

Create a community forum that supports an electronic pipeline through which employers and potential employees with disabilities can market and recruit.

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Meeting Notes

Purpose:

Hear your ideas on how together we can successfully implement the strategy to create a community forum that supports an electronic pipeline through which employers and potential employees with disabilities can market and recruit.

What is currently working? How do we capitalize what is already there?

- There are already collaborations and groups sharing information, but there is nothing electronic yet. There are things like the Business Leadership Network, Job boards and databases, SKIES (WorkSource), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation job pool, the national VR Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) and project EARN. There are national recruiter sites already available (Monster, CareerBuilder, Craigslist).
- There is a need for something “clean,” (i.e. disability focused with the disabilities of the job seekers verified) robust, and electronic. (For 503 contractors.)
- Current resources could be connected from a technological standpoint, connections of job boards and databases.
- TAP was developed with extensive input from employers and people with disabilities. 80 VR agencies nationally are in the process of populating TAP with job ready job seekers. Could be expanded to include job seekers from other sources. Currently disabilities are verified in the determination of eligibility for VR services. (Office of Financial Management is negotiating purchase of a blanket membership covering all state agencies.)
- WorkSource is usually the first public program employers go when they are recruiting, and OFCCP encourages posting on the Americas Job Bank. How do we actually create the pool for those that are mandated to follow the line?

How do we build disability population(s) participation?

- What populations of people with disabilities can the existence of disabilities be known and verified? DVR/DSB, Tribal VR, VR and DDA contractors, veterans, SSA beneficiaries, workers compensation recipients, IEP and 504 students, postsecondary disability program participants, other disability organization members/clients (e.g. Multiple Sclerosis Society, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Washington Association the Deaf, Hearing Loss Association of Washington, Washington Council of the Blind, national Federation of the Blind of Washington, Brain Injury Association of Washington, etc.) Begin with the easiest to identify and verify and build out from there.
- Most people with disabilities do not think of themselves in terms of their disability when searching for jobs. 75% of those looking for work, and 90% of those who are employed report no use of any disability program or service while seeking and obtaining employment.

Who are the likely targeted employers who will take part in the community form and pipeline?

- What are recruiters and employers willing to do to recruit? Most currently use Craigslist which is free, simple and effective. The disability pipeline should be similarly barrier free for employers and provide access to the broadest possible pool of talent. 60% of AWB's membership are businesses with 6-10 employees, and most likely do not even have an HR staff. It is important to not make it more difficult for small companies to hire people with disabilities.
- There is opportunity with the 503 covered businesses, ¼ of all jobs are affected by 503 and Washington state has a higher than average concentration of federal contractors.
- Lots of employers are lacking strategy on how to hire people with disabilities; they want to find the talent but do not know how to search for them.
- Employers tend to want to fill their openings quickly. The system will need to be reactive from the employee side as well as the employer side. (when jobs are filled they should no longer be listed/when job seekers have found employment they will no longer be listed)
- A systematic and coordinated approach is necessary for each of our needs and solutions.
- 503 Employers and state agencies need a system that proves that they are actively doing what they are required to by searching for candidates with disabilities.

- We are creating an aggregator and something new. We have the BLN, TAP, Project Earn, etc. We need to find out how much each of these pieces can be stretched to fill the whole picture and then start building new things to fill the remaining gaps
- Start by responding to the needs of and marketing to the motivated employer (503 contractors, state agencies, and the enlightened.) Expand marketing with a product of proven value and results.

What is the scope of the broader “community forum” and ongoing mechanism to support both employers and potential employees with disabilities and their needs and issues?

An electronic community that supports and feeds into the pipeline while meeting the needs and building the capacities of its members. Employers will, share best practices obtain technical assistance, troubleshooting and problem solving, be linked with available resources and participate in training, developed and offered through the community. Job seekers with disabilities will obtain pointers, training and assistance to improve their job search success, be linked with benefits planning services, and with training resources to further develop their marketable skills. All community members will have access to online and in person job fairs and other events developed to respond to the expressed needs of the electronic community participants.

Next steps:

- Colleen and Effenus will bring together a group of private sector employment recruiters to explore more fully the elements and characteristics they would want and an electronic recruitment community and pipeline.
- The work group will meet again, prior to the July meeting of the Governor's Task Force, and the input recruiters meeting and further develop the design and implementation steps for this strategy.