

# Eleversity

NEXT-LEVEL WORKFORCE EDUCATION

**585-340-2051**

Innovations in Employment Supports  
Basics of Business Engagement

## Distance Learning Protocol

- Be on-time. Late arrivals will not be admitted.
- Choose an appropriate place to set up your webcam (e.g. not laying down or in bed)
- Keep the camera centered and avoid moving around
- Minimize background noise and visual distractions
- Avoid sitting in front of a bright, lit window
- Please, only 1 person per device
- Must attend the 2 days as scheduled to receive credit
- 100% participation is required (chat discussions, poll questions, etc.)
- **No cellphones** and tablets must be in landscape view.

## Important Information from OPWDD

- **OPWDD is open for business!** ETP Supervisors are available to answer questions and assist you.
- Requests to bill Intensive and Extended SEMP hours are being processed regularly. If an individual needs hours, please submit a request.
- Please submit any employment and vocational service questions you may have to:  
[employment.technical.assistance.questions@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:employment.technical.assistance.questions@opwdd.ny.gov)
- Please be sensitive to the unique situations and difficult circumstances of the people you work with.
- Know who is on your roster and what services could benefit them.
  - What can they be working on now? Discovery? Work Readiness?
  - Will they be ready to get back to work if they've been furloughed or terminated? Are they maintaining or learning new skills?
- What services do you need to request now in order to be ready to support people returning to work?

## Innovations Trainings

More information is available on our website at:  
[www.Eleversity.org](http://www.Eleversity.org)

### Core Classes

Introduction to Employment

Discovery: Assessment and Planning

Effective Job Coaching

Basics of Business Engagement

### Quick Bites

Technology for Vocational Services

Demonstrating the Benefits of Supported Employment to Businesses

A Case Study in Discovery

### Other Offerings

Beyond Discovery

Job Development

Community Prevocational Services

Employment Training Program (ETP) 101

Management Skills for SEMP Leaders



## Agenda

Foundation

Positioning

Prospecting

Presentation

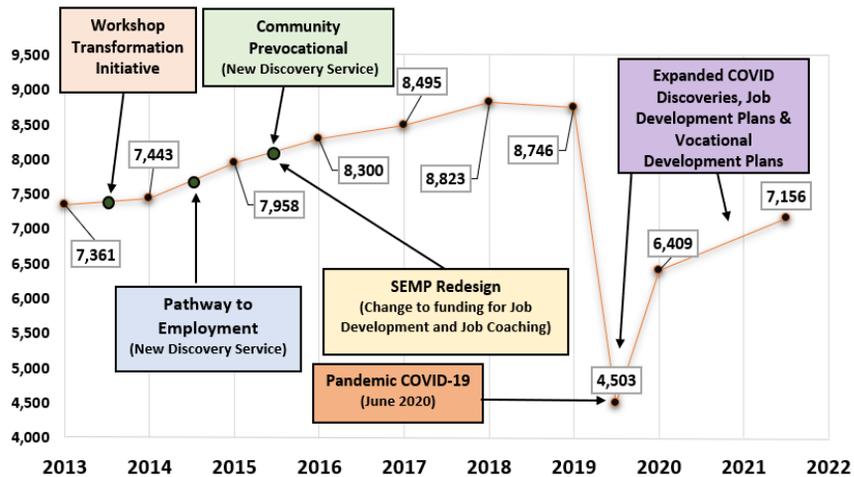
Preparation

Perseverance

Foundation

# Employment Before and During COVID-19, and the Recovery

## OPWDD Supported Employment Number of Individuals in Competitive Employment 2013-2021



*\*All numbers represent December annually*

## The COVID impact on PWD

PWD were disproportionately affected by Coronavirus.

- Last in - first out – PWD were often the last hired into the workforce

Greatest job losses have been in the retail and hospitality sectors, where many PWD had found jobs

Essential worker roles remained, but many PWD have underlying conditions that place them at greater risk

Remote work is challenging for many PWD who may not have internet or technology

Reluctance to hire PWD due to fear of high-cost accommodations

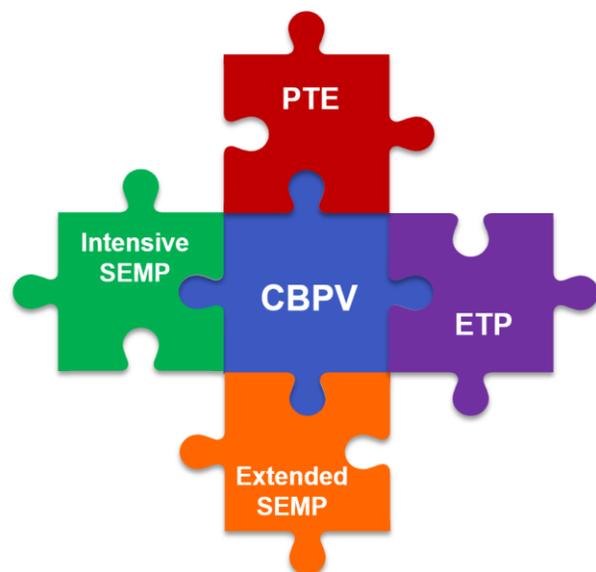
<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/legal-and-compliance/employment-law/pages/coronavirus-unemployment-people-with-disabilities.aspx>

# What Can We Be Doing Virtually?

- Discovery activities
- Continued employability skill development
- Work Readiness classes
- Online application
- Virtual job shadows
- O\*Net career exploration
- Virtual shadow
- Informational interviews
- COVID-19 Safety protocols
- Other Ideas?



