Provider Organizational Transformation and Integrated Employment

A project of ThinkWork!
at the Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston

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Today’s Agenda

• The evolution of our 44 series

• Overview of project and research activities

• Results of Delphi process: Top 10 elements

• What does it really look like in practice?
RRTC on Advancing Employment for Individuals with IDD

- Individual and family knowledge and engagement
- Effective employment supports
- Organizational change for community providers
- State-level policy and strategy

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Supporting providers to evolve how they deliver services

Through:

• a framework for building capacity
• a toolkit to guide organizations
• an efficient scalable strategy (a facilitated, peer-to-peer learning community) for supporting change across networks of providers
Purpose of the Delphi Panel

- Getting a group of experts to agree on a topic
- “What is most important for providers during transformation?”
- 2 rounds (identify, rank)
- What does the feedback tell us?
Who participated in the Delphi?

• 36 experts in organizational transformation
• Represented a range of groups (provider staff and management, self-advocates, families)
• Had knowledge of, or had participated in, a transformation process
Discussion Poll

Top 10 characteristics of transformative providers
Characteristic #1: Clear and consistent goals

Establish an explicit commitment to increase employment.

Goals should be:
- measurable
- flexible
- compelling and easy to grasp
- directly reflective of the core mission
- specific to a established time frame

In 2006, AtWork! had over 200 people served in 3 sheltered workshops and group employment.

With a plan in place, closed last sheltered workshop in 2014.

Closed last group recycling center site in 2015.

END of sub-minimum wages.
Characteristic #2: Agency culture

- Guides agency actions.
- Values positive thinking, learning, creativity, innovation, continuous quality improvement.
- Transmitted through values-based training, ongoing technical assistance, and staff mentoring.
Defining and Growing our Culture

• CREATE AND STATE YOUR DECLARATIONS
• Listening and responding
• Celebrate, celebrate (dance to the new music)
• Incentives and rewards
• Building belief
• Changing expectations
• Creating opportunities for input
• Sharing successes
• You are what you think
• If we don’t talk about it we can’t change it
• Teams within and without
• Off-the-clock gatherings
Characteristic #3: An active, person-centered job placement process is accessible to all, including those with the most significant disabilities.

- Find jobs for 1 person at a time
- Creates momentum and enthusiasm
Change our Attitudes and Beliefs

BUST THOSE MYTHS!!!

“Some people are just not ready for employment ”
“People won’t be accepted in the workplace and will have no friends.”

From:
“What’s wrong & how do I fix it?”

To:
“What’s possible & who is invested?”
Characteristic #4: Communicate expectations often and to all.

Internally:
• Simple, visible practices and daily decisions
• Employment as clear and authentic expectation

Externally:
• How money is spent
• Goals-based data tracking
• Policy initiatives
• Simple outreach (newsletters)
• Family meetings
COMMUNICATE THE TRANSFORMATION

A REALLY BIG IMPORTANT MEETING TO GET:

• Commitment from Board of Directors, Senior Leadership
• Commitment from all team members
• Families’ and stakeholders’ education and buy-in
• Community education & development (ALL partners)

COMMUNICATE THE INTENT

• It is the best way to achieve our mission
• It makes business sense
• It is the right thing to do for people with disabilities
Characteristic #5: Reallocate and restructure all resources.

- Reinvent job positions and expectations
- Continuous staff development
- Remember: Investment reflects priorities, influences outcomes.
Change Management that Builds Capacity

- Decide roles clearly from the beginning
- Who will be the change agent?
- Who will be the mission monitor?
- Who will be the communications liaison?
- Who will be the “Face of Capacity Building?”
Keeping the Engine Primed and Running

- Budgeting for staff development and events
- Financial management and other systems
- Counting and accounting
- Monitoring the margin and the mission
Characteristic #6: Ongoing professional development of staff

• Training, continuing education, conferences, mentorship lead to core competencies and best practices.
• Support employees at all levels to meaningfully contribute their ideas and energy to the mission.
Developing Growth Leaders

- Washington State Certified Employment Specialist through Highline College
- Annual Community Summit
- Local and National APSE events
- Statewide Recruit, Train, Retain series
- Leadership branding, coaching and mentoring
Characteristic #7: Customer focus and engagement

- Partner with self-advocates, families, business community
- Identify and solve workforce issues by matching needs with interests and skills
Annual business appreciation breakfast
Characteristic #8: Employment performance measurement, quality assurance, and program oversight.

• Share accountability across all staff
• Understand baseline data
• Technology-enabled tracking systems

“What gets measured gets done.”
**Key Quality Indicators**

- Good job matches
- Person-centered progress
- Satisfied people we serve
- Serving more people who need us
- Low turn-over
Characteristic #9: Embrace a holistic approach throughout the employment process.

• Consider the whole person.
• Career planning process involves staff, parents, friends.
• Maintain personal relationships, develop new ones.
Consider the whole person
Characteristic #10: Develop multiple and diverse community partnerships.

- Create buy-in to the change process
- Include local businesses, school districts, state agency offices, faith-based organizations
- Effective partnerships:
  - promote actions that improve outcomes
  - foster positive change within systems
  - meet local economic needs
The Importance of Partnerships

- Members of numerous community and business entities – Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, etc.
- Strong presence in WA with CEA and APSE
- Strong and recurring employer appreciation events
- Be engaged in public policy
- School-to-work transition partnerships
- C4 project with partner providers to assist in securing employment for individuals
Share your questions and perspectives!
Keep in touch!

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