The Employment First Collaborative Training Toolkit

**Domain 1**

**YouTube Transcript**

**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcM5fg3Uu1Y&feature=youtu.be**

Slide 1: Intro:

Welcome to the first of four Employment First Collaborative Team Training Toolkit prerecorded webinars. In this recording, we will briefly review the project and purpose, the project’s processes, and then we’ll learn about the First Domain of the Training Toolkit, which covers the Application of Core Values and Principles to Practice. I’m Russell Sickles, senior consultant with the center for social capital and Griffin-Hammis Associates, and I’ll be with you for this webinar.

The toolkit provides a framework and guide for all employment service professionals, from executive directors and managers, to frontline direct support staff, to assess their current service capacity and training needs, and then identify options for addressing those needs.

The Toolkit is a resource for planning overall agency training for an entire staff and can also be used to identify specific training needs for individual staff.

Because this is the first session, I’d like to spend a few moments briefly summarizing the project and also talk about what to expect going forward.

(Click to Slide 2)

The toolkit has been created to assist organizations as they transition to a service system that supports Florida’s Employment First Philosophy.

(Click 1st bullet)

These 4 webinars detail the Toolkit’s Training Needs Assessment and explain the Domain Rating Scales. The training needs assessment is built around the specific core competency standards identified by the Association of People Supporting Employment First, or APSE. These core competencies represent an evidence-based national standard for employment services. In other words, these competencies have been determined by APSE to be critical to the accomplishment of sustained, high-quality employment outcomes.

**The 4 Training Toolkit webinars cover:**

Domain 1 (Today’s Webinar): Application of Core Values and Principles to Practice

Domain 2: Individualized Assessment and Employment/Career Planning

Domain 3: Community Research and Job Development

And…

Domains 4 and 5, covering Workplace and Related Supports and Ongoing Support

(Click #2)

The 2nd Step of the project is for organizations to complete the rating scales, with Technical Assistance and Guidance from Griffin-Hammis Associates.

The tool is used to review a vocational services program’s *demonstration* of the Core Competencies. It is not simply a review of whether the program or program staff have received content training in a specific competency, nor is it based on a program manager’s sole perception or subjective rating of the vocational program’s implementation of the Core Competencies. The reviews require an inquiry of demonstrated competencies through program strategies, staff performance, program staff interviews, and stakeholder interviews.

The review is not a program performance evaluation and should not be used as such. It is simply a tool that assists agencies to self-assess gaps in training needs based upon the review and assessment of the Core Competencies. As mentioned, the review is completed with the assistance of GHA facilitators who can guide the review process, and who are knowledgeable about the core competencies.

Along with the support and guidance of the facilitator, the review is typically completed by a minimum of one administrator of the vocational services program responsible for program implementation, quality, oversight, and staff supervision. They review each of the Domains and the specific core competencies for the agency’s vocational services, using the EFCT Training Needs Assessment. Processes may include observations, direct interviews with program and management staff, program document reviews, reviews of program policies and procedures, and stakeholder interviews.

(Click #3)

The 3rd step involves each partner agency evaluating their review data and identifying their own highest-priority training gaps and needs.

(Click #4)

After identifying training gaps and needs, organizations will use the Toolkit’s recommended trainings and resources to create targeted training plans. Partner Agencies will identify training need commonalities, and also create opportunities for training collaboration.

Many of the recommended trainings and resources are found online. Options for trainings and resources offered come from the College of Direct Supports, the Dartmouth IPS Supported Employment Center, Marc Gold and Associates, Project 10, of course, Griffin-Hammis Associates and the Center for Social Capital, and many other great organizations.

(Click to Slide 3)

Domain 1 represents the foundational knowledge needed when working to build effective employment services. Organizations that do not have strong core values and principles will find the content, skills, and knowledge in the other domains very difficult to implement, especially if organizations want to serve those employment seekers with the most complex and significant impact of disability, which is a goal of all Employment First efforts, namely, to serve those who have previously been excluded from employment.

The core competencies and principles range from understanding and demonstrating that “All really means All” when referring to employability, to accessing all available funding sources for those served in community employment.

In the Toolkit, for Domain 1, the 12 competencies are grouped into 6 similar topic areas.

The first grouping focuses on employment being the first service offered to all individuals and whether or not there is zero exclusion from access to community employment services. Both are the basis of Employment First Policies.

The second is disability etiquette and People First Language;

The 3rd is job seeker involvement, job seeker strengths and talents, self-determination and empowerment;

The 4th: providing services outside institutional and workshop settings and in fully inclusive settings in the general workforce.