Community-Based Prevoc services can happen in between other services **OR** in addition to other services



# Key Components of Successful Employment

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# Key Components of Successful Employment

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# Key Components of Successful Employment

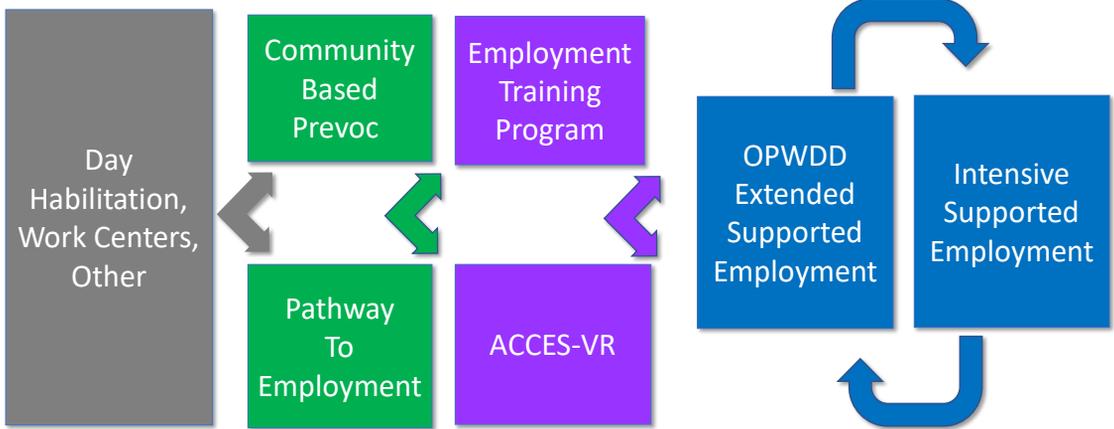
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Foundation

# How Do OPWDD Employment Services Flow?



*\*Chart is designed for illustrative purposes only. An individual may apply for services in the order that makes sense based on individual circumstances*

Community-Based Pre-Vocational (Waiver Service)	Pathway to Employment (Waiver Service)	Employment Training Program (ETP) (Program)	Foundation Supported Employment (SEMP) (Waiver Service)
Prepares people for paid employment or meaningful activities	Creates a vocational plan and prepares people for paid work	Provides an opportunity time limited paid work experience after Discovery and targeted job development	Provides job coaching, job development and support on a job
<b>2 years or more</b>	<b>1 year</b>	<b>1 year or less</b>	<b>On-Going</b>
Discovery, community work experiences, volunteer opportunities and career planning	Discovery, community work experiences, and develop a vocational goal	Discovery, job development, Intensive SEMP, and Internship/Work opportunity at a community business that agrees to hire the individual	Community-based, competitive, integrated employment
Unpaid/Volunteer work or 14C Paid Experiences	Unpaid/Volunteer Experiences or paid at minimum wage	Wages paid by OPWDD at Minimum Wage until business hires	Paid by business at Minimum Wage or higher

## The Tools in our Toolbox

Foundation

### Different Opportunities with Engagement



Volunteer



Assessment



Internships



Employment

# Business Engagement and Job Development in OPWDD Services

## Employer Focused (Employer Centered)

Identify employer needs for individual job seeker or other services

- Identify hiring needs based on trends, problems, community issues, growth, etc.
- Look for a match between a business' need and the interest and abilities of job seekers

## Applicant Focused (Person-Centered)

Develop opportunities for individual job seekers

- Determine needs a person can meet given their skills, abilities, life experience, interests, and strengths
- Identify organizations that have these needs and match job seeker

Adapted from: "Beyond Traditional Job Development: The Art of Creating Opportunity" by Denise Bissonnette

## The Intersection

Discover unmet needs of a business and proposition of value

Utilize sphere of influence

Use of business language

Use of Discovery and job analysis information

Handling employer objections – dispelling myths and stereotypes

Requires tools, strategies, research and much preparation

Leads to employment, volunteer and assessment opportunities

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## Engaging with Businesses – The Foundation

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Foundation

## Finish These Sentences...

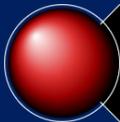
- When I think about meeting with a new business, I most fear...
- One thing I need to know about Business Engagement, that I don't know, is...



## Job Seekers & Business Engagement

What is the  
connection?

SEE THE  
BIG PICTURE



Prepare the Job  
Seeker



Prepare Yourself



Prepare for Business

Ready, Set, Go!

