

Barn Raising: Building the National VR-Business Network



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The Big Picture

- Perceptions, Reality and Politics
- Reactive vs. Proactive Position
- Shrinking Resources
- A “Consolidation” Environment
- Perceptions Become Reality
- Who Controls VR’s Message?



Creating an Opportunity from the Challenge

- Creating and controlling our own messages
- Defining our customers
- Understanding what customers are asking for from the VR system
- Developing a customer driven system and service delivery strategies
- Defining our own niche through the values and feedback of our customers.



VR Customers and Stakeholders Working in Collaboration

- People with disAbilities
- Employers
- Service Delivery Partners
- Educators
- Referral Sources
- Parents and Advocates
- VR Staff
- Professional and Community Organizations



Who is a Customer? What does it mean to VR?

- People with disabilities – funding
- Employers – outcomes
- It's based on their needs, not ours
- When their needs are met,
our needs are met
- Creating a customer service environment
- It's about relationships – do they like you,
trust you and have confidence in you?




Dual Customer Approach

- People with disAbilities
- Business / Employers
- Careers vs. Jobs
- Placement and Job Development or Employer Relations and Business Development?



What do customers with disabilities value?

- Satisfaction surveys
- State Rehabilitation Councils
- Public Meetings
- Involvement in the legislative process
- State Independent Living Council
- Community based disability organizations



Customers with disabilities tell us they value:

- VR Counselors that they trust as a partner in the assessment and planning process
- Empowerment
- Informed choice
- Self-determination
- Careers
- Independence
- Support systems at the local level




Dual Customer Approach: Benefits to Consumers

- **Career opportunities....not just job placements**
 - part of the upfront planning
 - Informed choice
 - internal “champions”
 - corporate culture
 - benefits & inclusion
- **Upward mobility opportunities**
 - life-long learning
 - mentors on site



What do our business customers value?

- VR has a history of working with business at the state, regional and national level
- VR has conducted surveys with business customers
- Business has participated in the planning and training in regional and national employment conferences
- CSAVR conducted a focus forum with business



Business Customers Value:

- VR relationships built on TRUST
- Long-term relationships with VR
- Point of contact that can link to value added resources at the state, regional and national level
- Learning about best practices
- National system that has successful partnerships across state lines for businesses with multi-state operations
- VR services are cost-effective...services to businesses are already funded and available
- VR can refer or coordinate multiple community-based resources



Business Customers Value:

- VR services are customized to business needs
- The VR system is national and can deliver quality services across state lines
- Opportunity for a seamless process or system of interaction from state to state
- Easy access to a talent pool
- No “layers” of contact - single point of contact !
- VR is responsive to the business customer
- VR understands the concept of company culture
- VR staff are qualified, they are value added resource partners



The VR History with Business

- 1970-80's – individual state agencies, PWIs
- 1988 Multi-State Marketing Conference, Michigan
- 13 VR agencies: Alabama, Colorado, D.C., Georgia, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Texas – General and Blind, Virginia – General and Blind, Washington
- Region IV Model



CSAVR Employer Focus Forum

- WIMCO – Ohio
- Washington Mutual – WA.
- Intel – Oregon
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield – NH
- The Southern Company – AL
- CellularOne – WA.



National Employment Conference 2004

- AirTran Airways
- American Red Cross
- Bridges, Inc.
- Cellular One /
Western Wireless
- CVS/Pharmacy
- GEICO
- General Motors, Inc.
- infoUSA
- Intel
- The Kennedy Center
- Lenske's Clamping
Tools, Inc.
- Manpower, Inc.
- Marriott, Inc.
- Motor World
- Miami University
- Microsoft Corp.