The 5th: the impact of employment services history on current practice and Employment Legislation and regulations

And the last: Employment funding

These competencies represent the core values and principles that best practices are built upon.

Slide 4:

(Click First Bullet)

The ratings are statements that describe the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (or K,S,A’s) of a **Community Employment Service Provider or Program** and that may indicate a need for additional training in the reviewed Domain. As mentioned earlier, ratings are not to be used as a program evaluation tool, but as an informal assessment to determine if training should be considered as a solution to the gaps that may be seen in the Domain. The toolkit is a developmental and forward-looking capacity-building tool; and is not to be used punitively.

(Click Second Bullet)

When gathering data, The Toolkit Facilitator guides the Assessors to review at least two sources of data for each competency; some sources may be used for multiple competency reviews. Sources of data may include:

• Interviews or reviews with the Vocational Program Manager, Transition Coordinator, or

Administrator.

• Interviews with other Vocational Program Staff: Employment Specialists, Job Coach,

Job Developer, etc.

• Vocational Services Documentation or Reports, like the Discovery Staging Record, Vocational Profile, Assessment reports, job development records, log notes, etc..

• Program Documents and Agency/Program publications, such as Program description materials designed for job seekers and families, program participant manuals, marketing materials used with businesses, program policies and procedures. Etc.

(Click 3rd Bullet)

The toolkit is designed to assist with determining whether the **Community Employment Service Provider or Program** best matches the descriptions provided under numbers 1 through 3 for each competency. The descriptions may provide a general idea, but not an exact description of the program’s competencies. We choose which best fits. Again, we want to emphasize that finding a rating is not the end purpose of the Toolkit. I think most of us have a well-founded aversion to ratings, scorings, and gradings because they often seem arbitrary, mean-spirited, and not very helpful. They can be unclear, self-fulfilling, and a bit misleading.

In contrast, toolkit ratings are used as the first step toward taking action, by developing a training plan and then implementing needed training.

The competencies in Domain 1 are interrelated and foundational. Trainings should be targeted to leadership, managers, mid-level managers, as well as to employment support staff.

(Click to Slide 5)

For all Domain competencies, the 1-3 scale has the following general meaning:

1. Does not demonstrate this competency. Needs intensive training focused on this competency, including how this competency is interrelated with other Core Competencies. Training Suggestions: intensive training may be warranted for vocational staff, including management and mid-level management in Community Employment.
2. Does not demonstrate this competency with effectiveness. Incomplete/inconsistent application; Training Suggestions: a focused topical training, a webinar, or other short-term training module.
3. Effectively demonstrates this competency. No training is needed at this time.

When thinking about the rating scales, it’s good to remember that everyone started somewhere. Regardless of where organizations and individuals stand now, successfully implementing Employment First will require some learning, growing, and improvement. There is no perfect agency or staff. The point is to learn what you might not know or what you need to get better at, and then create a training and implementation plan.

Click to Slide 6:

Ok, enough project review. Let’s look at the first set of competencies within Domain 1: The Right to Work, Zero Exclusion, and Employment First, which correspond to APSE competencies 1 and 2.

(Click 1st and 2nd Bullets, left side)

These competencies are looking at whether or not Employment is the first service offered to **all** individuals entering services.

(Click 3rd Bullet, left side)

Are there are exclusionary eligibility requirements such as

(click) job readiness,

(Click) pre-vocational work skills training,

(Click) intellectual functioning requirements,

(Click) or employability determinations? These requirements have historically excluded large numbers of employment seekers with disabilities.

(Click 4th Bullet, left side)

Standard program eligibility can be applied, based on the individual having a disability that meets a program’s services mandate and funding eligibility for services.

(Click “Ratings”, Right side)

As in each competency grouping, there are 3 possible rating outcomes:

(Click 1st Bullet, right side)

Organizations that receive a Rating of 1, have the following characteristics:

Eligibility criteria that includes requirements that individuals are screened for “Work readiness” eligibility, complete or pass readiness activities or checklists, meet behavioral expectations, or that they enter through a sheltered workshop or day program to receive community employment services. Some individuals are excluded from the community employment services as deemed too severe to benefit from services, or unemployable.

Programs that receive a rating of 1, may inform applicants or the referral source that an individual’s needs are too significant and therefore should seek services through another organization.

(Click 2nd Bullet, left side)

Organizations that receive a Rating of 2, will screen some referrals for employment readiness or employability.

