

The Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center (JD-VRTAC) presents:

Skills for Business Engagement: Part 1

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Presenters:

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Job-Driven VR Technical Assistance Center Goals

Improve skills of state VR agency staff, other rehab professionals & providers of VR services, who are trained to provide “job-driven” VR services & supports to people with disabilities, employers & customized training providers.

Four Topical Areas:

1. Business Engagement
2. Employer Supports
3. Labor Market Information (LMI)
4. Services to Customized Training Providers

[For more information visit: www.explorevr.org](http://www.explorevr.org)

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Job-Driven TA Center Partners

Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at Univ. of Massachusetts,
Boston

In Partnership with:

- Jobs for the Future (JFF)
 - Univ. of Arkansas
 - Univ. of Washington
- United States Business Leadership Network (USBLN)
- Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
- Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR)

In Collaboration with:

- National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB)
 - Technical Assistance Center Collaborative



Webinar Objectives

Upon completing this webinar, participants will:

- Be familiar with the matrix of competencies involved in business engagement
- Be able to explain how the competencies in each of the categories contribute to engaging business in the VR process



Poll: Which of these activities would you define as business engagement?

(Select all that apply)



- Researching online about a company
- Going on a tour and/or informational interview
- Emailing a client's resume to HR
- Walking in the front door and chatting with the receptionist
- Attending a business after hours event
- Hanging a plastic bag full of VR materials on the doorknob of the business



Poll: How much of your time do you currently spend in business engagement?

