



LEAD CENTER

Customizing Employment: Success through Partnerships

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The LEAD Center is led by National Disability Institute and is funded by the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor, Grant No. #OD-23863-12-75-4-11

WELCOME

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Project Director

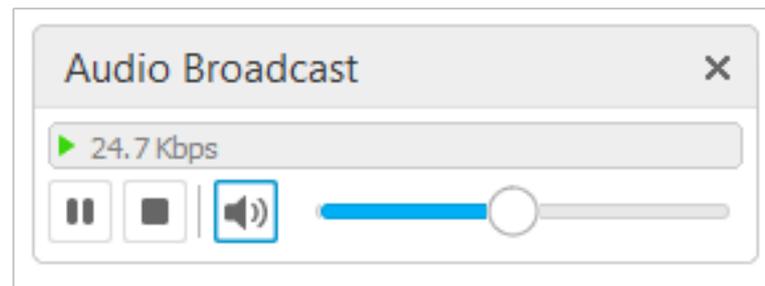
LEAD Center

A Project of National Disability Institute



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LEAD CENTER MISSION

- ▶ To advance sustainable individual and systems level change that results in improved, competitive integrated employment and economic self-sufficiency outcomes for individuals across the spectrum of disability.



AGENDA

- ▶ The Importance of Customized Employment (CE) for people with disabilities in WIOA
- ▶ Integrated Resource Teams:
 - ▶ Braiding and Leveraging Resources for CE through American Job Centers (AJCs) -Lessons from the Field
- ▶ Partnering for CE Delivery:
 - ▶ Examples of Inter-Agency Collaboration
 - ▶ An Employer's Perspective on the Value of Customized Employment
- ▶ Questions & Answers



WEBINAR OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Participants will:
 - ▶ Identify opportunities for collaborations that enable youth and adults with disabilities and others who experience barriers to employment to benefit from Customized Employment strategies to achieve employment outcomes
 - ▶ Learn about practices that are being successfully implemented in different parts of the country
 - ▶ Learn about Customized Employment resources they can use to assist job seekers in getting and keeping jobs



TODAY'S MODERATORS

Rebecca Salon, Ph.D.

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TODAY'S SPEAKERS

Brian Ingram

Technical Assistance Liaison
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LEAD Center Subject Matter Expert
Moving to a Different Drum, LLC



THE IMPORTANCE OF CE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WITHIN WIOA

Christopher Button, Ph.D.

Supervisor, Workforce Systems Policy

Office of Disability Employment Policy

U.S. Department of Labor



Braiding and Leveraging Resources for CE through
American Job Centers (AJCs)
Lessons from the Field

Brian Ingram

Technical Assistance Liaison
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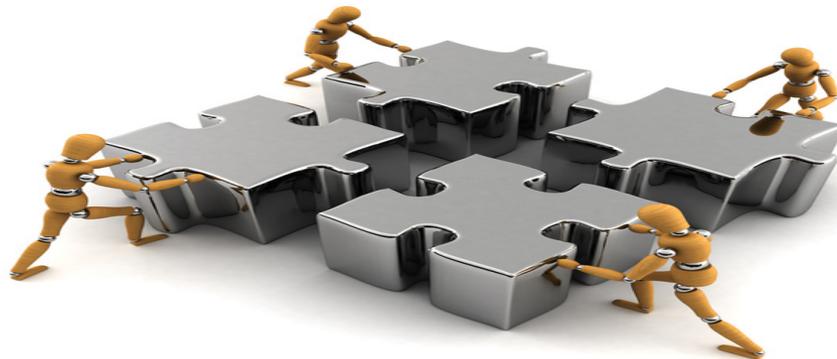
What is an Integrated Resource Team (IRT) ?

- An Integrated Resource Team or IRT is driven by the needs of the customer it is built around as it relates to their chosen employment goal.
- Supporting a customer as they develop and commit to an employment goal is the commencement point of the IRT process



What Is an Integrated Resource Team (IRT) cont.

- **An IRT is initiated on behalf of an individual with a disability who is experiencing multiple challenges in reaching an employment goal**
- **It addresses that one individual's specific needs in relation to attaining this goal.**



What an IRT is and is NOT...

- ▶ **An IRT is an INFORMAL approach used for an INDIVIDUAL job seeker.**
 - An IRT is *NOT* an interagency committee consisting of various disability/community agencies that focus on systems collaboration. Nor is it a group of providers that meet to discuss a cohort of shared customers.
- ▶ **The main purpose of an IRT is EMPLOYMENT.**
 - The main purpose of an IRT is *NOT* resource mapping or to assist an individual to learn about various agency resources.