These organizations will have program descriptive materials (such as marketing brochures, program descriptions, web sites, etc.) providing an explanation of the right to work for all individuals regardless of the significance of disability; stating the organization’s Employment First policy and implementation; and also discuss all individuals’ right to equal access to employment in the general workforce.

But, despite these materials, the program still excludes some individuals based on significance of disability, behavioral expectations, or readiness criteria. Exclusion occurs either by not accepting referrals or through providing alternate services via day programs, workshops, or to prepare for work activities, etc.

(Click 3rd Bullet, right side)

**Rating 3**

In organizations rated 3, all Individuals who are referred for services and meet standard eligibility requirements are offered community-based employment services as the first option. Services are individually tailored to the unique needs of the individual, and consider each person’s skills, abilities, interests and community in the process. Services result in real community employment as the outcome.

These programs serve a broad range of individuals with disabilities, including people with the most significant disabilities, and have data to prove this.

Underneath all eligibility and access to service considerations is a predictive mindset, the notion that a professional opinion or a set of tests or assessments can essentially act as a fortune-teller or oracle and predict what the future of employment holds for a person, sometimes for the rest of their lives. Hopefully, we will have learned by now that the world (and people and contexts within the world) are vast, varied, complex, and because of this, the future will always be too unknowable for us to predict that someone can’t ever, under any possible circumstances, be successful at work in the community, and therefore does not deserve access to community employment services.

(Click to Slide 7)

Let’s look at a hypothetical case study involving the Right to Work, Zero Exclusion, and Employment First Domain.

(Click first para, left side)

You’re working with Work Supports, Inc., a very large service organization. You are facilitating their internal use of the Training toolkit. From interviews and observation, you learn the following:

(Click first bullet, left side)

-They offer what they call a “continuum of services.” They have a day program, a sheltered workshop which has contracts with a medical device company and the state (making survey stakes), on-site “social enterprises” owned and operated by the organization (they have an industrial laundry, a café and catering business). They also have an off-site miniature-golf course, custodial and grounds crews; and offer competitive, community employment services, job developing with typical businesses.

(Click 2nd bullet, left side)

-Although Work Supports , Inc. has a waiting list, they accept all referrals who are connected to Vocational Rehabilitation. They also work with individuals who have Medicaid Waiver funding and some who have Ticket-to-Work funding (though those with Ticket Funds usually also have Waiver or VR funding). They also accept some private pay and work in partnership with the local school districts.

(Click 3rd bullet, left side)

-Staff have recently been through thorough training on the state’s Employment First policy and have added that information, as well as information about the right to pursue work for all, to program descriptions and some program policy. They have begun using Employment First imagery (a logo) and language reflecting that policy within their marketing materials, website, and social media accounts.

(Click 4th bullet, left side)

-Organizational leadership tell you that they believe that Employment First works really well for (Quote/Unquote) “high functioning” individuals. However, those individuals that the organization deems (again Quote/Unquote) “low functioning” are offered a work trial in one of their social enterprises, or a functional life skills assessment first. They say that If competitive employment is indicated following these activities, individuals are referred to the organization’s Supported Employment Services or Placement Services. Staff tell you about 90% of individuals who go through the work trial or life-skills assessment are referred to the sheltered-workshop, or social enterprises for “work-hardening,” or life-skills classes, before they work toward community employment services.

(Click 1st and only paragraph, right side)

Here are the ratings summaries, 1, 2, and 3.

To receive a rating #1, Eligibility requirements would include readiness activities, behavioral expectations, entry through sheltered workshops or day programs. Organizations receiving a rating of 2, would have some eligibility screening beyond the standard, the standard eligibility for a person having a disability and being attached to a funding source. Program materials would provide an explanation of the Right to Work, Zero Exclusion, and Employment First concepts, but some exclusion occurs based on the significance of impact of disability. And rating 3, all individuals are offered employment first. Uniquely delivered services are offered in real community employment and individuals with the most significant disabilities are served.

Pause the recording now to assign a rating to Work Supports, Inc. for the Domain category of Right to Work, Zero Exclusion, and Employment First. Spend 5 minutes to assign the rating and also write down the reasoning behind your rating.

This organization would receive a 2 rating. There is no explicit refusal of individuals from services because of a “too severe to benefit” assignment and, because of their size and service options, Work Supports Inc. holds out the possibility that all referrals may receive community employment services.