- None
- Less than half
- More than half
- All (or almost all) of it



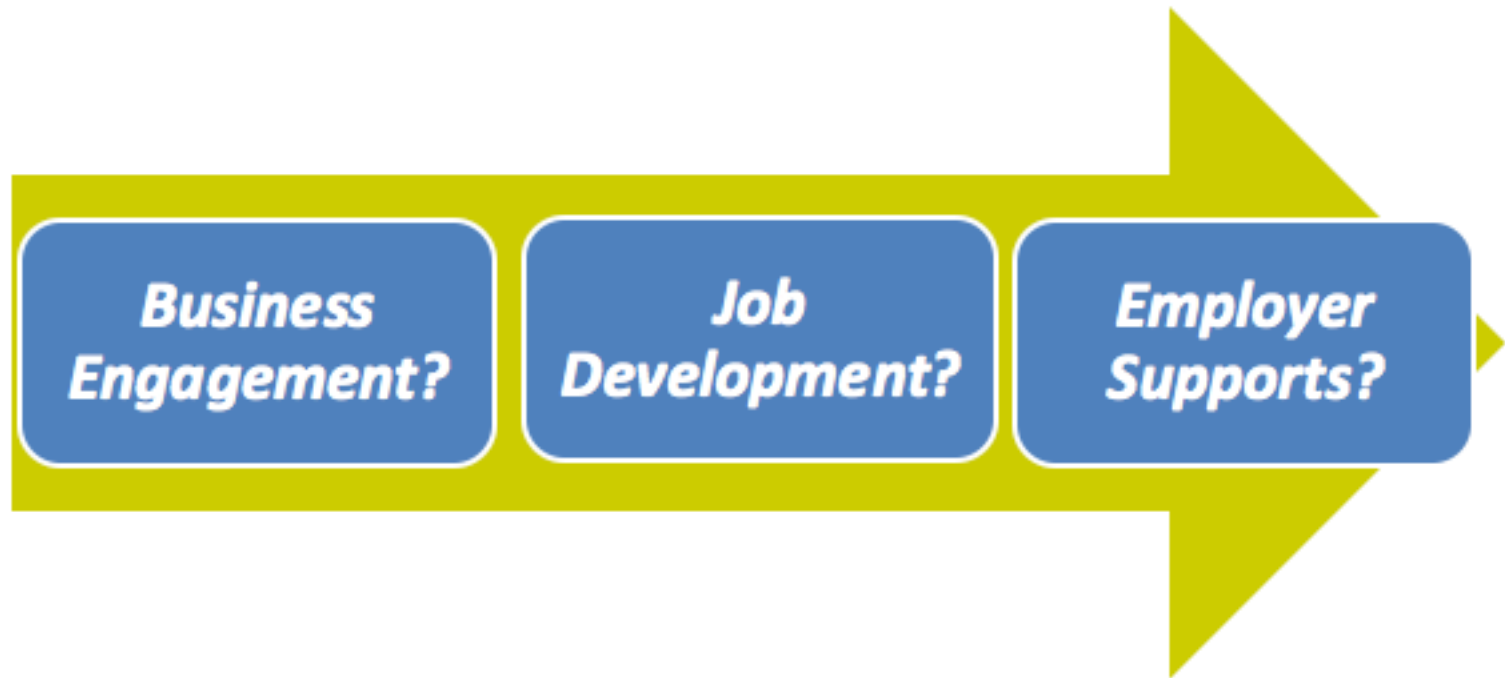


Poll: What is most challenging about business engagement?

- Talking to people you don't know
- Dealing with employer objections
- Describing the services you have to offer
- Figuring out which businesses to contact and pursue
- Finding time to do it on top of everything else you need to do



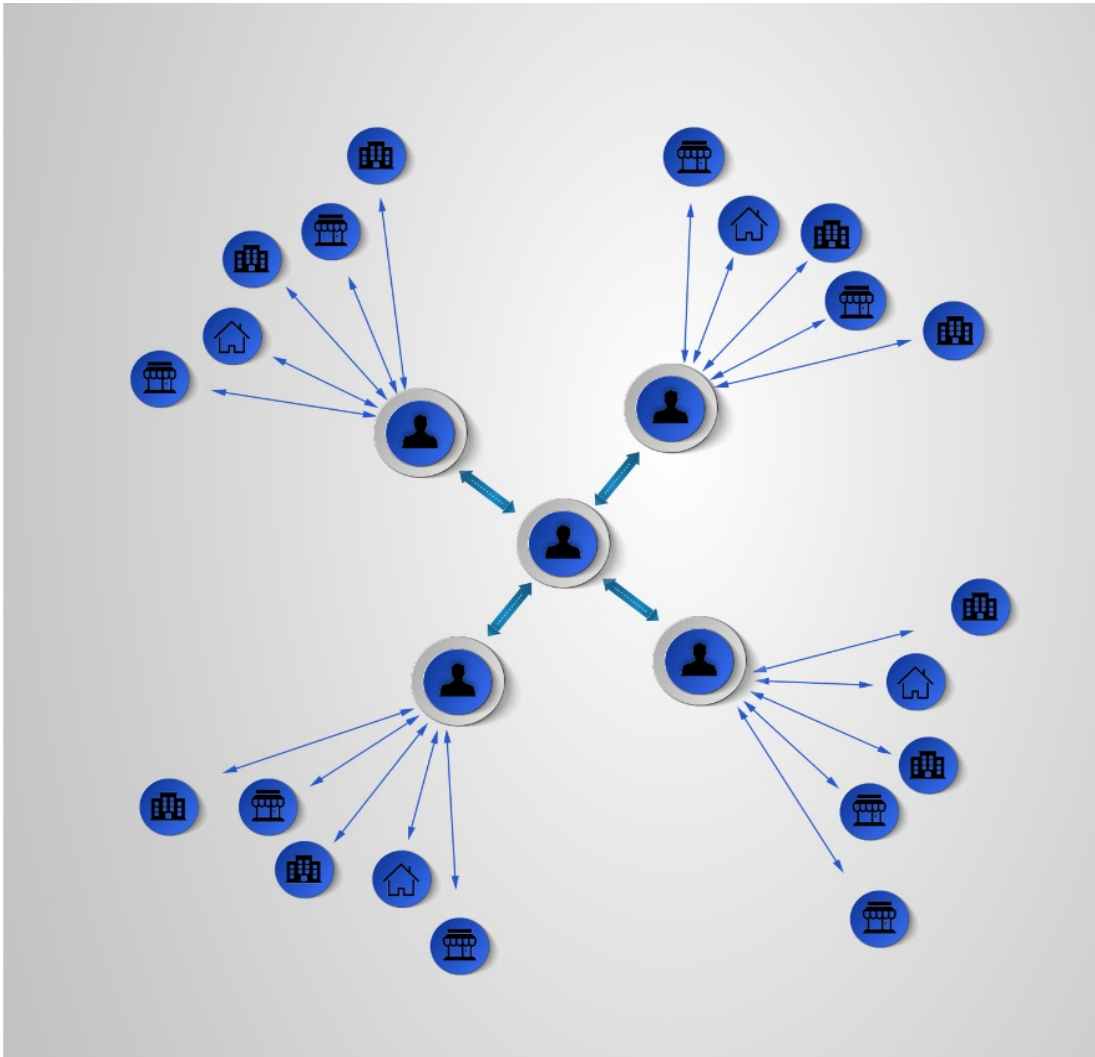
What's the difference?