Who Participates on an IRT?

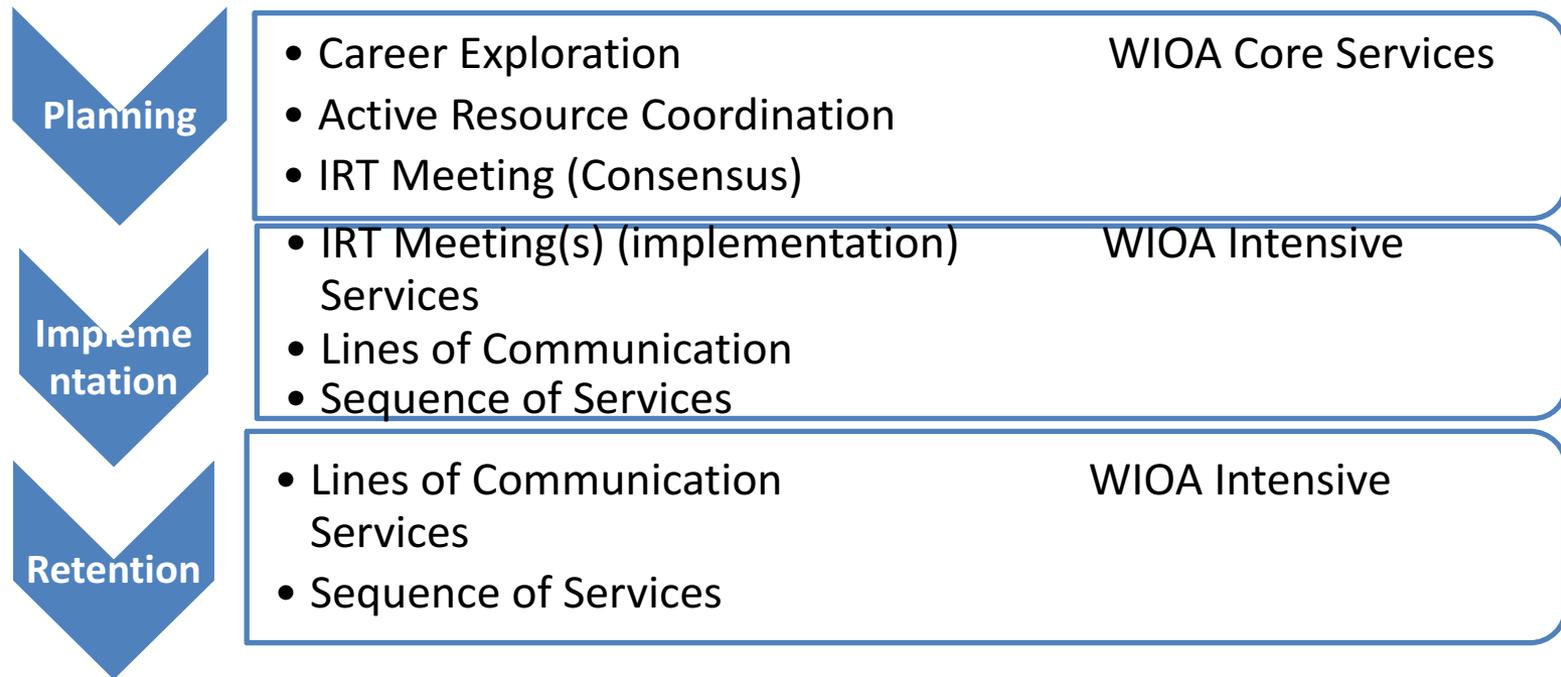
An Integrated Resource Team may consist of members from a wide variety of community programs and service providers, including:

- The Workforce Investment system
- Mental Health
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Independent Living Center
- Programs for Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing
- Commission for the Blind
- Community Work Incentives Coordinator
- Supported Employment Specialist
- Housing Provider
- TANF
- Advocates /Friends of Job Seeker



Integrated Resource Team (IRT) Flow Chart

The IRT model is designed to provide support to a customer through the entirety of a plan



What is the difference between an IRT and Active Resource Coordination?