Also, program descriptive materials provide some information about Employment First, the Right to Work, and Zero Exclusion, but exclusion from community employment services is occurring based on perceived significance of disability and readiness criteria. Exclusion is happening through the “service continuum,” by providing alternative services, like Day Programs with life skills training, sheltered workshops, enclaves, “work hardening” at social enterprises, etc…

(Click to Slide 8): Disability Etiquette, People First Language

The second set of competencies in Domain 1 include Disability Etiquette and People First Language. We are looking at how organizations and their staff interact with Individuals experiencing disability.

(Click 1st bullet, left side)

Are those served treated with respect and dignity…

(Click 2nd bullet, left side)

and as full partners in the employment process?

(Click 3rd bullet, left side)

Does the language used by the Organization and Staff reflect seeing people as unique individuals? Are Individuals referred to by name or as an “individual with a disability”; and not for example, using outdated or generalized terms such as “our people”, “autistics”, “the mentally ill”, “mildly handicapped”, etc?

(Click 4th bullet, left side)

While reviewing these competencies we are also looking at descriptive materials and all other written, visual, and social media communications for the use of dignified and respectful language.

(Click Middle Text Box)

You can see the ratings for these competencies, 1-3 in the middle of the slide.

Staff of organizations receiving a rating of 1, will not use people first language or treat individuals receiving community employment services as individuals. Staff will no use or model respectful interactions in the community, and staff often will appear to be “in control.” Staff will not practice disability etiquette. Also, program descriptive materials (marketing brochures, program descriptions, web site, etc. will not reflect People First Language.

Organizations receiving a rating of 2, will have staff that are inconsistent in their use of People First Language, and in treating individuals receiving community employment as individuals. They’ll inconsistently use or model respectful interactions in the community, and staff will often also appear to be “in control.” Program descriptive materials will not consistently reflect People First Language.

Organizations that receive a rating of 3, will use people first language when speaking about individuals receiving services and treat individuals receiving community employment services as individuals, not as service recipients. Staff will use and model respectful interactions in the community and staff will appear to be partners in the community services provided to employment seekers.

(Click Bottom Text Box)

At the bottom of this slide you’ll see links to 2 videos. The first looks at Disability Etiquette. The second is a video from “Think Beyond the Label.” You may have seen them before. Both are pretty fun and do a good job of talking about treating people with respect and dignity (as human-beings) and also seeing people as unique individuals.

Please pause the webinar now and watch the 2 videos. Watching them will take you a few minutes.

(Click to Slide 9)

Next, we’ll look at the competencies that focus on Job Seeker Involvement, Job Seeker Strengths and Talents, Self-Determination, and Empowerment, corresponding to APSE competencies 5,7, and 9.

(Click 1st, bullet, left side)

We want to know, are Individuals served in the program active participants in all program services:

(Click 2nd bullet, left side)

Are they in control, making choices and decisions throughout the process with supports as needed?

(Click 3rd, bullet, left side)

And also whether those services are guided primarily by the individual’s strengths and talents (what they can do and what works for them), as opposed to what they struggle with and doesn’t work for them.

(Click 4th, bullet, left side)

Lastly, we want to know if services are guided by pre-established program content and structures. Are assessments completed at pre-arranged sites, or at individually developed, unique locations in the typical community, following the employment seekers strengths and talents. The same concern holds for job development: Are jobs created at pre-determined businesses? Or does job development follow what is learned about the job-seeker to businesses that make sense, which should require constant interactions with new businesses.

(Click 1st bullet, right side: “ratings”):

Let’s look at the ratings for this domain

(Click on 2nd bullet, right side)

In rating 1, we find that Job seekers are not included in the employment process, assessments are completed at pre-arranged assessment sites and not individually developed based upon each person’s interests and skills. Choice is not understood and/or is not considered as a preference among options offered.

The Program develops employment sites for all job seekers based on available opportunity for the program but employment is offered only to those employment seekers who are viewed as the most qualified candidates.

(Click on 3rd Bullet; Rating 2)

Organizations receiving a rating of 2 will include Job seekers in some of the employment process. Individuals may participate in informational interviews but not job development, or individuals may participate in the development of a resume but not participate in developing a vocational assessment process to include tasks of interests or activities that are meaningful to them. Choice is not understood or considered as a preference among options offered.

Also, final decisions and documentation of services remains the purview of the program.

(Click on 4th Bullet; rating 3)

To receive a 3 rating, organizations will include Job seekers in the employment process, starting with initial community-based assessments, informational interviewing and continuing through job development, job training and on-going support.