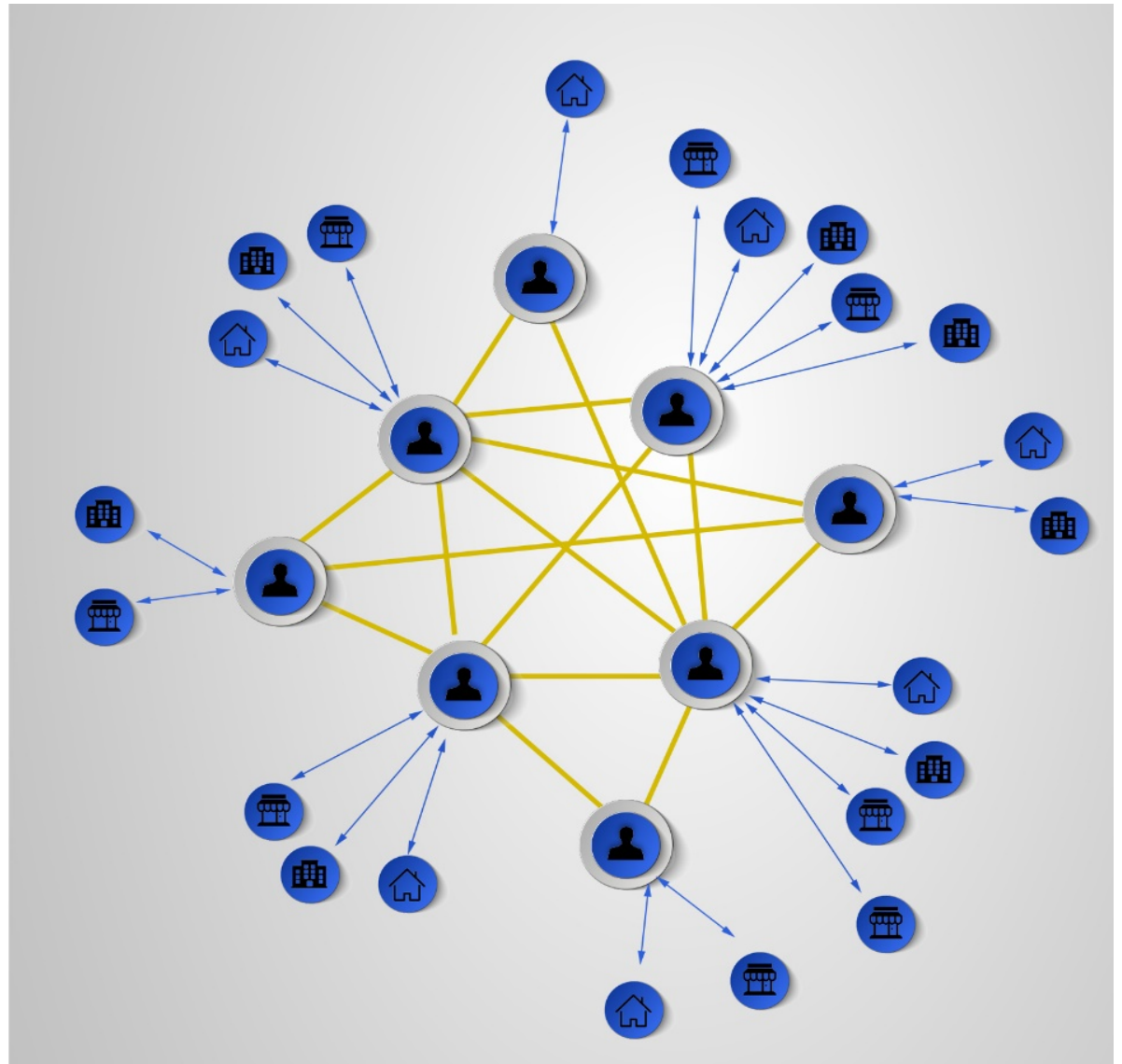
One model: the Centralized Business Relations Unit



