

**Panel on Vocational
Rehabilitation and Business:**

**The National
VR-Business Network
and the IRI on
VR Business Partnerships**

VR – Business Panel

- Steve Wooderson, Moderator, Iowa VR
- Kathy West-Evans, CSAVR
Director of Business Relations
- Peggy Anderson, IRI Chair, Alabama VR
- Business Partners:
 - Beth Butler, Wachovia Corporation
 - Bob Haber, Hyatt Hotels
 - John Ficca, Hands on Education

Business and Vocational Rehabilitation: The National Alliance

Presented by: Kathy West-Evans

2006 EMPLOYMENT & DISABILITY

“Transition into High Demand Industries”

August 2006

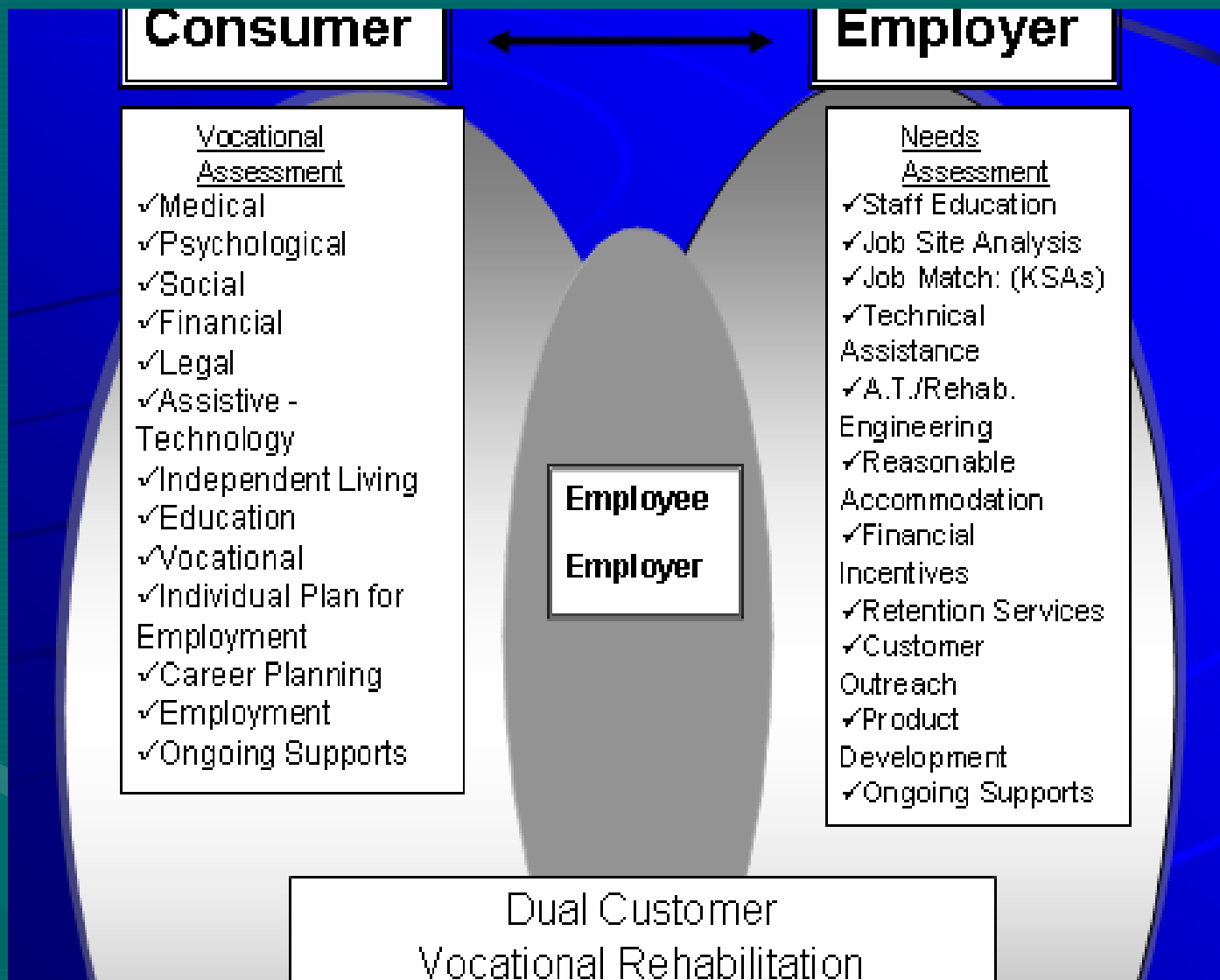
Who is VR's Customer?