- ▶ **Active Resource Coordination is the process of identifying needed resources and appropriate and prioritized action steps to address specific, targeted barriers to employment experienced by an individual entering the Job Center's customer flow.**
- ▶ **Active Resource Coordination always takes place PRIOR to an Integrated Resource Team (IRT) being put in place. Although active resource coordination may take place without resulting in an IRT.**

So you can have Active Resource Coordination without an IRT, but you CANNOT have an IRT without first having done some Active Resource Coordination!

Active Resource Coordination is:

- **Actively assisting** a customer to identify, explore, and access available resources in a way that is specific to assisting a customer achieve their employment goal,
- **Positioning** the customer in the Title One system prior to coordinating with other providers
- **Providing** customers with targeted support around coordinating their resources beyond simple referral
- **Acknowledging** that a customer often has the least amount of leverage when it comes to advocating for themselves within service delivery systems

Active Resource Coordination (ARC) vs. Simple referral

ARC differs from simple referral to resources (which is a legitimate WIOA service) in a number of important ways:

- ARC begins with an employment goal then makes referrals based on needs specific to attaining that goal.
- In ARC referrals are made internally to WIOA Title One services before or at the same time referrals are made to other systems.
- In ARC the WIOA Title One system makes an initial commitment to advocate for a customer as they engage in eligibility for additional services.
- In ARC the WIOA Title One system makes an initial commitment to take the lead in convening multiple service providers for the purpose of resource coordination.

Integrated Resource Team (IRT) Meeting

The purpose of an IRT meeting is to convene all the providers that have service commitments to a specific customer to share information about each provider's service plan and then reach consensus around three key parameters:

1. A common Employment goal
2. Sequence of services
3. Lines of communication

Important Note: The IRT is not the meeting itself, therefore you don't hold an "IRT" when you have one meeting of team members. The IRT is an ongoing support.

How can the Customized Employment (CE) “Discovery” process lead to an IRT?

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- Engagement-conversations about work as a possibility
- Support the employment goal development process through evidence-based methods (harm reduction, motivational interviewing, informational visits, job testing, etc.)
- ‘Discovery 101’-Informal, place-based conversations about strengths, assets, skills as a basis for an employment goal
- Arraying needed services around the individual to support employment (housing, food, supports, etc.)
- **Set the stage for the ARC**

PARTNERING TO IMPLEMENT CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

Lisa Mills

Owner, Moving to a Different Drum, LLC



PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

- Working with community and state system partners an essential strategy for AJCs
- Evidence-based employment strategies for people with disabilities – including **Customized Employment** – typically require coordination of resources across systems
- There are unique ways AJCs can partner with community providers of disability services to implement Customized Employment strategies that lead to employment outcomes

PARTNERSHIP AROUND JOBSEEKERS WITH DISABILITIES

- Partnering with other disability service providers can help AJCs
 - Reach jobseekers with disabilities they might otherwise not reach
 - Effectively serve job seekers with disabilities, including those with most significant disabilities
 - Ensure better coordination of AJC services and resources with the services and resources offered by other systems
 - Offer an effective model for implementing Customized Employment strategies, as emphasized under WIOA



GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY

- ▶ LEAD Center innovation
- ▶ Utilizes **Discovery** process – the most widely embraced aspect of Customized Employment – in a small-group, facilitated model
- ▶ AJC partners with disability service provider who is serving working-age individuals not yet in competitive integrated employment
- ▶ AJC **hosts** Guided Group Discovery at AJC (similar to other workshops held at AJCs)



GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY (CONT'D)

- ▶ AJC staff person and staff person from disability service provider **co-facilitate** the Guided Group Discovery process
- ▶ Disability service provider is able to **offer supports to individuals** participating, as needed, both during the Guided Group Discovery sessions and in-between those sessions
- ▶ **Resources of the AJC** and its partners (e.g. VR, community colleges, training providers, employer connections) can be **made available to individuals** to pursue the employment goal they arrive at through the Guided Group Discovery process



EXAMPLE #1 OF GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY

- ▶ Butler County, Kansas AJC partnered with community mental health center (CMHC)
- ▶ AJC and CMHC staff co-facilitated the process
- ▶ AJC got connected with individuals with psychiatric disabilities wishing to obtain employment
- ▶ AJC staff person Mikayla Fink on webinar today



BUTLER COUNTY AJC SUCCESS STORY



- ▶ Laura participated in Guided Group Discovery
- ▶ Guided Group Discovery helped her clarify her desire for career in child development
- ▶ AJC and CMHC helped her find an initial job working 40 hours /week earning \$10/hour at call center
- ▶ AJC made supportive services funds available to help Laura get to/from work for first six weeks on the job

BUTLER COUNTY AJC SUCCESS STORY (CONT'D)



- ▶ AJC made training funds available so Laura could return to community college to obtain a certification in Early Childhood Development
 - ▶ **This is entry-level certification that puts Laura on the career path she chose as a result of participating in Guided Group Discovery process**
- ▶ The partnership between the AJC and the CMHC ensured that all of Laura's needs were met (career/employment, psychological, physical, financial) so that her employment effort was successful.