Individuals are not passive participants in the process—they make choices and decisions and are actively in control, with support, as needed.

Services are also guided by the individual’s strengths and talents, and not by pre-established program components.

Taking an asset-based approach, providing services that help employment seekers play to their strengths and talents and working to figure out what contributions employment seekers have to offer to businesses, can be transformational for organizational outcomes.

(Click to Slide 10)

(Click 1st line, left side)

Ok, now I want to ask you to think about your organization or a provider organization that provides services for your agency. Spend a few minutes in reflection about your work with Job Seekers. Answer the following questions:

(Click 2nd line, left side)

-Describe how job seekers are involved and give input in the employment process, from the first time you (or the employment specialist) meet them to on-going, follow-along support on the job.

(Pause the webinar and spend 2 minutes doing this)

(Click 3rd line, left side)

-What choices do employment seekers make during the process? How much decision-making power do they have when they are choosing what service they receive and who provides the service?

If receiving an assessment, do they have input about where they complete it and the types of work to pursue? Do they meet a variety of businesses during informational interviews and job development?

(Again, pause the webinar for about 2 minutes to write down your response)

(Click 4th Line, left side)

Now, describe the tools and methods used to get to know job-seekers. Think about the content of these processes and describe how they are guided by the individual’s strengths and talents. Also describe if, when, and how they can be guided by pre-established program components.

(Pause the webinar again to answer)

(Click 5th line, left side)

(Then click 6th line, left side)

Now, pause the webinar again for a minute or two, and assign the organization a rating for this Domain using your notes as justification.

I’d like share a few stories about work that I’ve been a part of in the past, before I learned better. Work that has been part of my learning…

* At one place I worked, we had a “3 strikes and you’re-out” rule. It we worked with someone and helped them get 3 jobs over the course of our service history with them, and those jobs didn’t work out, they were booted from our Employment services. I remember one woman who we helped get 4 jobs in a calendar year, but at the end of the year she held no jobs. We basically focused on janitorial and retail jobs at big boxes, not caring much about the duties, commute, or shift times. The jobs weren’t a good match in tasks (she was sick of doing only or mostly cleaning or stocking…that was all that had been offered in previous jobs). She had to ride a bus an hour each way to a couple of the jobs, and some of the shifts were graveyard, even though she told us that a job with those hours wasn’t sustainable for her. We told her that those where the jobs available, and, to be honest, blamed her (not our lack of creating options) for her job failures (though we were flexible in giving her a 4th strike!). We were thinking only about the Big Box store, the jobs that were obviously available (they were always available for a really good reason) and the multiple placements (the big account), rather than whether or not the job was a good fit for her.
* In another job, I worked with a gentleman named Matthew who’s mom told us that he wasn’t cleaning toilets anymore after losing a few jobs where that task was a responsibility of his…I’m embarrassed to say that it took us a while to come to terms with this choice, thinking, well, all of us have to do job tasks we don’t want to do and, again, that’s where the jobs are…It took a while for us to get past our “Well, what’s he gonna do then?” thinking…
* I also once worked for an organization that had a budding partnership with a local school transition program. The first 10 students we saw told us they wanted the same 4 jobs: working at the animal shelter; lot and lobby at McDonalds’; wiping down tables at the mall; and working at the local assisted living facility. This was a bit later in my career than the first 2 stories, and I was learning that it was an impossibility that 10 human beings would all agree on the same work goals…we did about 2 minutes of research and learned that these were the 4 work learning experience locations (or sites) that the school had set up and rotated all of their students through them. This was the only work that the students knew…
* Also, I’ve worked with organizations that have contracts providing services or products, whether it’s some type of assembly work, or custodial, or landscaping or something else… these aren’t necessarily bad job matches, it’s just that if job seeke’s are offered these jobs and nothing else, really the choice is to work in one of these limited settings (one of the contracts) or choosing not to work at all.

(Click to Slide 11)

Next we will look at competencies related to providing services outside of institutional and workshop settings as well as competencies involving the history of employment services, legislation and regulations related to employment. These areas correspond with APSE competencies 6, 8, 10, and 11,

We are measuring the clear expectations of progress to ensure that best practices in employment services will be maintained based on historical changes and improvement. Do organizational staff have knowledge of regulations, policies, and practices that impact service quality and outcomes. Are they active in legislative and policy movements to effect positive change**?** In effect, we are asking whether the program has evolved and does it continue to evolve and function based on current practices and has/is the program participating to help others (state/fed/families/other providers/etc.) do so too?