National Employment Conference

- National Bank of Commerce
- Oklahoma One-Call System, Inc.
- On Our Own
- Principal Financial Group
- Raytheon Company
- Safeway, Inc.
- Social Security Administration
- SouthTrust Bank
- Starbucks Coffee Company
- State of Delaware
- SunTrust Bank
- United States Army



National Employment Conference

- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- University of Alabama at Birmingham
- Washington Mutual
- West Corporation



What Business Customers Value

- **Pre-Employment**
 - **Training**
 - **Internships**
- **Human Resources**
 - **Recruitment & Promotion**
 - **Benefits & Compensation**
 - **Accommodation Assistance**
- **Staff Development & Training**
- **Diversity**
- **EEOC/Affirmative Action**
- **Employee Advisory Services**
- **Retention Supports**
- **Labor Relations**
- **Legal & Compliance**
- **Information Technology**
- **Risk Management**
- **Marketing & Outreach**
- **Contracts**
- **Facilities**
- **Customer Service**
- **Product Development**
- **Financial Supports**



Benefits to Business Customers

- Direct access to qualified applicants and recruitment resources with support services
- Single point of contact to navigate multiple government systems
- Connection to a local network of resources
- Support in developing accessible to facilities, services and systems
- Accommodations for applicants, employees or the general public



Benefits to Business Customers

- Training and technical assistance on the Americans with Disability Act, Rehabilitation Act & other related employment laws
- Disability awareness training and staff development
- Assistive technology
- Customer development and outreach
- Economic development



Benefits to Business Customers

- Early connections with transitioning students and their support systems
- Mentoring & internships
- Hiring strategies & staff support
- Training and prescreening of applicants
- Employee Advisory Services
- Product research & development
- Public Relations



Benefits to Business Customers

- Retention strategies
- Small business development
- Special event planning
- Diversity programs
- Tax Credits / Deductions
- Technical Assistance / Conflict Resolution
- Training & Staff Development



Defining VR Success from the Business Perspective

- Return on Investment - ROI
- The Effectiveness of the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program
- Data Sources: CSAVR, RSA, State VR
- Presented at the NRA Legislative Summit in March 2005



Outcomes & Use of Resources

Source: 2004 RSA 2 and 113

- 213,432 people rehabilitated in 2004
- 85.7% of the financial resources of the VR program were spent on consumers for counseling/guidance/employment services and other purchased services
- Approximately 85% of staff are focused on serving the consumers with 15% focused on the administration of the program



What Consumers Value

Source: Longitudinal Study of the VR Program, Nov.2002

- 91% perceived they were in charge of decisions in their rehabilitation program
- 81% believed that had a choice in selection of their vocational goal
- 80% were satisfied with the services provided by Vocational Rehabilitation



Consumer Satisfaction After Hire

Source: Longitudinal Study of the VR Program, Nov. 2002

- 85% of consumers were satisfied with the support they received from their employers at 1 & 2 years after hire
- 90% were satisfied 3 years after hire



Return on Investment (R.O.I.)

Source: CSAVR National Data

- Over 14 million individuals with disabilities have acquired & maintained competitive employment with support from the public VR program
- In 2003, the employed individuals earned approximately \$3.5 billion in wages during their first year of work.



Return on Investment (R.O.I.)

Source: CSAVR National Data

- During that year, these new wage earners paid approximately:
 - \$320 million in Federal taxes
 - \$95 million in State income tax
 - \$520 million in SSA and Medicare
- They will pay back the cost of their rehabilitation in 2 - 4 years.



R.O.I. And Social Security

Source: CSAVR National Data

- For the individuals served by VR who are Social Security recipients, there is a \$6 return for every VR dollar invested.
- This equated to a \$470.3 million savings to the Social Security Trust Fund in FY 2004



R.O.I. Pay Back & Reduced Dependency

Source: Oregon Commission for the Blind

- State funds in VR are paid back in less than 9 months
- Federal funds invested in VR are paid back in less than 22 months
- Average savings in SSI and health care per rehabilitated VR consumer: \$342,518



