Increasing Organizational Accountability and Performance: Activity Tracking for Employment Consultants

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Agenda

- Introduction
- Theory
- Examples From Research
- Examples From the Field
- Q & A
Definitions

- **Employment consultants (ECs)** are staff members in employment programs who assist job seekers with disabilities in finding employment. They also may be referred to as employment specialists, job developers, rehabilitation counselors, or employment support professionals.

- **Community rehabilitation programs (CRPs)** are non-profit or for-profit, private or public organizations that provide a wide range of services—including employment services—to people with any types of disabilities.

- **Employment** refers to work that pays at least minimum or prevailing wage and that entails working in an environment where the majority of co-workers do not have disabilities.
What's the problem?

Percentage employed

- No Disability
- Cognitive Disability

American Community Survey
Weekly wages (in 2013 dollars)

General population

American Community Survey

Think Work!
What are the desired goals?

- Higher employment rates
- Higher wages and more work hours
- Longer job retention
- Career advancement
Any good news? Yes!

- Employment first policies (12 states)
- DoJ scrutiny on day programs
- WIOA new provisions
- Families’ higher expectations
Big picture

Policies

CRPs

ECs
Focus on Employment Consultants (EC)

“...Regardless of the job seeker’s level of motivation, skill, experience, attitude, and support system, his or her ability to get a job will often depend on the effectiveness of employment specialists...

Simply stated, if they (employment specialists) are good, job seekers get jobs. If they are not, the barriers to employment for job seekers can become insurmountable...”

(Lueking et al., 2004, p. 29)
What do we know about ECs?

- Estimated 35,000 employment consultants serving the IDD population, nationally

- The majority of ECs support up to five job seekers with IDD per year in getting employment (60%)

- 73% of job seekers makes $8 per hour or less

- 62% of job seekers work 20 or less hours/week

Migliore et al, 2010
Part II

Theory
How to improve outcomes?

- All organizational results are the product of behavior...

- To improve results, you must first get people to change what they do...

- Do it either more often, or less often, or do it entirely different...

Aubrey & Bailey, 2014
3 keys to behavior change

Direct the rider
• give clear direction, reduce mental paralysis

Motivate the elephant
• find the emotional connection

Shape the path
• Reduce obstacles, tweak the environment, make the journey go downhill

Heath & Heath, 2010
http://www.slideshare.net/mnceeInEx/using-behavior-change-principles-to-increase-the-performance-of-traditional-residential-energy-efficiency-programs
Direct the rider: Clarify goals

- Identify what needs to be done
- Precisely define your expectations
- Pinpoint the results you want

Daniels & Bailey, 2014; Drucker 2004
Examples of What Needs to be Done

- Getting to know job seekers
- Searching for jobs
- Engaging employers to hire
- Support after hire
Direct the rider: Measure progress

- If you don’t measure it, you can’t tell if things are getting better, getting worse, or staying the same

- Measurement allows you to see smaller changes in performance than you could NOT see through casual observation

- People need useful information on how they are doing (i.e. feedback).

Daniels & Bailey, 2014
Direct the rider: Measure progress

- Time is the scarcest and most precious resource we have...

- A first step toward effectiveness is to record actual time use...

- Without an action plan one becomes prisoner of events, without a way of assessing which events really matter

(Peter Drucker, 2004, p. 35)
“...somehow you want to send the message clearly without getting people down. You can do that with numbers. People hear the message backed by numbers loud and clear. They say, ‘Boy, we’ve got to do something about that’...”

(Stack & Burlingham, 2013, p. 106)
Motivate the elephant

- Highlight successes
- Share success stories, tips, and peer-to-peer encouragement
- People do better when they are happy, have positive views of their organization
- Believe that our work is contributing to something that matters...

Shape the path

Provide tools:

- knowledge
- Technology
- Leadership
- Supports
Part III

Examples from Research
Research

- Employment consultants (EC) survey (2009)
- Pilot activity log (2013)
- Community Rehabilitation Programs survey (2014)
- Employment consultants Interviews (2015)
- Daily survey (2016)
What Domains have we Measured?

- Getting to know job seekers
- Searching for jobs
- Engaging employers to hire
- Support after hire
What Tools Have We Used?

- Survey: Multiple choice/Likert scale
- Activity log on paper
- Daily survey for smart phones (in progress)
Example of Survey

9. Please rate the extent to which you performed the following activities to get to know this job seeker’s skills and needs. (circle one response for each item)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Extent to which you performed these activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. I spoke to his/her family members.</td>
<td>Never  Very little  Some what  To a great extent  N/A</td>
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<td>B. I spoke to his/her acquaintances (i.e., friends, etc.).</td>
<td>Never  Very little  Some what  To a great extent  N/A</td>
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<td>C. I spoke to his/her former employers.</td>
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<td>D. I spoke to professionals from referral sources and/or funding agencies.</td>
<td>Never  Very little  Some what  To a great extent  N/A</td>
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<td>E. I observed the job seeker in non-work environments (e.g., shopping, home, etc.).</td>
<td>Never  Very little  Some what  To a great extent  N/A</td>
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<td>F. I used job assessments at a community-based employment site.</td>
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<td>G. I facilitated or attended a person-centered planning meeting for the job seeker.</td>
<td>Never  Very little  Some what  To a great extent  N/A</td>
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Example of Survey findings

