



Barn Raising: Part 2 Building the National VR-Business Network

Kathy West-Evans, CSAVR
Director of Business Relations



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

Benefits by customer category:

- **Business** will have direct access to the qualified candidates and support services provided by State VR agencies on a national basis.
- **State VR agencies** will have a national system for sharing employment resources, best practices and business connections.
- **VR consumers** will have access to national employment opportunities and career development resources.

CSAVR 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



Customer Needs Assessment

- CSAVR Focus Forum
- The National Employment Conference
- CSAVR Employment Committee
- State Rehabilitation Councils
- 2005 Point of Contact Meeting
- Interviews with Business
- CSAVR Surveys



Building the Infrastructure for Internal Communication

- Developing the vision across VR
- A presence in every region
- Presentations to VR leadership
- Work with regional employment teams
- Work with the IRI Prime Study Group
- Employment Committee – Protocols
- Communication Network with VR Designated Points of Contact



Communication Plan

- Internal communication network
- Evaluated online system options
- Microsoft – software, licenses, legal and technical assistance
- Develop a current distribution list of VR designated points of contact
- CSAVR Website – Business Relations
- CSAVR News Updates – Business Relations

VR-Business Network Online

VR Business Network - Home - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Refresh Home Search Favorites RSS Mail Print Webcam Copy Paste People

Address <http://portal.rehabnetwork.org/default.aspx> Go Links

CS AVR
COUNCIL OF STATE ADMINISTRATORS OF
REHABILITATION VOCATIONAL

Home Training Resources Best Practices Contacts and Connections News and Events Business Services and Consultation

VR Business Network Home All sources

Home

- Training
- Resources
- Best Practices
- Contacts and Connections
- News and Events
- Business Services and Consultation

Actions

- ▾ Add Listing

News

Microsoft Donates Software
Microsoft donated approximately \$31,000 worth of software in support of the VR Business Network.

Events


5/1/2006 8:00 AM [32nd IRI : VR - Business Partnerships](#) **NEW**
Meet with the authors of the 32nd Institute on Rehabilitation Issues at the National Forum. Register for this event at <http://www.rcep6.org/events>

12/6/2006 8:00 AM [Perspectives on Employment of Persons with Disabilities Conference](#) **NEW**
Training conference that is sponsored by a significant number of Federal Agencies and has a primary focus on hiring individuals with

Links


- Email Kathleen
- CSAVR Website
- ▢ Add new link

Trusted sites




Elements of the Online Network

- **Contacts/ Connections**
 - VR – designated points of contact
 - VR websites
 - PWIs
 - RCEP consortium
- **Marketing Resources**
 - Marketing Plans
 - Marketing Materials
 - Brochures by audience (business, consumers, others)
 - Videotapes by audience
 - CD/DVD by audience
 - Presentations (e.g. Power Points) by audience
 - Annual Reports
- **Other materials**




Elements of the Online Network

- Training Packages
 - Disability Awareness
 - Disability Specific
 - Employment Laws (ADA, FMLA, Workers Comp, etc.)
 - Customer Services
 - Diversity
 - Assistive Technology
 - Universal Design
 - Other




Elements of the Online Network

- **Success Stories**
 - Business
 - Consumers
 - Other
- **Testimonials and Quotes**
 - Business
 - Consumers
 - Other




Elements of the Online Network

- Partnerships (brief overviews and features)
 - Projects with Industry
 - CRPs
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Business Leadership Networks (BLN)
 - Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM)
 - Other
- Events (brief overview, who to contact)
 - Award programs
 - Job Fairs
 - Others



Elements of the Online Network

- Specialized Services or Programs for Business
 - Retention (e.g. Alabama)
 - Business Consultation (e.g. ND)
 - Assistive Technology (e.g. SOS Nebraska)
- Mentoring VR-VR
 - Chat Room
 - Discussion Board
- Staff Training and Development
 - Training Packages used with internal VR staff
 - Written materials
 - Recommended trainers or programs



Elements of the Online Network

- Business Profiles
- Employer Account System (VR internal)
- Job Seeker Profiles




Business Profile

- **Company Overview**
- **Corporate and Business Locations**
- **Job Descriptions**
 - **Skills Sets**
 - **Company Culture**
 - **Salaries, Benefits**
 - **Work Schedules, Hiring Trends**
 - **Training and Career Opportunities**
 - **Links to Job Openings**
- **Hiring and Accommodation Process**
- **VR Connections**



Marketing

- The Branding Team
 - Brand Name
 - Tag Lines
 - Logo
 - Registration
- Website Development
 - Domain name
- Marketing Plan



Elements of the Online Network

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Marketing

- Success Stories and Testimonials
- Return on Investment Data
- *Investing in America*
- Launch and Launch Button Awards
 - Wachovia PR
- Boston Globe – Microsoft Connection



Marketing Via Networks

- Consumers – VR
- VR – VR
- VR – Business
- Business – VR
- Targeted Marketing
- What are we Marketing?
- Developing a National Marketing Strategy



Business Development

- CSAVR Surveys: existing and targeted relationships
- Hyatt Partnership – Florida, D.C., MD, VA
- Mid-Atlantic Business Summit – Bank of America, Delaware
- ACCESS
- Federal Partners – OPM, USPS
- BLN Partnerships



Business Development

- AstraZeneca
- Compass Group
- EchoStar
- H & R Block
- Holiday Inn
- Hyatt
- Microsoft
- Nordstrom
- OPM
- Philips
- Qwest
- REI
- Safeway
- Starbucks
- USPS
- Wachovia
- Walgreens
- Wal-Mart



Business Development

- Self-Employment: Abilities Fund
 - State policies
 - Grant
- Perspectives Conference – Federal Employers
- USBLN Conference



Training and Technical Assistance

- 20 training sessions across the country
- 1:1 technical assistance
- Regional employment teams
- Database of VR Experts
- Annual Point of Contact meetings
- IRI Prime Study Group
- Resource sharing



Evaluation and Evidence Based Best Practices

- University Partners
- NIDRR Grant
- Work in targeted areas
- Evaluating best practices



Other Partners and Collaborators

- AHEAD
- SRC
- BLN
- CANAR
- RCEP Consortium
- NRA
- PWI
- AAAS/Entry Point



Network Protocol and Expectations

- What can business expect from the National VR-Business Network?
- What are VR agencies promising to deliver as members of the network?
- Marketing VR as “one company”
- The credibility of the national network – delivering on our commitments



Network Protocol and Expectations

- Responsiveness – time sensitive
- Understanding the needs of business
- Technical assistance and consultation
- Market the company to consumer
- Provide qualified applicants
- Follow-up and support to business



Network Protocol and Expectations

- Designated point of contact current
- Respond to inquiries from the network
- Work with CSAVR Director of Business Relations to develop:
 - Coordinated approach to working with business
 - Business profiles and accounts
 - Best practices and resources
 - Success stories and testimonials



It's All About Relationships

- “All things being equal, people want to do business with their friends.”
- “All things being not quite so equal, people **STILL** want to do business with their friends.”
 - Jeffrey Gitomer
 - Little Black Book of Connections



Contact Information

Kathy West-Evans

Director of Business Relations

CSAVR

206.999.9455

kwest-evans@rehabnetwork.org

www.rehabnetwork.org