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Provider Transformation and Integrated Employment

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Provider Transformation and Integrated Employment

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A project of

ThinkWork!

at the Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston

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Today's Agenda

- *National policy context*
- *Overview of project and research activities*
- *Results of Delphi process and case studies: Top 10 elements*
- *What does it really look like in practice?*

National policy context

- Employment First
- CMS language
- WIOA
- Department of Justice



RRTC on Advancing Employment for Individuals with IDD



- Individual and family knowledge and engagement
- Effective employment supports
- Organizational change for community providers
- State-level policy and strategy

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Supporting providers to evolve how they deliver services

Through:

- a framework for building capacity
- a toolkit to guide organizations
- an efficient scalable strategy (a facilitated, peer-to-peer learning community) for supporting change across networks of providers

Research activities

- Two main research activities that frame our presentation (Delphi Process and case studies)
- Delphi panel to identify critical elements and case studies to show those elements on the ground
- Delphi Process is complete, but case studies in process of collecting data

Purpose of the Delphi Panel

- Getting a group of experts to agree on a topic
- “What is most important for providers during transformation?”
- 2 rounds (identify, rank)
- What does the feedback tell us?



Who participated in the Delphi?

- 36 experts in organizational transformation
- Represented a range of groups (provider staff and management, self-advocates, families)
- Had knowledge of, or had participated in, a transformation process

Purpose of the case studies

- Provide examples of what Delphi characteristics look like on the ground
- Provide depth as to how the characteristics can be implemented
- Provide detail and resources to populate our Toolkit
- Provide us with a state systems context as it relates to the provider experience

Who participated in the case studies?

- AtWork! - Bellevue, WA (Seattle metro)
- Work, Inc. – Dorchester, MA (Boston metro and Cape Cod)
- The Arc of Westchester – Westchester County (NYC metro)
- Penn-Mar Human Services - Glen Rock, PA (rural)

How did we choose them?

- 28 individual organizations were nominated by Delphi panelists, research team members and others
- Web research and follow-up using 3 inclusion criteria lead to 9 finalists
- Phone-based screening interviews resulted in 4 finalists

East Bay Innovations/Arc of Alameda County

- The Arc of Alameda County in 1992 served approximately 200 people in sheltered workshops and about 200 in individual and group supported employment. In 1987, approximately 40 people were served at the Tri Valley workshop.
- East Bay Innovations, my current agency started in 1994, supports approximately 130 people in SE-IP and 30 in Project SEARCH programs
- I was asked to be here to show how our workshop closure stories illustrate the ten characteristics.

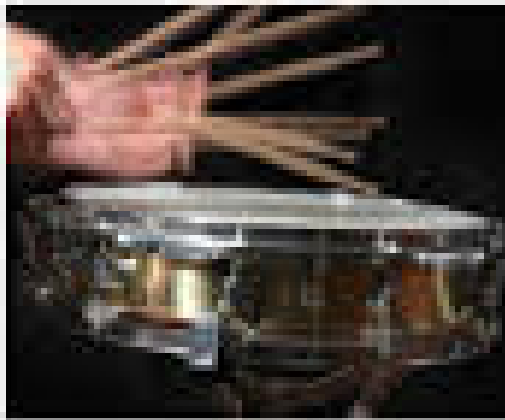
Audience participation time!

- Multiple and diverse community partnerships
- An active, person-centered job placement process
- An agency culture that values inclusion
- A holistic approach to supports
- A strong internal and external communications plan
- Reallocated and restructured resources
- Clear and consistent goals
- Effective performance measurement, quality assurance, and program oversight
- A focus on customer engagement
- An ongoing investment in staff professional development



Top 10 characteristics of transformative providers and some practical examples





**drum roll
please...**



Characteristic #1:

Clear and consistent goals

Establish an explicit commitment to increase employment.

Goals should be:

- measurable
- flexible
- compelling and easy to grasp
- directly reflective of the core mission
- specific to an established time frame



The Arc of Alameda County

- Worked with Agency Leadership and Board to approve closure of sheltered workshop when number of consumers attending decreased to below 20.
- Rationale to close was bolstered by a survey we sent to families of transition aged youth in the area which offered an array of service options (SE, community based day service, site based day service and sheltered workshop). Only 2 out of 30 respondents preferred sheltered workshop.
- Set timeline for closure and developed person centered transition plan for each consumer still attending the workshop, targeting their preferred service option and outlining steps to get there.