What does that 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?

VR's Dual Customer Approach

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



How do we know what VR 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 VR's regional and national employment conferences
- CSAVR conducted a focus forum with business

Feedback from Business : Focus Forum and Surveys

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

- 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 Bank of Commerce

National Employment Conference

- Oklahoma One-Call System
- On Our Own
- Principal Financial Group
- Raytheon Company
- Safeway, Inc.
- Social Security Administration
- SouthTrust (Wachovia)
- Starbucks Coffee Company
- State of Delaware
- SunTrust Bank
- United States Army
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- University of Alabama at Birmingham
- Washington Mutual Bank
- West Corporation

VR – Business Connections and Services

- **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**

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 of the National VR – Business Network

- Business: public, private and non-profit
- Vocational Rehabilitation Consumers
- State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies

Benefits by Customer Category

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

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

VR-Business Network Online

VR Business Network - Home - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Refresh Home Search Favorites

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

CS AVR
COUNCIL OF STATE ADMINISTRATORS OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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

VR Business Network Home All sources

Home

- Training
- Resources
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- Business Services and Consultation

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

Key Components of the National VR – Business Network

- Built on a history of business relationships
- 80 VR programs – a national network delivering at the local level
- Commitment of VR leadership
- One company approach
- Customer Driven
- Dual Customer Focus
- Customized Services

Customer Driven National Network

- People with disAbilities - VR
- VR – VR
- VR – Business
- Business – VR

VR Consumers Benefit from the National Network with Business

- 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

Business Customers Benefit from the National VR Network

- Access to VR as a national system with partnerships across state lines for businesses with multi-state operations
- Access to a coordinated national network of VR state points of contact
- Access to a national VR system that delivers responsive and consistent quality services
- Access to the national VR talent pool
- Access to national VR resources, best practices and technical experts
- VR points of contact that are linked to resources at the local, state, regional and national level

Contact Information

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RSA's IRI and the National VR-Business Network:

~How this forthcoming IRI supports the
formalization of the Network~

Presented by Peggy Anderson, IRI Chair
RSA National Employment Conference
August, 2006

A Call to Action: The Time is NOW



- Our past has helped our VR-business partnerships evolve into a Network
- Our customers have shared their needs & ideas
- VR has formalized the national VR-business network
- This IRI supports this movement and provides key messages and tools
- Let's hear from our customers, leadership & partners first.

VR-business partners contribute to this IRI

- *“This network concept has been discussed for awhile, and it’s good to see it being formalized. We’ve partnered with VR in a number of states already. A nationwide network would be even better.”*
 - Human Resource Representative, Lowe’s Companies Inc.
 - IRI Conference Call, December 2005

Consumers also share....

“State, regional and national networks between VR and business create a critical value-added component for consumers. They broaden the scope for career search opportunities and have certainly helped me approach my career transition, as a person with a disability, much more confidently. Why? Because I know there is an established relationship between VR and my employer and because I now realize that can be multi-state.”

Former VR consumer and now, Litigation Consultant –
Wachovia Bank

IRI Conference Call, December 2005

RSA weighs in....

- *“This revolutionary approach within the classical vocational rehabilitation system accrues benefits for the individual with a disability and the employer. It can create a new working alliance where business is comfortable in coming to VR for employment consultation and recruitment of qualified workers and where VR will not hesitate to approach businesses to identify and meet their needs.”*
 - RSA National Employment Conference, 2004, Emcee

VR leadership as well...