The Regional Model



Local Staff and/or CRPs



Competency Table in Business Engagement Toolkit

COMPETENCY	STATE- CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL (Single Points of Contact, Business Relations Coordinators, etc.)	AREA OFFICE OR DISTRICT LEVEL (Business Cadre, Employment Specialists, Counselors, etc.)
Knowledge of Labor Market Needs		
Access and utilize information regarding economic trends and opportunities in the labor market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of state labor market ** • Incorporate regional economic conditions, industries, and cultural diversity dynamics (i.e. businesses with proactive and public presence involving diversity issues) into a strategic plan concerning business engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of local labor market** • Awareness of key local employers**



Competencies outlined at two levels

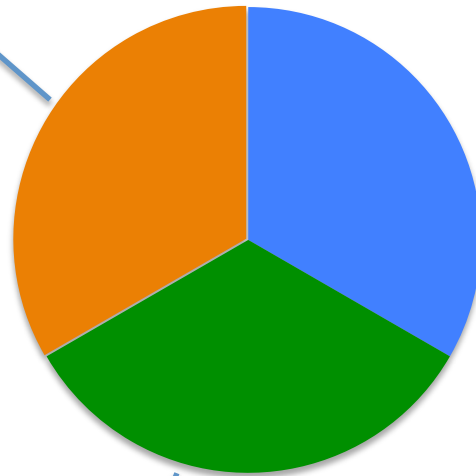
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Business Engagement: Three Key Components

Knowledge of labor market needs

Communications strategy



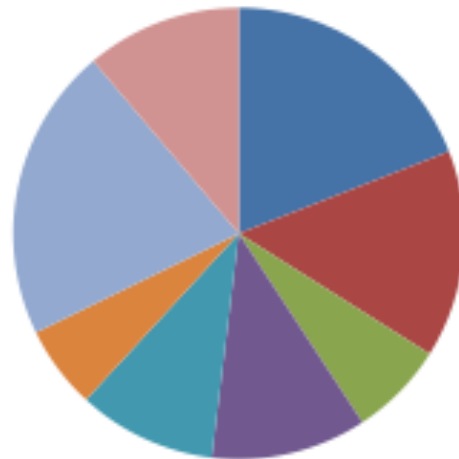
Internal management strategy



Knowledge of Labor Market Needs

- Assess/utilize information economic trends & labor market opportunities
- Create opportunities and relationships

Employment by Sector



Why Labor Market Information (LMI)?

- Keep track of new types of business entering the area, key local employers, and other opportunities
- Stay aware of skills sets necessary to meet business needs in your area
- Know what types of training programs will likely lead to employment outcomes
- Learn what business may be ideal in terms of internships or On-the-Job-Training opportunities



Knowledge of Labor Market Needs

STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL

- Know about state labor market
- Develop strategic plan for Business Engagement
- Data base of positions in demand & associated skill sets
- Employer recognition

AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL

- Know about local labor market
- Awareness of key employers
- Negotiate customized positions



Communications

- Marketing VR
- Assessing Needs
- Speak the language of business
- Networking & Connections



Why Communications?