EXAMPLE #2 OF GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY

- ▶ *Workforce Essentials* Clarksville, Tennessee AJC partnered with *Progressive Directions*, a Medicaid intellectual disability (ID) services provider
- ▶ AJC and ID provider staff co-facilitated the process **at the AJC**
- ▶ AJC got connected with individuals with intellectual disabilities wishing to obtain employment
- ▶ ID service provider was able to use Medicaid funding to provide transportation and support to individuals with ID participating in Guided Group Discovery



CLARKSVILLE TN AJC SUCCESS STORY

▶ **Every individual** from Progressive Directions that participated in Guided Group Discovery was offered a job at competitive wage



▶ Guided Group Discovery enabled participants to expand their views about what types of jobs they were qualified for



▶ Hosting group at AJC enabled participants and the Medicaid provider to become familiar with the AJC and the many resources it offers



CLARKSVILLE TN AJC SUCCESS STORY (CONT'D)

- ▶ One individual works at a local hospital
- ▶ He has advocated for new tasks to be added to his Customized job description as he has gained confidence, shown his supervisor what he can do, and recognized how he could do more to meet the hospital's needs
- ▶ He received a raise last month
- ▶ Sharyn Hancock and Margaret Davis on webinar today.



SELF-GUIDED DISCOVERY

- ▶ LEAD Center supporting this innovation from Griffin-Hammis Associates
- ▶ Takes Customized Employment and makes it into a self-guided, **self-paced process**
- ▶ Emphasis on Discovery – first step in Customized Employment
- ▶ For individuals who do not need (or do not want) other forms of Discovery (e.g. 1:1 facilitated process; small, peer-group Guided Discovery process)

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM SELF-GUIDED DISCOVERY?

- ▶ Job seekers in the Workforce System who have a disability (may not qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation or other government assisted employment services)
- ▶ People with a previous career who have recently acquired a disability
- ▶ People with a disability who have a college degree, technical certificate, or advanced training
- ▶ Veterans with disabilities who were trained in specific skills in the military
- ▶ People with sensory disabilities who may fall into one of the categories listed above
- ▶ People with Asperger Syndrome



SELF-GUIDED DISCOVERY FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

- ▶ Self-Guided Discovery is also effective for families with sons or daughters ranging from early childhood to their School Transition years.
- ▶ One benefit of Self-Guided Discovery for families is the ability to engage in the process over the course of several years.
- ▶ The process can guide families in teaching their child functional skills that are valuable later in life and that enhance employability.
- ▶ The process also guides educational efforts including work experiences, academics, skills training, after-school employment, and school to work transition.



SELF-GUIDED DISCOVERY COMPONENTS

- ▶ Personal Profile
- ▶ Financial Goals
- ▶ Exploitable Skills
- ▶ Ideal Conditions of Employment
- ▶ Touch Base
- ▶ Defining Vocational Themes to Guide Employer Contacts
- ▶ Linking Discovery and Customized Job Development



AJCs USING SELF-GUIDED DISCOVERY

- ▶ LEAD Center supporting AJC use of Self-Guided Discovery in three states: AR; GA; RI
- ▶ AJC staff trained to act as **Facilitators/Guides** for people using the **Self-Guided Discovery Manual**
- ▶ AJC staff functioning in role of Facilitators/Guides were trained via webinar on how to carry out this role, and completed the Self-Guided Discovery Manual for themselves as part of the training



AJC STAFF FUNCTION AS FACILITATOR/GUIDE

- ▶ Reviewing progress/process creates strong focus for AJC case manager relationship with job seeker
- ▶ Self-Guided Discovery is an effective way to **put the control** of one's career development **squarely in the hands of the job seeker**, with support from AJC staff as needed
- ▶ AJC staff help individuals with drawing out most important learning from Self-Guided Discovery and applying that to their employment search effort



PERSPECTIVE FROM GEORGIA

“Self-Guided Discovery was a great experience for the Georgia Team. The team collaborated on different pathways during the self-guided discovery process. Due to the diverse professional backgrounds of the team members, we were able to suggest alternative pathways not previously considered. Which was very impactful for the clients.”