- *“I challenge you to formalize the infrastructure needed to meet the needs of our business partners throughout the country. Together we can do this. The time is now.”*
 - Past president, CSAVR
 - June, 2005 Meeting of VR Points of Contact

And VR business relations reps share...

- *“The beginnings of VR and business multi-state networks began for us at the RSA National Employment Conference. A terrific partnership developed between Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission and a sister VR agency outside our region. They provided technical assistance to Ohio on the expansion and refinement of business and VR customer services over the past several years. Why re-invent the wheel when another VR agency has already done it! The network can benefit other VR agencies the way it has ours.”*
 - Business relations point of contact, Ohio RSC
 - IRI Conference Call, Spring 2006

Our partners contribute....

- *“As Projects with Industry director, I see how critical it is that the customer-driven VR-business network expands to the next level which is multi-state and national. Projects With Industry is a national partner in this initiative, and I look forward to the opportunities it will create for both businesses and consumers.”*
 - PWI Executive Director, VT Association of Business, Industry & Rehabilitation
 - IRI Conference Call, Spring 2006

Customer Input Drives this IRI

- AirTran Airways
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield
- Cellular One
- Intel
- Lowes Home Improvement
- Medtronics
- Microsoft Corp.
- Recreational Equipment, Inc.
- Raytheon
- Safeway
- The Southern Company
- University of Alabama at Birmingham
- Wachovia Bank
- Walgreens
- Washington Mutual
- WIMCO

An incredible mix of expertise

- Long-term VR leaders in the field of VR-business partnerships from:
 - Washington State, Ohio, North Carolina, Minnesota, Michigan, Illinois, Alabama
- Strong VR partners:
 - RCEPS, PWIs, Workforce, BLN, advocacy groups:
 - Vermont, Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, California
- Direct input from dual customers: VR consumers and established VR business partners
- Draws from the foundation built by VR staff on the CSAVR Employment Committee & leadership, VR state directors & each VR agency's "point of contact"

Key Concepts in the Document

- Customer-driven networks
- VR as “One Company” within the Network
- Formalizing the national VR-business network:
 - In-state
 - Regionally/Multi-state
 - Nationally
- VR helping VR grow within the Network

What this IRI is intended to cover:

- Building, formalizing, expanding VR-business networks at the state, regional/multi-state, national level
- Dual customer perspectives on VR-business networks
- Critical network components for VR-business partnerships
- Progression steps for strengthening VR-business networks
- Supports and partnerships that impact VR-business networks

What this IRI does NOT cover:

- Marketing principles with a new business partner
- Variety of services VR agencies could/should offer business partners
- “Placement” services for VR consumers
- How to approach an employer
- Employer “tips” for an initial visit with them
- Systems for developing jobs
- ALL THESE TOPICS ARE COVERED IN PREVIOUS IRI’s (which are excellent tools and referenced by subject matter in this IRI)

The chapters cover it all:

- The Framework for building VR-business networks as “One Company” through:
 - Leadership
 - Strategy Development
 - Marketing
 - Business Services
 - Continuous Quality Improvement
 - Human Resources
 - Processes
 - Infrastructure
 - Protocols
 - Designated points of contact

And also....

- Progression steps for VR as “One Company”
 - Reviews the 6 critical components of a VR-business network
 - Offers maturity scales for each component to assess organizational readiness and direction
 - Foundational principles within the Network
 - Trust
 - Responsiveness
 - Deliverability
 - Consistency
 - Quality
 - Sustainability

What's next?

- Final edits now, with RSA feedback forthcoming
- Distribution anticipated at the Fall CSA VR meeting
- VR-to-VR connections for learning and mentoring each other while using the document

This IRI's Challenge to VR

- The opportunity is here !
- The opportunity is now !
 - Decide !
- Take Action !

Contact Information

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