These competencies are defined in the following way:

(click on 1st bullet, left side)

Does the program assist individual job seekers with disabilities to obtain competitive integrated employment in community businesses? Competitive, integrated employment means jobs in businesses that employ citizens of that community and are owned and operated by other community citizens. A good test is: who’s writing the paycheck? Is the employee on a payroll of an independent community business? Or are the paychecks signed by a human service agency, or an organization owned or affiliated with one?

(Click on 2nd bullet, left side)

Next, we look at whether the developed jobs in community businesses match the individual? Is there evidence that the job meets the person’s unique choices, interests, skills, contributions, and ideal conditions of employment? Or, was the job taken because there was an opening, without much consideration, prior to the start of the job, of whether-or-not it was a good fit?

(Click on 3rd bullet, left side)

Are program services (whether they are newly developed or having evolved) aligned with current best practices, emerging practices, and evidence-based practices?

(Click on 4th bullet, left side)

Are Program staff knowledgeable about legislation, rules, and regulations that effect their ability to provide best practices, emerging practices, or evidence-based practices and can they speak to the effect of regulations on the services they provide?

(Click on 5th bullet, left side)

And lastly, do program staff participate in reviews, focus groups, or advocate in some way to provide program input to proposed state/federal/and local changes that will impact their program and those they serve?

(Click on only Paragraph, right side)

Programs that receive a Rating of 3 would offer only individualized employment services that use current best practices and also expect to change based on future improvements. These organizations have staff that are aware of and affecting change on legislation, rules, and regulations that impact their program and the people they serve.

(Click to Slide 12)

Let’s look at a hypothetical case study for this domain:

(Click Bullet 1, left side)

While facilitating Job Finders Plus’ internal training needs review using the EFCT Training Toolkit, you learn the following:

(Click Bullet 2, left side)

Job Finders Plus employs job seekers in custodial services and grounds maintenance contracts, has a product assembly and packaging and paper shredding business on site, and also a food service operation that consists of an on-site cafe and a boxed lunch delivery and catering service.

(Click Bullet 3, left side)

Other services offered include: evaluation, aptitude tests to determine what job will work best; the development of a personalized training plan (using on and off-site contract locations) to teach what they believe to be the “skills necessary for work”; and Supported Employment, which they have always offered, but has been somewhat neglected until recently.

(Click Bullet, 4, left side)

Organizational Leadership are very knowledgeable about best practices and are working to “rebalance” their services towards more community employment. They tell you about the states’ Employment First efforts and changing service requirements in Medicaid. Leadership joined the state’s APSE chapter (The association of People Supporting Employment First) and are members of the Employment First work committee. After joining the workgroup, Leadership created an organizational training plan to have all staff receive training on Evidence-Based Supported Employment and Customized Employment.

(Click Bullet 5, left side)

When speaking with direct support staff, some staff tell you that it is a shame that Medicaid “won’t allow people to work in sheltered workshops anymore.” They say that all the organization was trying to do was “give jobs to those that can’t work in the community.”

(Click Bullet 6, left side)

Some direct support staff also tell you that they have heard a lot about the Medicaid waiver changes based on the “secluded locations” rule and also “something about the Justice Department settlements.” They tell you that they’ve been around when similar changes were proposed in the past and “expect this fad to pass too.”

Using this information, think about what rating you would give Job Finder’s Plus.

(Click paragraph right side)

Organizations receiving a rating of #1 would not demonstrate this competency. The Vocational program would have remained unchanged or have changed very little for many years, maintaining outdated services and program components.

Programs receiving a rating of 2, would have changed to include services that meet the definitions of best practices, emerging practices, or evidence-based practices, while maintain some outdated services and program components. Program staff would also be somewhat knowledgeable about legislation, rules, and regulations that affect the services they provide and sometimes participate in reviews, focus groups, or provide program input to state level changes that would impact their program.

And programs receiving a rating of 3, would either be newly developed or evolved based on best-practices, emerging practices, or evidence-based practices. Staff will be knowledgeable about legislation, rules, and regulations that effect the ability to provide best practices, emerging practices, or evidence-based practices and they can speak to the effect of regulations on the services they provide. Program staff would also participate in reviews, focus groups, or provide program input into proposed state level changes that will impact their program.

Pause the webinar for a few minutes. Assign rating and provide a rational for your rating.

Job Finder’s Plus would receive a rating of 2 for service settings, and also a 2 for service history impact on current practices and legislation and regulations related to employment.