## Moving From Applicant Focused to Business Focused Processes

Transcen Inc. Technical Report:

*Strategies Used by Employment Service Providers in the Job Development Process:  
Are they consistent with what employers want?*



(Simonsen, Fabian, Buchanan, & Luecking, 2011)

## The Path to Success

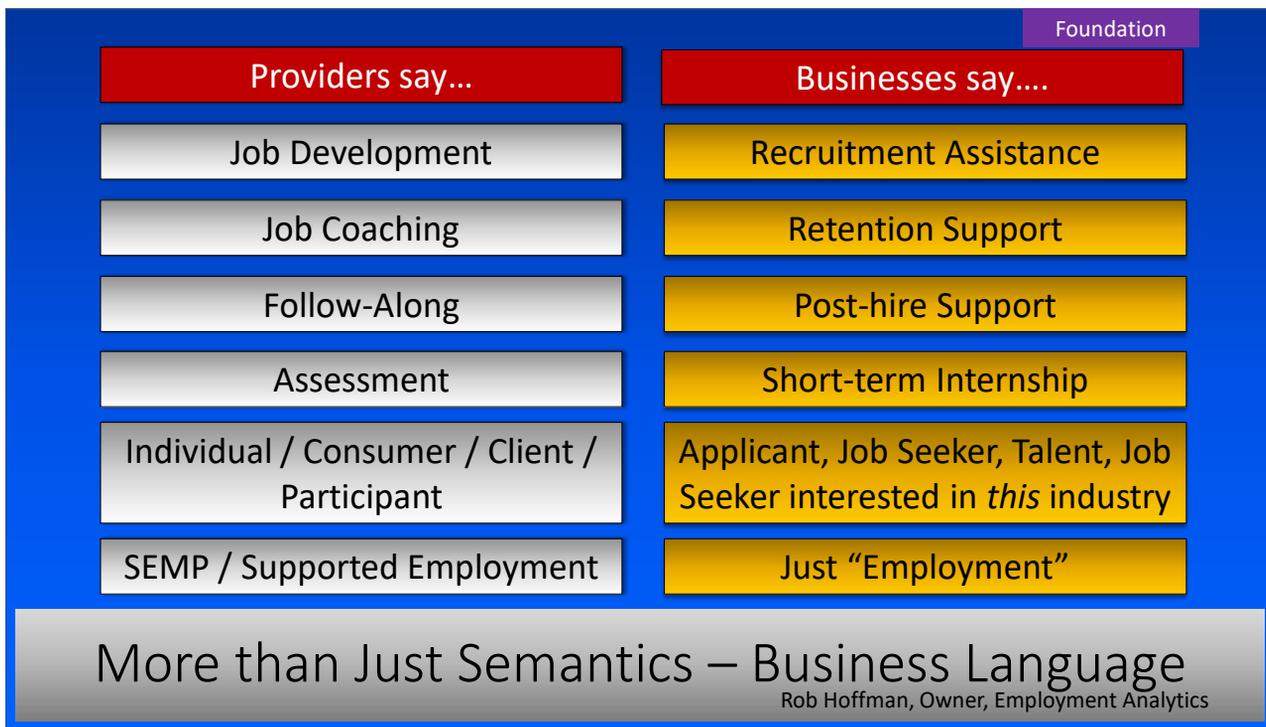
### Providers believe...

- Success relies on the flexibility of the employer
  - Attitudes
  - Accommodations

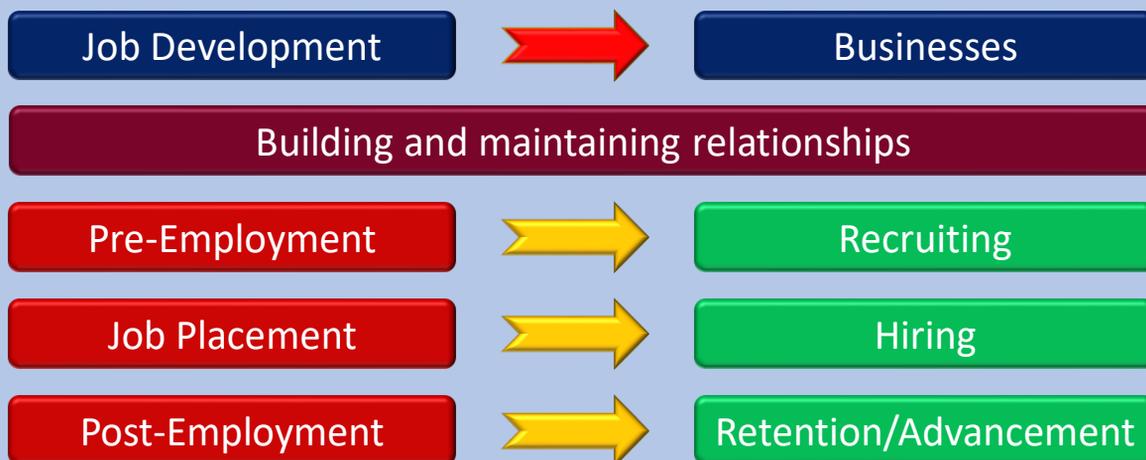
### Employers believe...

