



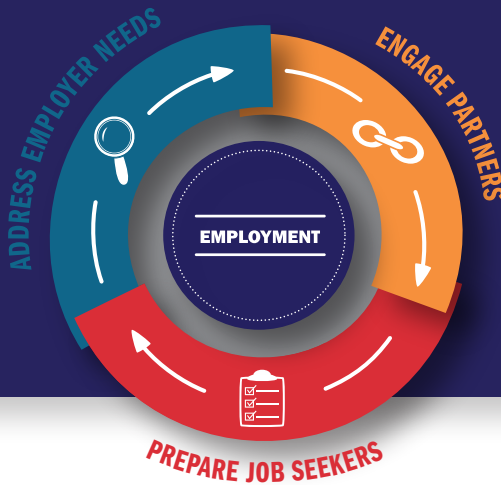
Use Labor Market Information to Target High-Growth Occupations

The Employer-Driven Model and Toolkit

Strategies for Developing Employment Opportunities
for Justice-Involved Individuals

PREPARE JOB SEEKERS FOR EMPLOYMENT

▪ May 2014 ▪



Employers face global competition in their drive to operate successful businesses in today's marketplace. If the correctional system is to be successful in placing job seekers in meaningful employment that meets employers' expectations, correctional practitioners must prepare them for the workplace well in advance of their release. Practitioner knowledge of employers' staffing requirements contributes to the success of this mission.

New tools and proven strategies can greatly assist justice-involved individuals transitioning to the community workplace. Using targeted assessments, providing career assistance, securing industry-recognized certifications and developing a career-focused work ethic are essential strategies that help job seekers attain and sustain meaningful employment necessary for post-release success.



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EMPLOYER-DRIVEN MODEL



Use Labor Market Information to Target High-Growth Occupations

ADDRESS EMPLOYER NEEDS



- Target specific businesses in the community
- Develop relationships with community businesses
- Partner with business to develop training/skill building
- Market job seekers to meet employers' needs
- Recruitment
- Retention

PREPARE JOB SEEKERS



- Assessment - Skills, Interests, Aptitude, Readiness, Assess Barriers, Reduce Risk
- Job Readiness
- Competencies
- Certifications
- Placement
- Retention

ENGAGE PARTNERS



- Division of Workforce Development, Workforce Investment Boards
- DOL Apprenticeships
- Community-Based Organizations
- Criminal Justice Agencies
- Educational Institutions
- Employers



KEY QUESTIONS

What types of assessments are most effective at ensuring a good job match and successful placement?

Assessments help match applicants to specific work environments in which they are most likely to achieve job satisfaction and long-term success. Other assessments help identify potential barriers.

General types of effective assessment tools identify:

- Criminogenic risks and needs
- Strengths and potential barriers
- Likes and dislikes related to various work environments
- Skills, interests, and traits of various jobs
- Time management
- Teamwork skills
- Flexibility/adaptability
- The ability to accept and learn from criticism
- The ability to get along with others

Several proven assessment tools are available at no cost, including:

- O*NET® Interest Profiler™
www.onetcenter.org/IP.html
- O*NET® Work Importance Locator™
www.onetcenter.org/WIL.html

“ Assessments help match applicants to specific work environments in which they are most likely to achieve job satisfaction and long-term success. ”



“ Establishing a working relationship with local labor market specialists provides employment practitioners a “heads-up” when industries are relocating to local areas. ”



What is job readiness?

Job readiness encompasses several areas, including soft skills, cognitive skills, and industry-recognized training and certifications that employers expect from qualified applicants.

Soft Skills: These are the important teachable but intangible skills needed for working successfully in any occupation. They include having:

- A strong work ethic
- A positive attitude
- Good communication skills
- Decision-making skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Social skills

Job Search Tools: Tools for successfully navigating the job market include:

- Resume writing
- The ability to fill out a complete first-class application
- Pocket application
- Having an understanding of networking
- Searching for jobs and filing applications via the Internet
- Having a “30-second elevator speech”
- Interview training, including a firm handshake, direct eye contact, good posture, a smile, appropriate dress, questions for the interviewer, etc.

Competencies/Job Skills: Useful competencies and skills for employment include:

- Vocational training
- Certificate programs
- Apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeships
- Documentation of prison/jail work experience
- Work references
- Written recommendations

Also see the U.S. Department of Labor’s webpage on registered apprenticeship programs. www.doleta.gov/OA/

Education: Relevant education includes completion of GED, community college, and skilled trade school courses.

Prison Work Verification: This is a system for prospective employers to receive and verify work skills and training received during incarceration.



Overcoming barriers presents ongoing challenges for people transitioning to the community, including housing, transportation, identification documents, and employment. What other barriers do these job seekers encounter and what resources can help address those challenges?

Barriers can be anything that diminishes a transitioning person's opportunity for successful reentry. The obvious barriers—housing, transportation and identification documents—can be lessened through access to community-based services. Employment specialists can gather practical information for addressing barriers by riding public transportation to identify employers along major public transit routes, visiting worksites of prospective employers, and providing newly-released individuals detailed information on obtaining identification (e.g., driver's licenses, social security cards) and other documents necessary for employment.

Behavioral barriers are more difficult to address. These barriers are cognitive-based and are often a result of the environments in which people have been living. Cognitive skills programs help people learn about the influence their thinking has on their behavior, and it helps them develop better problem-solving and interpersonal skills. Through these programs, justice-involved individuals develop new ways of thinking and behaving, which can help them be less impulsive and become better decisionmakers, which is critical to reentry success and job retention.