- Business may not be aware of VR
- Listen and learn about business needs
- Articulate the benefits of VR
- Use business connections to reach other businesses



Communications: Marketing VR Services

STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL

- Understand VR niche
- Produce marketing materials in various media
- Use respectful language/ images
- Participate in Chamber and other associations

AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL

- Understand VR niche
- Promote VR as hiring resource while accurately explaining services
- Use respectful language/ images
- Address employer objections



Communications: Marketing VR Services (cont.)

STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL

- Social media presence
- Promote VR as hiring resource
- Explain financial incentives
- Address employer objections
- Promote brand identity
- Reach out to HR professionals

AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL

- Present to groups of individuals, families, advocacy groups, etc.
- Participate in Chamber and other associations
- Understand and explain financial incentives



Communications: Assessing Business Needs

STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL

- Communicate effectively through active listening
- Accurately identify business needs
- Provide resources on accommodation strategies and disability issues

AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL

- Communicate effectively through active listening
- Accurately identify business needs
- Consult on accommodation strategies and disability issues
- Understand work flow and work processes



Communications: Speaking Business Language

STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL

- Create standardized approach using business language and explaining features and benefits
- Develop/articulate an “elevator pitch” that can be used across the agency

AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL

- Use business language and articulate VR features and benefits
- Develop/articulate an “elevator pitch”
- Understand:
 - Professional and responsive contact with businesses
 - Typical personnel procedures
 - How to “close the sale”



Communications: Connections and Networking

STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL

- Use business connections to reach others at HR or management level
- Communicate disability related workforce development trends to businesses

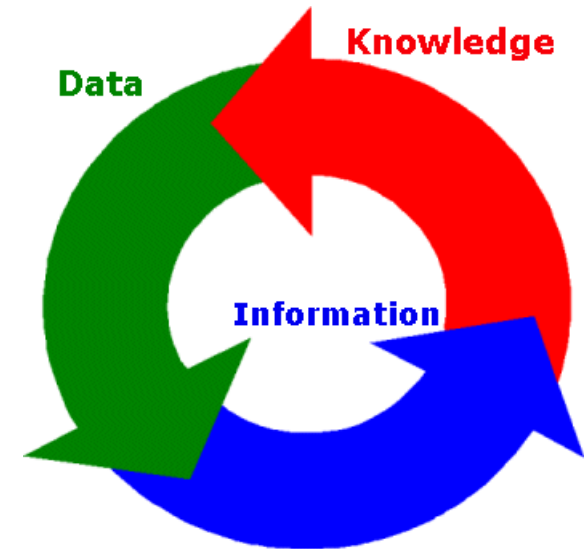
AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL

- Use personal/professional networks to link with other businesses
- Work effectively with CRPs or other contracted agencies
- Present to groups of individuals, families, advocacy groups, etc.
- Reach out/present to HR professionals



Internal Management

- Tracking marketing outcomes and connections
- Internal communication to share potential opportunities



Why Internal Management?

- Track contacts to avoid redundancy and promote professionalism
- Evaluate which marketing/outreach efforts lead to outcomes
- Develop and maintain an internal system to effectively communicate key information



Internal Management

STATE/CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL

- Develop/use system for tracking business data
- Evaluate marketing plan via business awareness & satisfaction
- Develop/maintain internal infrastructure for sharing information and opportunities
- Communicate LMI and business info/issues to staff

AREA OFFICE/DISTRICT LEVEL

- Track/report impact of marketing activities on job placement & retention
- Access, utilize, and contribute to internal infrastructure for sharing information and opportunities



Summary/ Conclusions

- Increase your business perspective by developing your Labor Market intelligence
- Improve your communications and increase opportunities with business by speaking the “language” they are accustomed to
- Tracking your business relations activities will help you focus your efforts productively
- What’s next?



Poll: What would you like to know about engaging businesses and potential job development?

- How to “get in the door”
- Ideas for networking strategies
- How to respond to employer apprehension/objections
- How to maintain long-term relationships
- How to repair and/or reconnect to past employers
- How to use the employer as a resource, even if they are not hiring



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For information on Business Engagement Competencies,
visit:

<http://www.explorevr.org/toolkits/business-engagement-toolkit/staff-competencies-skill-development>