- Success relies on
  - Jobseeker competence
  - Quality service provision

(Simonsen, Fabian, Buchanan, & Luecking, 2011)



## Making Sense to Businesses



(Simonsen et al., 2011)



## Breakout!

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- When you reflect on the word “trust,” what are actions that lead to trust in a relationship?
- What actions by the provider will diminish trust with a business?

**Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It's the foundational principle that holds all relationships.**

- Stephen Covey

[WWW.VERYBESTQUOTES.COM](http://WWW.VERYBESTQUOTES.COM)

## Business Engagement at each step



- Adapted from: "Job Developer Boot Camp" APSE Conference 2002, Mindy Oppenheim
- Rob Hoffman, Owner, Employment Analytics, *Connecting with Employers Now & For the Future*

# Positioning



- What are the services you can offer to an employer?
- What makes you unique and sets you apart from other placement services?
- How well do your marketing materials represent you?
  - Prepare your tool kit and polish your “business” image
    - Business cards
    - Market / Educational materials
    - Selling success stories, testimonials, statistics/data
    - Leave behinds

## Laying the Groundwork – Educate Yourself

- Learn the history and background of your agency
- Understand your organization’s strategy, and commit to its goals of community employment
- Know your part – how are employment/vocational services coordinated and who are the responsible staff
- Think ahead – anticipate objections, gather your organization data and key indicators of success



JOB DEVELOPMENT ESSENTIALS: *A Guide for Job Developers*, Wycoff L., Clymer C., 2005

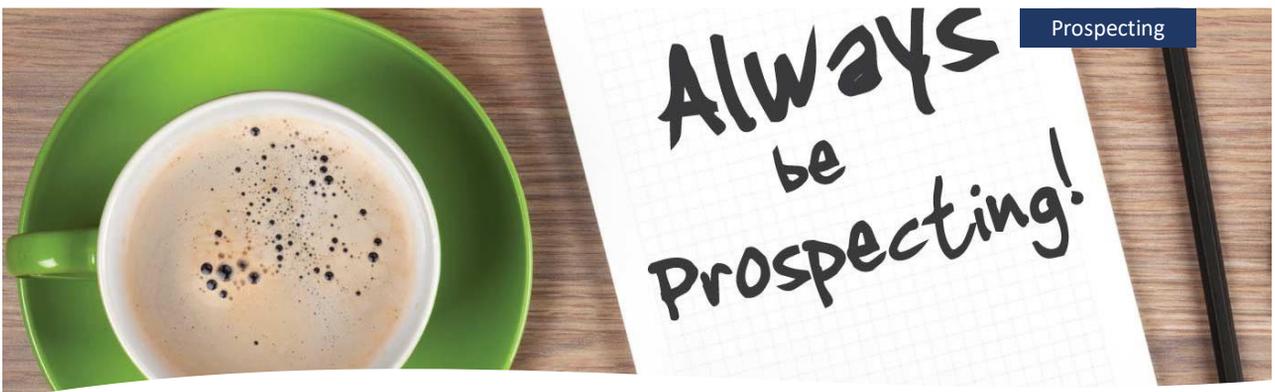


## Positioning

## Common Mistakes

- Failing to learn about what your organization can and cannot offer employers.
- Offering employers people or services they don't need.
- Calling or visiting with little understanding of the industry, the employer's business, or employment issues.
- Exaggerating what you and your organization can offer or achieve.
- Forgetting that employers are not in business to make jobs; they are in business to make money.
- Emphasizing your organization's mission to help people instead of emphasizing how you can provide services that will benefit the employer.
- Feeling dishonest because you approach employers by offering your services as opposed to asking them for jobs.

JOB DEVELOPMENT ESSENTIALS: *A Guide for Job Developers*, Wycoff L., Clymer C., 2005



## Prospecting

## Prospecting

- Who needs your services? / Why?
- Where can opportunities be created?
- Where can you continue to strengthen relationships with current employers?
- People sources vs. Data sources



## Prospecting

## Prospecting with Purpose

- Locations of businesses
- Types of industries
- Interests and career goals of the job seeker(s)
- Programming needs
  - Volunteer opportunities
  - Assessment opportunities
  - Internships
  - Job placement
  - Others

## Customer Relations Management

How are you storing critical knowledge, information and “intelligence”?

- File cabinet, spreadsheet, or in your head?
- It is critical we store all business information to facilitate on-going relationships and quality job matches
- Promotes credibility with businesses and increases our appearance of professionalism



## Prospecting

Prospecting

## Information to Track

- Employer name and address
- Contact name, phone number, email [at business]
- Contact name, phone number, email [at your organization]
- Type of industry
- Status: Active vs. Inactive, individual working there
- Types of activities (employment -> work experiences)
- Update notes
- Other information you collect?