There are several effective cognitive-based programs for people transitioning to the community. *Thinking for a Change*, available through the National Institute of Corrections, is a widely-used and effective evidence-based program. nicic.gov/T4C

See also a research summary by the Ministry of Justice on the effectiveness of cognitive skills programs on justice-involved individuals. www.swmprobation.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/What-works-Cognitive-skills.pdf

***Thinking for a Change*, available through the National Institute of Corrections consists of the following video lessons:**

- Lesson 1: Introduction
- Lesson 2: Active Listening
- Lesson 3: Asking Questions
- Lesson 4: Giving Back
- Lesson 5: Knowing Your Feelings
- Lesson 6: Thinking Controls Our Behavior
- Lesson 7: Pay Attention to Our Thinking
- Lesson 8: Recognize Risk
- Lesson 9: Use New Thinking
- Lesson 10: Thinking Check-in
- Lesson 11: Understanding the Feelings of Others
- Lesson 12: Making a Complaint
- Lesson 13: Apologizing
- Lesson 14: Responding to Anger
- Lesson 15: Negotiating
- Lesson 16: Introduction to Problem Solving
- Lesson 17: Stop and Think
- Lesson 18: State the Problem
- Lesson 19: Set a Goal and Gather Information
- Lesson 20: Practice Skills 1, 2, and 3
- Lesson 21: Think of Choices and Consequences
- Lesson 22: Make a Plan
- Lesson 23: Do and Evaluate
- Lesson 24: Problem Solving Application
- Lesson 25: Next Steps

www.nicic.gov/T4C

What can be done during the time of incarceration to teach job retention skills?

There are several strategies and tools that you can use during incarceration that will improve retention outcomes for both the employer and job seeker. They include:

- **Job preference assessments.** These are valuable tools that assist job seekers in identifying the type of work environment where they will be most satisfied.
- **Barrier identification worksheets.** These can play an important role in the development of strategies as well as the elimination of potential barriers.
- **Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) programs.** CBT programs help people address deficits and build social skills, decisionmaking skills, and problem-solving skills essential for job retention.
- **Drug treatment and sobriety programs.** These help people address major substance abuse barriers affecting job retention.
- **Mentoring programs and identification of pro-social supports.** Such programs and support provide job seekers with social connections and relationships they need to avoid re-establishing anti-social associations that lead to recidivism, negative behaviors, and job loss. Local YMCAs and faith-based organizations often sponsor mentorship programs.
- **Labor market information.** This data provides job seekers with knowledge of the job market in the communities where they will be released. Coaching these clients on how to access and use labor market information assists them with finding short-term employment prospects and developing long-term career path plans for post-release job retention.
- **Emulating the community workplace in prison work assignments.** This process teaches and reinforces work ethic principles, including daily attendance, punctuality, teamwork, communication skills, ability to take direction from a supervisor, and adherence to health and safety guidelines.
- **Time management training.** This training helps people plan for a productive and balanced use of personal time that supports success on the job after release. Time management skills are essential for people who transition from an institutional environment where most decisions were made for them into a world where they immediately become the decisionmakers.

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What training is available for staff interested in building effective pre-release job training programs?

Below are some links to evidence-based training information and programs for employment practitioners.

- Offender Employment Retention Specialist Training www.nicic.gov/training/oerstrng
- Offender Workforce Development Specialist Training www.nicic.gov/owd
- Motivational Interviewing www.motivationalinterview.org
- Thinking for a Change nicic.gov/T4C



EFFECTIVE PRACTICES



Meaningful Employment During Incarceration

Facility work assignments should mirror the community workplace, including a required application, job interviews, workplace orientation, regular work evaluations, employment termination for unacceptable performance, and opportunities for performance-based pay raises.

Journey Workers as Career Center Facilitators and On-the-Job Trainers

Use of trained journey workers as on-the-job trainers and facilitators in jail and prison career centers saves costs and provides excellent skill-building opportunities for the journey worker/facilitators.

Assist Job Seekers with Networking

Networking for employment leads is often a new concept for many people who need coaching on how to best use their social contacts for job leads. Some studies report that more than 90 percent of today's jobs are filled through networking.

Partner with Workforce Development Agencies

Partner with Workforce Development agencies as a potential source of job readiness training, pre-release job readiness programming, and ongoing support services for people transitioning to the community post-release. www.nawdp.org

Provide Credentials at Release

To validate prison work history at release, provide credentials, including documentation of U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) apprenticeships, trade association certifications, OSHA safety certifications, and specific skill certifications (e.g., forklift certification).

Develop Prison/Jail Career Resource Centers

Career resource centers are an emerging strategy for improving employment outcomes with facilitation by resource center clerks. www.nicic.gov/Library/023066

Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE) Partnership

This case study program is a partnership between the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and the Indiana Department of Correction.

www.in.gov/dwd

www.in.gov/idoc



TIPS

Ensure Selective Service Registration: Avoid Financial Aid Barriers

Ensure that males (age 18-25) register for selective service to be eligible for educational financial aid. www.sss.gov

Acknowledge Success

Celebrate success stories through graduation ceremonies, success bulletin boards, and articles in local correctional publications and trade journals. Invite manufacturing associations, chambers of commerce, and labor trade unions to attend and participate in ceremonies and celebrations.



RESOURCES

Indiana Department of Correction Apprenticeship Program Policy and Registered Occupations with USDOL

Two resources helpful for understanding the workings of apprenticeship programs within correctional settings include the Indiana Department of Correction Policy for Administering the U.S. Department of Labor Apprenticeship Program and Work Processes for Occupations Registered with the USDOL. penproducts.com/reentry/apprenticeship

Correctional Agencies Recognized as Leaders in Post-Release Placements

www.nationalcia.org

www.penproducts.com

www.aca.org



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