
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819

Jan Rossier
Parent Child Center South Director
115 Lincoln Street
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819
802-748-6040
janleerossier@hotmail.com

Faith Therein
Work Site Coordinator
Parent Child Center
115 Lincoln Street
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819



Appendix C: Evaluation Summary

Participants reported an overwhelmingly high level of satisfaction with the content of the training as well as the presenter’s skills. Responses indicate that the participants were most satisfied with the effectiveness of the presenter and relevance, value and applicability of the material presented.

TRAINING CONTENT

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
	5	4	3	2	0	
Information presented was relevant and valuable within the subject area of career coaching with TANF participants. N= 27	93% N=25	7% N=2	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0
Strategies and programs presented will be useful and relevant to our work with TANF participants. N=27	93% N=25	7% N=2	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0
Material was presented in a logical and understandable manner. N=27	89% N=24	11% N=3	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0
I was satisfied with the information presented during the training. N=27	93% N=25	7% N=2	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0
I was satisfied with the overall effectiveness of the training presenter. N=27	100% N=27	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0
I was satisfied with the overall design of the training. N=27	93% N=25	7% N=2	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0



PRESENTER



<i>The Presenter...</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
was an authority in his field N=27	93% N=25	7% N=2	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0
understood the challenges of working in rural communities and tailored their input accordingly N=27	74% N=20	26% N=7	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0
offered unique ideas for improving the service delivery for our areas N=27	85% N=23	15% N=4	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0	0% N=0

COMMENTS:

- Great training. Thank you!
- Charles had a lot of energy and was every effective in delivering his presentation. Great ideas!
- Excellent job, very creative.
- Great job- thanks!
- Presenter has huge amounts of enthusiasm. Great presenter!
- Friendly great presenter!
- Great reinforcement of knowledge obtained in other trainings/discussions.
- Excellent presenter.
- Very “right on” for us. Great fun and energy.
- Great energy, nice foundation to build on. Thanks!
- Outstanding.
- Not sure Charles understood the challenges faced in working with this population. We were easy on him. We see people who can demonstrate aggression, anger, come to groups when they are high, etc.
- Wonderful training!
- Great upbeat presenter!
- Great!!
- Great! Great energy and inspired me to motivate participants.
- Fantastic job! Great presenter- knows topic matter extremely well. Should definitely attend another one of his trainings.
- The presenter was awesome. He is very motivating as a speaker, funny and serious at the same time.
- Charles was a dynamic presenter with very relevant information.
- Excellent facilitating and modeling. Very useful- Bravo!
- Would like materials to use.
- Probably the most valuable training I have been part of in the past 6 years working with TANF.
- Excellent job of presenting relevant info- the Confucius example will stick!
- Wonderful! Will use much of this training and transfer. Very enthusiastic and informative.
- Very happy with the information presented here! Can’t wait to put it into practice!
- Excellent motivator, highly skilled.