Prospecting

## Methods of Tracking and Sharing

- Excel spreadsheet
- Word Document
- Whiteboard
- Cloud storage: Google Docs, Microsoft One Drive
- What are you using?



Prospecting

# The Hidden Job Market

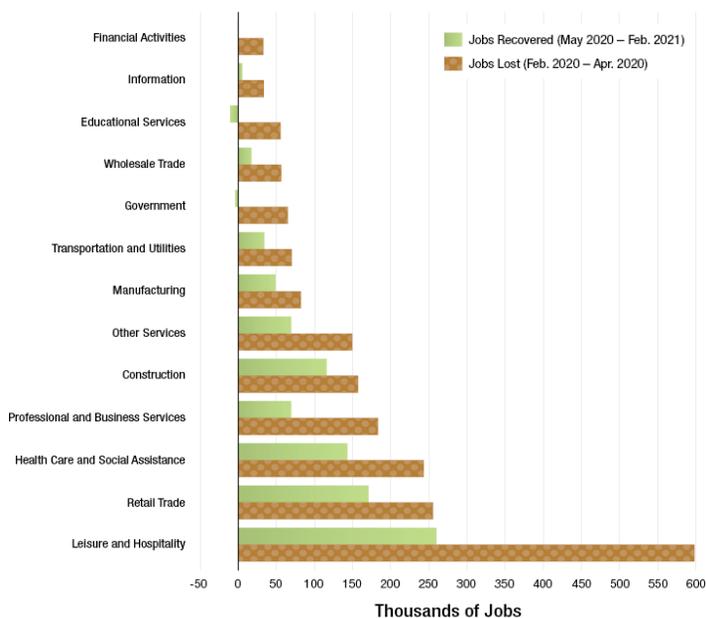


- Change the way you network
- Join a professional networking group (Employment Consortiums, Camber of Commerce, others in your area)
- Contact businesses directly
- Sign up for Google News Alerts <https://www.google.com/alerts>
- Attend a conference/Trade show/One-Stop events
- Tell everyone, everywhere, about what you're looking for

Adapted from: [Forbes.com](https://www.forbes.com)

## New York State Job Losses and Gains by Industry

Prospecting



Source: New York State Department of Labor

## Recovering Jobs After COVID-19

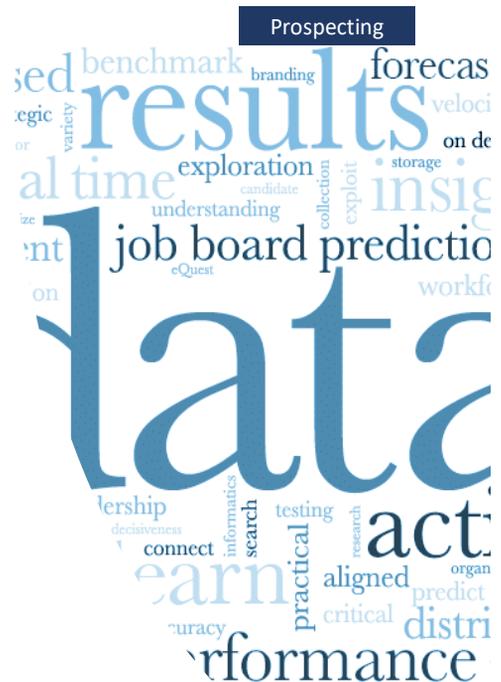
- Continually assess caseloads to determine who is ready to return to community employment
- Job openings at a five-month high; most are industries that require in-person work. 9 out of 10 job postings are in-person requirements.

[NPR.org](https://www.npr.org)

- Target growth industries

## You can be the expert!

- Use Labor Market Information (LMI) to target industries
- Develop knowledge of occupations, pathways, minimum requirements, and job descriptions
- This should be job #1 for job developers and employment specialists



## Sources of LMI

New York Department of Labor: <https://labor.ny.gov/stats/index.shtm>

New York Association of Training & Employment Professionals: <https://www.nyatep.org/state-of-the-workforce>

O\*NET Online: <https://www.onetonline.org/>

US DOL Occupational Outlook Handbook: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>