The program offers services on-site in a café and in a workshop setting (shredding, assembly, and packaging), in contract businesses that are owned by the program, using enclaves and an on-site café. They also are providing supported employment services, refocusing on these to provide community employment opportunities. and once they receive training and begin the practice of Evidence Based SES (Known as Individual Placement and Support, or IPS Supported Employment) and Customized Employment, they plan to move toward more individually developed jobs.

These changes are part of the program’s efforts to include services that meet best practices standards and “rebalance” their services efforts towards community-based employment. Leadership are aware of, and involved in, the changing landscape of employment, are a part of a workgroup and APSE and have a plan to for getting staff trained, though it seems that Direct staff may lack understanding of best practices and of coming changes that will impact them.

Click to Slide 13

The last competency looks at Organizational Knowledge and use of employment funding. This part of the EFCT domains correspond with apse competency 12.

This competency is defined using the following criteria:

(Click first bullet, left side)

Are programs knowledgeable about all available funding for employment? Is this knowledge implemented?

(Click second bullet, left side)

Do programs use these varied funding sources, or are they relying on a single source of funding (typically VR or Medicaid)? Of course, we’re concerned about program stability, or lack thereof, for a program that utilizes few funding options. But also, accessing fewer funding sources will also mean fewer options and tools for employment seekers to use to circumvent employment barriers as they pursue their work goals.

(Click third bullet, left side)

Lastly, does the program use individualized resource plans to help each job seeker not only get access to all employment services, but also take care of direct costs associated with work (for instance, gas for commuting, driving classes, purchase of a car, or cell-phone, etc.?)

(Click right side)

A program that would receive a 3 rating in this competency would utilize multiple funding sources for its program and also work with employment seekers to access all available resources to create successful outcomes, including those resources that can be used directly by the employment seeker and don’t go towards program costs.

(Click to Slide 14)

Let’s think about employment seeker’s needs when pursuing work and those needs’ associated costs.

Think about the costs that are programmatic in nature; those costs that are typically incurred when an employment seeker with a disability uses a governmental agency or employment service provider …in other words, what is the employment seeker getting in terms of supports, to assist with meeting their needs?

Pause the webinar for a couple of minutes and jot down your ideas about programmatic needs and costs.

(Click first bullet, left side)

Some typical programmatic costs include Counseling/Guidance/Case Management (typically through VR, Medicaid, or WIOA programs).

(Click second bullet, left side)

Assessment or Discovery of some sort…Some method of getting to know the employment seeker and deciding on a direction for work.

(Click 3rd bullet, left side)

Job Development: providing assistance or support to the employment seeker as they learn about businesses, their needs, and create opportunities.

(Click 4th bullet, left side)

Some form of support with getting trained at the new job…the support will look different depending on the individual. In general, the support will facilitate the new employee learning job tasks and responsibilities and becoming a member of the workplace; and may include more time intensive job coaching up front, if needed.

(Click 5th bullet, left side)

Continued support, at an appropriate level, for as long as is needed and useful…there will be a provision of on-going supports for check-in and to anticipate and assist with opportunities and challenges as they arise.

(Click 6th bullet, left side)

The on-going supports will lead to opportunities to assist with Career Development. This job will not be the last job, there will be a need for further career development (either at the current job or with the next one).

Now I’d like you to consider costs that are not programmatic in nature. Those costs that will typically go to something that is a direct expenditure to a 3rd party vendor, outside of the program, often purchasing a needed product/service/or resource. If it helps, think about costs that you have incurred or frequently incur that are work-related.

Pause the webinar for a couple of minutes and jot down your ideas about job seeker costs.

(Click 1st bullet, right side)

Job seeker costs might include some form of skill development, maybe through a trade organization.

(Click 2nd bullet, right side)

Transportation. Perhaps purchasing a car and paying for insurance and gas. If you don’t drive or don’t need to drive for work, commuting costs associated with subways, buses, trains, Lyft, ride-shares, car-pooling, etc.

(Click 3rd bullet, right side)

College Tuition, whether a 2 year or 4 year, Masters or Doctorate program; and costs associated with room and board.

(Click 4th bullet, right side)

If you are responsible for children, childcare. Or maybe meals while commuting to college if you are not living on campus.

(Click 5th bullet, right side)

And what about business start-up costs? Those costs associated with producing the product or service (tools and equipment; stocks and supplies), marketing your business, and doing the finances.