Characteristic #2: Agency culture

- Guides agency actions.
- Values positive thinking, learning, creativity, innovation, continuous quality improvement.
- Transmitted through values-based training, ongoing technical assistance, and staff mentoring.



Arc of Alameda County Commitment

- The Tri Valley sheltered workshop was closed in 1992. In 1993, the agency closed the Berkeley workshop.
- Program Director, Executive Director and Board were supportive. Leadership gave financial support during the transition.

Characteristic #3: An active, person-centered job placement process is accessible to all, including those with the most significant disabilities.



- Find jobs for 1 person at a time
- Creates momentum and enthusiasm

Examples

- Job development was provided to those whose transition plan targeted community integrated employment.
- Strategic identification of individuals from the workshop
- Welcome individuals back as motivation for peers

Characteristic #4: Communicate expectations often and to all.

Internally:

- Simple, visible practices and daily decisions
- Employment as clear and authentic expectation

Externally:

- How money is spent
- Goals-based data tracking
- Policy initiatives
- Simple outreach (newsletters)
- Family meetings

Case Study Examples

- Announce or choose not to announce
- Brag boards, Facebook posts, annual job match of the year, simple email blasts, wall of fame....
- Not all communication strategies work for all providers!

Characteristic #5: Reallocate and restructure all resources.

- Reinvent job positions and expectations
- Continuous staff development
- Remember: Investment reflects priorities, influences outcomes.



Case Study Example

- Get rid of the real estate in order to re-engineer job descriptions.



Characteristic #6: Ongoing professional development of staff

- Training, continuing education, conferences, mentorship lead to core competencies and best practices.
- Support employees at all levels to meaningfully contribute their ideas and energy to the mission.

Staff support

- Supported employment staff were energized by the challenges the transition posed.
- Training was offered to workshop staff who desired to work in supported employment.
- Ensure that all staff have a job opportunity, even with changed duties
- Provided clear direction: this change WILL happen, we WILL support staff, the workshop WILL close by a particular date

Characteristic #7: Customer focus and engagement

- Partner with self-advocates, families, business community
- Worked in partnership with funding source to make sure they were on board with the transition and helped make referrals to other programs.

Case study example

- Annual business appreciation breakfast



Characteristic #8: Employment performance measurement, quality assurance, and program oversight.

- Tracking individual outcomes
- Share accountability across all staff
- Understand baseline data
- Technology-enabled tracking systems

“What gets measured gets done.”

Accountability



Characteristic #9: Embrace a holistic approach throughout the employment process.

- Consider the whole person.
- Career planning process involves staff, parents, friends.
- Maintain personal relationships, develop new ones.

Considering the whole life

- Encouraged and supported a day program to start in our area whose services were geared to seniors and people with significant physical disabilities
- Reached out to families about community living options
- Leverage Community Life Engagement—connect individuals to "wrap around" supports and meaningful day activities such as fitness, computer courses, volunteering, and cooking classes.
- Explore volunteer placements to develop skills and experiences.

Characteristic #10: Develop multiple and diverse community partnerships.

- Create buy-in to the change process
- Include local businesses, school districts, state agency offices, faith-based organizations
- Effective partnerships:
 - promote actions that improve outcomes
 - foster positive change within systems
 - meet local economic needs

Case Study Example

- Innovative partnership with local college.
- Partnerships with adult education for pathways to high growth professions



Additional strategies: focus on transition-age youth

- We continued to expand supported employment placements. Developed direct hire group placements (which were new at the time).
- Placed a high priority on getting to know youth who were in their last year of K-12, to try to find employment opportunities that synced with their exit from school.

Work within your state context

- What's happening in CA?
- Take advantage of resources provided by State IDD agency if they exist
- You can do it no matter what. Only one of our four had state resources.

What's happening at your agency?



experiences?
challenges?
strategies?

Keep in touch!

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