State Occupational Projections: <https://www.projectionscentral.com>

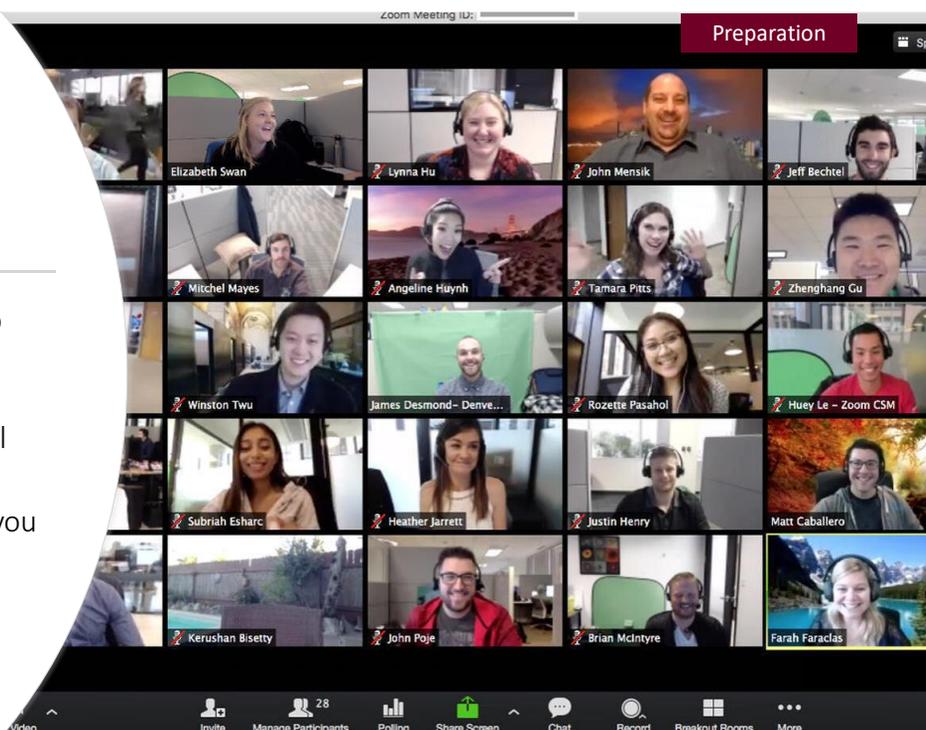


## Preparation

- Research employer
  - Basic information
  - News releases, annual reports, social media, etc.
  - Best contact
- Gather questions to ask employers to determine needs and concerns

### Group Discussion - Before the visit

- What do you want to know?
- What can you learn before the visit/initial contact?
- What method(s) do you find most helpful?



## Breakout - Creating Your Questions

- What are 3 things you want to know about the business?
- How will you use this information?
- What are 3 things you want the business to know about your services?
- Why is this important?



failing = prepare  
to prepare = to fail

## Presentation

- Develop initial presentation / introduction which is brief, memorable, interesting and geared toward employer needs
- Schedule a face-to-face appointment – bring materials
- Identify what have you done for other organization – gather testimonials
- Demonstrate the bottom-line (return on investment - ROI)
- Future visits: job analysis, financial incentives, etc.



80% of employers surveyed found the most persuasive recruitment strategy is demonstrating **how job developers address the BOTTOM LINE.**

~Simonsen et al., 2011

## The Bottom Line



Benefits to  
Businesses –  
Community work  
experiences

- Find future employees
- Test-drive talent
- Increase productivity
- No financial cost
- Give back to the community
- Close the skills gap
- Foster leadership skills in current employees
- Improve the overall work environment

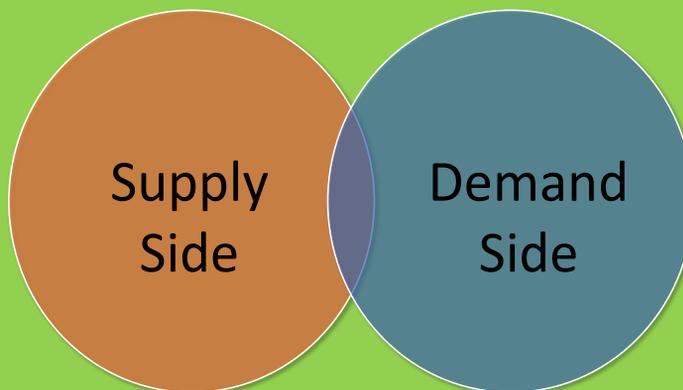
Adapted from: <https://www.internships.com/employer/resources/setup/benefits>

## The Start Line?



## Finding the Balance

- Focus is on benefits for the job seeker
- Focus is upon job seeker needs and accommodations

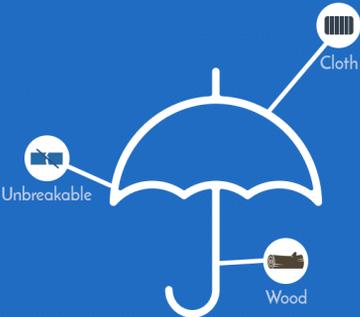


- Focus is on adding value to the business
- Quantifies the benefits
- Explains how features lead to benefits

Which Side Are YOU On?