Now that we’ve considered the programmatic and job-seeker costs, I’d like you to think about how these costs are paid for? Next to each of the costs you wrote down, note who or what may be able to provide funding to purchase the needed items.

Pause the webinar now and take about 5 minutes to consider possible funders.

Click to Slide 15

It is helpful to think about individual employment needs and available or potentially available resources early in the employment process. At the beginning, you may not know exactly what skills, supports, or barriers will need to be addressed to obtain employment. But you can think about and identify resources that are potentially available or actually available, and also consider whether those resources are personal, such as savings and family resources; or systems oriented, like Medicaid, VR and WIOA. These are the resources that are most likely to be immediately available. If they are personal resources, then the individual or family can decide how and when to use them. Often the person you’re working with will be attached to either VR, Medicaid, or WOIA services.

There are additional resources that can be developed. These days, most times, Medicaid, VR, workforce, and education are working well together. But that’s not always the case. An employment seeker may be utilizing one agency, but not the others. We can help the person consider whether or not it would be useful to approach other services and organizations. Also, there are social security work incentives, such as PASS, IRWE and ticket to work that are substantially underutilized. Savings Matching Individual Development Accounts, micro-loans, small business loans, and other potential resources.

On this slide, you can see a simple tool, a table, that lists common skills, supports, and needs that must be addressed to get to a successful employment outcome. We say that there are skills, along with supports and needs, because the employment seeker may already possess the ability to meet their own need, for instance if they already have a driver’s license, or possess the skills needed in a particular industry.

It’s common that the employment seeker will have some needs and supports met from the outset. There will be supports and needs and skills that can be addressed with resources that are at hand, and some that will take some thinking, planning, and creative problem solving.

By doing some resource mapping at the beginning of employment planning and continuing to do resource planning throughout the employment process, we become aware of possibilities, opportunities, and solutions that may have been unknown or overlooked. Maybe a small business you’re talking to has an eye on a new piece of equipment that would produce a new product or make production much more efficient. If we know ahead of time that the employment seeker has access to a potential PASS or VR funding that can buy tools and equipment that are used on the job, then we can have a conversation about this with the business, to see if we may be able to help the business meet its needs. There could be a new job there, that was undetectable without the knowledge of multiple funding sources and the ability to make those funding sources work.

One other thing to consider when using multiple funding resources is the flexibly in what each funding source can do. Some funding sources are very inflexible, they can only pay for a specific thing in a specific way. For instance, Medicaid waiver funding pays for services only, and has some restrictions (state by state) as to who can get paid and how they are paid. Some states’ waivers allow a small amount of goods, but Medicaid waiver can’t pay for business startup costs, or insurance for a vehicle, for example. VR funds are more flexible, but they typically buy things for a person from a vendor, they don’t actually give the cash to the employment seeker to spend. Also, for example, in most states, it is very difficult for VR to purchase a vehicle. PASS on the other hand, is extremely flexible. A PASS can purchase a car, pay for child care support, purchase stocks and supplies for a business and more. And with a PASS, the money goes directly to the employment seeker who has more direct decision-making control regarding what to purchase, when to purchase items, and from whom to purchase them. The most flexible money may be Ticket-to-Work dollars, they can be spent pretty much any way the employment network wants to spend them.

When using multiple funding sources, a good rule of thumb is to use the inflexible funding first, and then start assigning costs to the more flexible funding available, saving the most flexible to address the last remaining support or need gaps.

It’s not uncommon, once you’ve done some resource planning, to discover that an employment seeker is sitting $10,000, $20,000 or more they can use towards employment. They’ve likely been sitting on this $ for some time, and no one has told them about it. This is empowering knowledge, obviously for the employment seeker and their supports, but also for employment professionals, as we realize we have many more tools to use than we thought.

Click to Slide 16: Recommended Trainings)

Great! We’ve reviewed all the competencies in Domain1! The Toolkit provides a list of Domain 1 recommended trainings, on the Introduction to Employment Services & Core Values and Self-Determination. There are also additional recommended resources on these topics.

At the end of the Toolkit there is also a discussion of Comprehensive Basic Trainings in Employment Services, including a list of reviewed and recommended comprehensive trainings. Agencies or individuals demonstrating extensive training needs in multiple domains may benefit from enrolling in a comprehensive basic training program.

Slide 17: Wrap Up

We’ve come to the end of our recorded Webinar on domain 1. If you have any questions, please Email me at the Email address shown on this slide. Thank you for your time and attention and good luck to you as you learn more about the Toolkit and begin it’s implementation.