Percentage of ECs performing these activities for **most or all** job seekers... to get to know job seekers

- Talked to acquaintances: 17%
- Talked to former employers: 19%
- Situational assessment: 38%
- Observation in non-work environment: 43%
- Talked to family members: 54%
- Talked to referral and funding agencies: 59%
- Facilitated/attended person centered planning: 61%

N= 163 Ecs in 28 states
...to search for jobs?

- One-Stop Career Centers: 16%
- Searched without referrals in mind*: 18%
- Negotiated job descriptions: 27%
- Knocked on doors of businesses*: 33%
- Involved family members or…: 34%
- Asked employers about related…: 39%
- Attended business events*: 51%
- Approached past employers: 53%
- Made cold calls to employers: 53%
- Reviewed classified ads: 53%

*In the past three months
Survey Pros and Cons

Pros

- Relatively quick/easy
- One-time measure
- Allows to track several activities

Cons

- Self-reported
- Accuracy is an issue
- No quantitative measurements
## Example of Activity Log

**INTERVENTION LOG**

**Employment Program**

Name of employment consultant: ________________________ Week Ending on (dd/mm/yy): ______________

Please choose a typical week of work and, for each interval in the table, write the code number corresponding to the primary activity that you performed. Use the list of activities and codes on the right side of this form. Please complete ALL your work hours, including those not assigned to community employment.

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### Codes

**Career planning and individual supports**
1. Time spent with the job seeker (e.g., career planning)
2. Time spent with the job seeker in the community for job trials
3. Time spent with family members or acquaintances to support the job search

**Job Development**
4. Time spent with employers or representatives of employers for the purpose of job development and negotiation
5. Reviewing job postings in newspapers, internet, or other resources
6. Other job development work (e.g., general outreach not on behalf of an individual, going to business associations)

**Job support**
7. Time with job seekers at their jobs in the community (e.g., job coaching, training, observing, etc.)
8. Time with employer, supervisors or coworkers about an individual who has already started work (e.g. coaching business personnel, checking on performance,)
9. Traveling with consumers (e.g. transportation to work or interviews)

**General supports**
10. Interacting with professionals (e.g. Case managers, Residential staff, sources of referrals, funding agencies, etc.)
11. Doing administrative duties in office (e.g. Paperwork, meetings, etc)
12. Other not included in the above list
Example of Activity log Findings

Percentage of weekly hours (N=49 ECs)

Adm duties (e.g. Paperwork, meetings, etc) 28%
Other (12%)
Reviewing job ads in newspapers, internet, 10%
At JS s workplace (e.g., job coaching, 9%
With job seekers for career planning (9%)
Traveling with JS (e.g. to work or, 7%
At work sites for job exploration (6%)
With case managers, Residential, referrals, 5%
Outreach not on behalf of a specific JS (e.g, 5%
With empl/their reprs. for job... 5%
Coaching business personnel, checking on... 3%
With family members or acquaintances (1%)

ThinkWork!
Activity Log Pros and Cons

Pros
- More Precise (Tracks 30 minutes periods)
- More Objective

Cons
- Limited number of activities tracked
- Time consuming/distracting
- People may forget
What’s next?
Daily Survey for Smart Phones

Tell us about your “What, Who, and Where” primary activities in which you were involved during the 30 minutes right before your inbox got the email with the link to this survey.

What? (What was the main purpose of your activity?)

What? (What was the main purpose of your activity?)

Who? (Who was your main interaction with?)

Where? (Where were you?)

Number of employers met yesterday (in person or on the phone) *

Number of job seekers’ interviews with employers yesterday *

Number of job descriptions negotiated yesterday *
Pros and Cons

Pros

- More activities tracked: What, Who, and Where and their combination
- Precise (30 minutes periods)
- Immediate
- Less disruptive
- Longer data collection (1 year)
Cons

- Not everybody have smart phones
- Requires connectivity to a cellular network
- Samples only 30 minutes per day
What Data Tracking Tools do CRPs use?

- Excel, Access, or paper: 57%
- Web-based: 22%
- Do not track activities: 14%
- Other: 7%

136 CRPs in 37 states in USA
What Web-based tools are available?

- set-works.com
- salesforce.com
- therapservices.net

- State-provided tools
- Agency developed tools
Part IV

Examples from the Field:
Please request the slides to Jeannnine Pavlak at
jeannine.pavlak@nebaworks.com
Work Inc.

Please request the slides to Steve Aalto at 

Saalto@workinc.org
Conclusions

- Use data to drive performance
- Explore what others do
- Start low tech
- Invest in technology
- Try, assess, revise, repeat
Questions?
References

Contact information

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