Presentation

## FEATURES

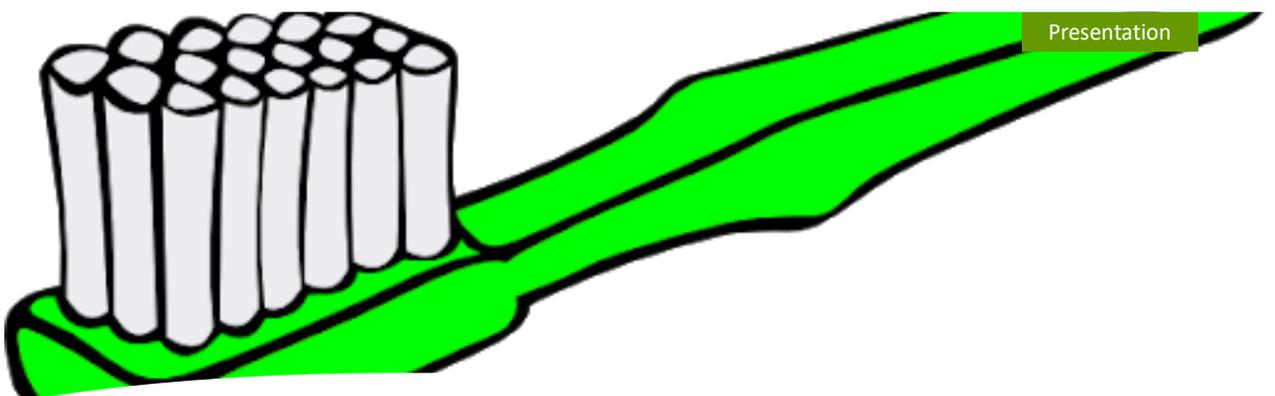


## BENEFITS



Features vs. Benefits

- Features describe the product or service
- Benefits explain what the user gains from the features
- People buy benefits, not features



Features  
vs.  
Benefits  
Part 1

- Name 3 **features** of your toothbrush
- Name 3 **benefits** of your toothbrush

# BENEFITS

## Features vs. Benefits Part 2

- Name **3 features** of your services
- Name **3 benefits** of your services



## The Bottom Line Return on Investment [ROI]

- Focus on how features lead to benefits
- Quantify the benefits

## Pitch Perfect?

Hello, my name is Jeanne, and I am a direct support professional with a non-profit organization called Disability Employment Services. We help people with disabilities who need a little extra help, support and accommodations.

I'm wondering about the job posting on Indeed because I have a person who really wants to work here, and this location is within walking distance from his house. His name is Sam, and he is qualified and pre-screened. Sam has never actually had a job, but he has been in our CBPV program for 2 years and is making a lot of progress.

Sam is responsible, dependable and is willing to do any job. He can't operate the cash register, but anything that's easy, like cleaning. I will be here for as long as he needs to help him and make sure the job gets done, so you don't have to worry about training him.

## Language Matters

### Provider says...

- "I work for a non-profit organization called Disability Employment Services"
- "We help people with disabilities who need a little extra help, support and accommodations"
- "I have a person who really wants to work here, and this location is within walking distance from his house"

### Employer thinks...

- "Is she looking for charity? Disability?"

*Sets a Human Services tone*

- "I don't want someone who needs more help, I don't have the time"

*She doesn't use asset-based language.  
Presents deficits*

- "Why do I care where they live? This has nothing to do with my posting"

*The focus is on the supply side, the agency and the disability, not on the employer needs*

## Pitch Perfect?

Hello, my name is Jeanne. While visiting your business last week, I overheard an associate mention that your Main Street location was currently experiencing frequent turnover in some of your entry-level positions. I know how costly it can be to have on-going job openings and I may be able to assist. I work for an organization that helps employers find qualified employees at no cost. Employment Solutions has been doing business in this community since 1989 and currently has relationships with 8 businesses similar to your industry, with 12 successful job matches.

To help me fully understand your business needs and how Employment Solutions may be able to meet your personnel needs, it would be beneficial for me to visit your location and have a deeper discussion on how our services have helped other businesses save money and reduce employee turnover.

## Language Matters

### Provider says...

- “while visiting your business last week, I overheard an associate mention that your Main Street location was currently experiencing frequent turnover”
- “I work for an organization that helps employers find qualified employees at no cost”
- “it would be beneficial for me to visit your location and have a deeper discussion on how our services have helped other businesses save money and reduce employee turnover”

### Employer thinks...

- “This person knows my business and wants to help me”  
*Sets a Business tone*
- “I need qualified employees, and this won’t cost me anything”  
*She uses asset-based language and does not focus on supports and limitations*
- “This person wants to find out what my business are, not just to jump to the match”  
*The focus is on the demand side and discovering the employer needs*



## Handling Objections

- Listen first and seek to understand – what is the underlying message?
- Validate the concern / objection
- Dispel myths
  - Know the facts
  - Have your testimonials and stories ready
- Provide solutions

If they are so “qualified”, why do they need you?

- What is the underlying message?
- How will you validate that statement?
- What are the facts?

**OBJECTION**

## If they are so “qualified”, why do they need you?

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I hear this all time when I am meeting with businesses, and I can understand why you might question this. The reality is that many people benefit from assistance connecting with business, such as headhunters and employment agencies. We are the experts in connecting with businesses. We help job seekers to connect with employers, navigate and learn the new job, and help to ensure the tasks are performed to your expectations.

## I can't risk the liability...

---

- What is the underlying message?
- How will you validate that statement?
- What are the facts?

**OBJECTION**

## I can't risk the liability...

---

This is a common misconception about work and people with disabilities. I confess that I thought this at one point, but I have done some research and learned that very few businesses experience disability-related claims when they hire people with disability.