R.O.I. - Other State Examples

Source - VR Agency Reports

- In fiscal year '04, for every dollar invested in a consumer rehabilitated by VR:
 - Alaska VR reports an \$8 ROI
 - Alabama VR reports a \$21 ROI



Business Meets with Congress to Support VR Partnerships

April 28, 2005 U.S. Capitol Building

- Host: John Stanton, CEO of Western Wireless/CellularOne and T-Mobile International, Chairman of T-Mobile, USA
- Corporate Supporters: Western Wireless/CellularOne, T-Mobile, SouthTrust /Wachovia Bank, Hyatt Hotels, Microsoft, CVS Pharmacy
- Supporting Organizations: CSAVR, NRA, CANAR and NCD
- 12 Congressional Offices




The VR Niche

- VR
 - Vocational Rehabilitation
 - Dual Customer
 - Consumer focus is individualized, holistic and comprehensive
 - Career focused
 - Business relations are long-term and customized to the wide range of needs identified by the employer
- One-Stops
 - Jobs
 - Job seeker supports focus on employment services and are menu driven
 - Focus on high demand jobs
 - Employer connections are related to current job openings and recruitment



VR-Business Partnerships Work

- VR has an existing national network with public rehabilitation programs in every state and territory
- VR has existing long-term partnerships with business customers across the country
- VR is a credible partner with a proven track record in business relations
- VR is a primary source of qualified candidates with disabilities
- VR staff have unique expertise and provide valued resources to business
- VR system acknowledges business as a customer and responds accordingly
- VR has developed customized services for business with input from businesses who access those services




National VR – Business Network: 2006 CSAVR Work Plan

Vision Statement

To create a “one company” approach to serving business customers through a national VR team that specializes in employer development, business consulting and corporate relations.


Customers

- 1) Business (public, private and non-profit employers)
- 2) State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies
- 3) Vocational Rehabilitation consumers



The National Network: Customers and Benefits


- **Business**
 - Business will benefit from having direct access to the qualified candidates and support services provided by State VR agencies and their partners.



The National Network: Customers and Benefits

- VR Consumers

- VR consumers will benefit by having access to national employment opportunities and career development resources.



The National Network: Customers and Benefits

- State Vocational Rehabilitation
 - State VR agencies will benefit by having access to a national system for sharing employment resources, best practices and business connections.



The Strategic Plan

- Develop a customer driven strategic plan that will serve as a roadmap for the VR-Business network in defining the goals, objectives, products, services and the priorities of the network.

Strategic Plan

VR- Business Network

Strategic Plan Based on Customer Needs:
1) Business; 2) VR Agencies; 3) Consumers

Communication Strategy

Marketing and Outreach

Business Development

Training and Technical Assistance

Evaluation and Evidence Based Best Practice



VR as a Customer Driven System: Internal Challenges and Opportunities

- **Dual Customer**
- **People with disabilities and Business**
- **Business vs. Employers**
- **Careers vs. Jobs**
- **Employer Relations and Business Development or Placement and Job Development ?**
- **Qualified vs. Job Ready**
- **Controlling our own Message**
- **Marketing**
- **Return on Investment (ROI)**
- **Proactive vs. Reactive**

Consumer

Employer



Vocational Assessment

- ✓ Medical
- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Social
- ✓ Financial
- ✓ Legal
- ✓ Assistive -
Technology
- ✓ Independent Living
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Vocational
- ✓ Individual Plan for
Employment
- ✓ Career Planning
- ✓ Employment
- ✓ Ongoing Supports

Needs Assessment

- ✓ Staff Education
- ✓ Job Site Analysis
- ✓ Job Match: KSAs
- ✓ Tech. Assistance
- ✓ A.T./Rehab.
Engineering
- ✓ Reasonable
Accommodation
- ✓ Financial
Incentives
- ✓ Retention Support
- ✓ Customer
Outreach
- ✓ Product
Development
- ✓ Ongoing Supports

Employee

Employer

VR's Dual Customer Model



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