Norris Smith

Rapid Response Coordinator

Georgia Department of Economic Development

Workforce Division



BENEFITS OF SELF-GUIDED DISCOVERY

- ▶ As with using Discovery in any form, it creates a **holistic picture of a person** to guide identification of job/career goals and job search in a much **more sophisticated way** than would otherwise be the case without Discovery.
- ▶ Result is more targeted and informed job search – leading to a better job match: A **win/win** for the employer and the job seeker.



CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT AS A KEY HR STRATEGY

- ▶ Customized Employment (CE) is a flexible process designed to create a personalized employment relationship between a job seeker and a business in a way that meets the needs of both.
- ▶ Can Customized Employment be a significant hiring strategy for businesses?



PROFILING KWIK-TRIP AS A THRIVING MIDWEST COMPANY AND TOP EMPLOYER



- ▶ Mid-western, family-owned company that operates gas stations and convenience stores in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa.
- ▶ Celebrating their 50th year, they operate 475 stores.
- ▶ This is growing and prospering company which is currently opening 35 new stores and adding 2,200 new employees each year.
- ▶ Today, the company has over 14,000 employees and is consistently viewed as one of the top places to work in the states where it operates.

PROFILING KWIK-TRIP SUCCESS WITH SCALING CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT



- ▶ Kwik Trip is a place that attracts many people who want employment with the company.
- ▶ So why would a company - that has no trouble attracting people to hire - adopt a commitment to hiring people with disabilities?
- ▶ The answer is simple: they used Customized Employment as far back as twenty years ago to employ a person with a disability in one of their stores.
- ▶ The benefit to the store was so great (and mostly unexpected) that the idea of doing this in other stores took root.

HOW KWIK-TRIP BEGAN WITH CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT



The first Customized Employment at Kwik Trip:

- ▶ The standard “Guest Services Co-Worker” job description was modified to match the person’s skills with essential tasks that needed to be done in the store.
- ▶ This was really a traditional Job Carve – but it led the way to true Customized Employment taking root
- ▶ A unique job title (“Retail Helper”) with a flexible job description was created.

PROFILING KWIK-TRIP SUCCESS WITH CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT



- ▶ The flexible job description is customized for each employee with a disability and the store that s/he works in.
- ▶ The job description marries the best skills and contributions of the employee with a disability with the unique needs of the specific store where s/he works.
- ▶ It creates a win-win for employer and employee using an approach that **balances demand-side and supply-side thinking.**

KWIK TRIP'S SCALING OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT



- ▶ Today, Kwik Trip employs 247 people with disabilities as Retail Helpers.
- ▶ They just passed **a major milestone**: with 247 Retail Helpers, they now have **a Retail Helper in more than half of their 475 stores**.
- ▶ Average pay for Retail Helpers is \$10.19/hour
- ▶ The first Retail Helper just earned the month off with pay that comes after twenty years of service.

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT



- ▶ Retail Helper turnover is just 9.5% compared to 31.9% for other Kwik Trip retail store employees
- ▶ Retail Helpers' contributions consistently enhance and improve the customers' experience, increase co-worker morale, and free up store managers and co-workers to focus on other areas of the store operation.
- ▶ Stores with Retail Helpers are consistently superior performers for Kwik Trip
- ▶ This makes the investment in customizing employment and training well worth it over the long-term.

KWIK TRIP VALUES



- ▶ Retail Helper positions aren't the only jobs available to people with disabilities at Kwik Trip
 - ▶ But these positions offer customized employment for individuals who need this type of employment and who may otherwise be considered "not fully qualified" to fill other Kwik Trip positions.
- ▶ Kwik Trip creates opportunities for people to be promoted out of the Retail Helper position
- ▶ Customers let Kwik Trip know they value the company's hiring of people with disabilities



KWIK TRIP BOTTOM LINE



- ▶ The bottom line is that Kwik Trip took Customized Employment to scale because it created business advantage for the company.
- ▶ As a critical HR strategy, businesses can create mechanisms for utilizing Customized Employment throughout their companies
- ▶ Customized Employment is really the only type of employment that fully maximizes what an employee has to offer to its employer.



Customizing Employment: Success through Partnerships

QUESTION & ANSWER



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