*In a 1998 survey of employers regarding their experiences with the ADA, the vast majority of respondents reported that they had experienced no disability-related claims against their companies. In a 2003 survey, 91% of respondents indicated that they were not aware of any ADA complaints filed against their companies in the last 12 months.*

## We're not hiring right now...

---

- What is the underlying message?
- How will you validate that statement?
- What are the facts?

**OBJECTION**

## We're not hiring right now...

I understand, these are difficult times, but this is good timing because I don't have anyone in mind for this business. This will allow me to take my time and really learn about your business needs and how we can partner in a way that will benefit both of us.



## Common Mistakes

- Making your pitch to the wrong person in the company.
- Talking about what your organization does for the job seeker, instead of what you do for the employer.
- Giving a generic or “slick” presentation, not specifically reflecting the employer’s needs.
- Assuming you know the employer’s wants and needs. Not clarifying with employers generalized job descriptions, such as “a good worker” or “someone with a professional attitude.”
- Not taking the time to visit a work site if a visit could help make better referrals.
- Failing to record a job order and any other relevant information about the job because you think you’ll remember.
- Overstating what you can do.
- Bad-mouthing your competition.
- Taking rejection personally.

JOB DEVELOPMENT ESSENTIALS: *A Guide for Job Developers*, Wycoff L., Clymer C., 2005

## Proposal

- Assist and support participants with application / interview process

AND/OR

- Create document or presentation for employer proposing a match or customized employment
- Include benefits to employer to improve productivity, improve customer satisfaction, save time, save money, reduce costs...

Job Development

Learn More Here



**PERSEVERANCE  
PERSEVERANCE**



**PERSEVERANCE  
IS THE KEY**

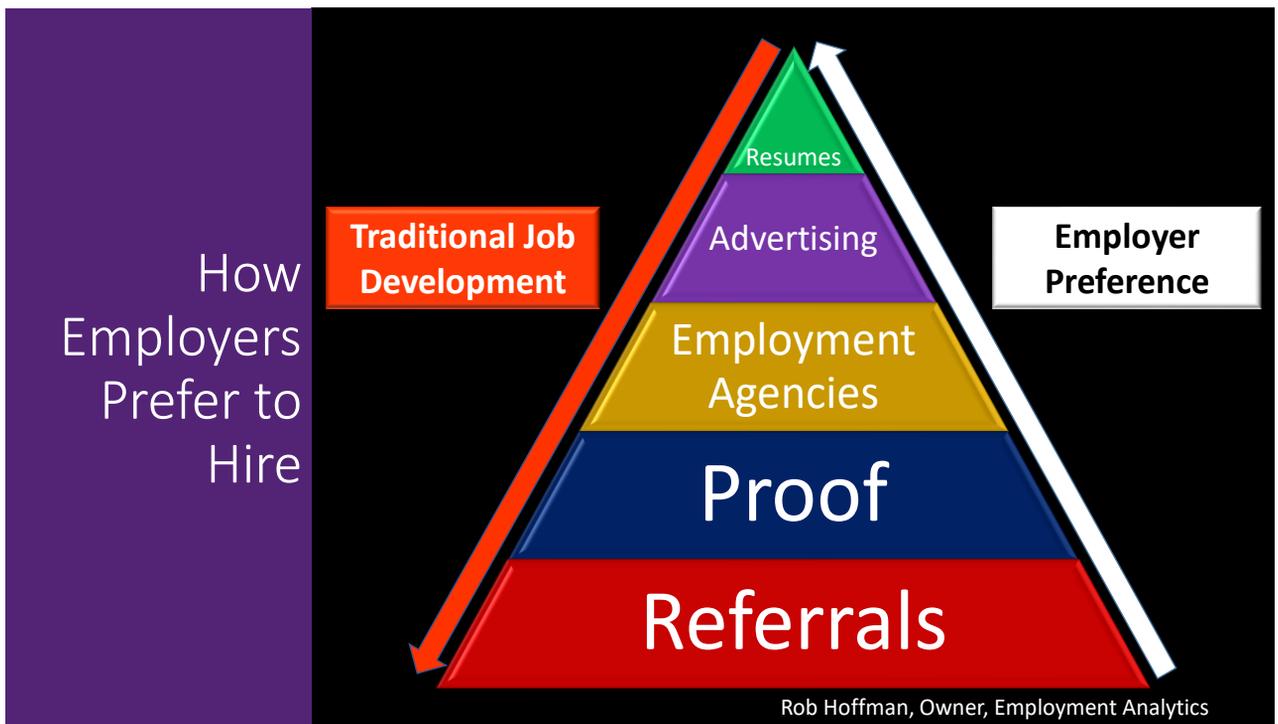
## Perseverance

- How can you continue to build / strengthen relationships?
- Satisfaction surveys with employers
- Long-term support of participants and employers



## Creating Our Advantage

- Preparation
- Credibility
- Leverage – relationships & successes



# Thank You!



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