

ABSTRACT: Increase Workplace Demand for People with Disabilities

ISSUE

Employers have limited knowledge about or access to the largely untapped pool of jobseekers and workers with disabilities. Many businesses need tools and resources on hiring, training and retaining people with disabilities to meet their workplace demands; and many suppliers of workforce resources need to better understand and accommodate employer perspectives and priorities.

GOAL #3

Improve knowledge, capacity and collaborations that enable employers and employer associations (“demand side”) to increase competitive employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

RATIONALE

A business’ bottom line typically drives its workforce strategy. Businesses are very clear on their workplace needs but may not be aware of the potential bottom-line impact of disabilities inclusiveness or how to get there. Many need to hear the business case, i.e., understand the connection between competitive advantage and inclusive workforce strategies and/or they need better access to resources and innovations that support such strategies. They can benefit from the many tools and resources available from their peers, from the service provider community and from other expert sources, but – as in all demand/supply relationships – will only respond to resources that come in a form, language and delivery method that meets their needs. Parties to the “supply-side” (disabilities and workforce service providers, consultants and other stakeholders) must shape their products and delivery to the employer’s specifications.

STATUS

Accredited regional forums (4 in 2009, 5 in 2010) and online tutorials for employers and service providers promote workplace diversity skills and partnerships; knowledge and behavior changes will be assessed in 2010. Resources being made available to employers include online tools (e.g., an exchange portal, a workplace accommodations guide, multi-media growth industry briefs), a peer mentoring network and leadership academies. The 2nd annual Employer Roundtable will be held in October.

2010 KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

- Two employer/provider forums; business resource exchange mechanisms and tools (Spring 2010)
- Twenty online courses for service providers and employer; pre/post test on impact of employer/provider forums and online learning; statewide NY-based employer marketing campaign
- Five employer/provider forums; in-depth workforce case studies; business resource exchange mechanisms and tools; high growth demand briefs and tools; analysis of all demand-side activities
- Report on demand-side strategies at 2nd Annual Employer Roundtable breakfast, facilitate discussion and recommendations (Fall 2010)
- Conduct follow-up on Annual Employer Roundtable (Fall/Winter 2010)

PARTNERS

- MISCC EC** – Most Integrated Settings Coordinating Council Employment Committee
- BCNYS** – NYS Business Council (incl. Chambers of Commerce)
- USBLN** – Business Leadership Network
- SHRM** – Society/Human Resources Mgt.
- VESID** – Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities
- OMRDD** – Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
- OMH** – Office of Mental Health
- OASAS** – Office on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services
- VA** – Division of Veterans Affairs
- CBVH** – Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped
- DOL** – Department of Labor
- WDI** – Workforce Development Institute

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