



**LEAD CENTER**

# Customized Employment : Moving Beyond the Basics

July 30, 2014  
3:00 pm EST

*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*

# TODAY'S SPEAKERS

**Brittany Taylor** (Facilitator)  
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National Disability Institute

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Griffin-Hammis Associates, LLC



**The National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities (LEAD)** is a collaborative of disability, workforce and economic empowerment organizations led by **National Disability Institute** with funding from the **U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy**, Grant No. #OD-23863-12-75-4-11.

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# WELCOME

## **Christopher Button, Ph.D.**

Supervisory Policy Advisor, Workforce System Policy

US Department of Labor

Office of Disability Employment Policy



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# SUBMITTING QUESTIONS

**For Q&A:** Please use the chat box or Q&A box to send any questions you have during the webinar to **Nakia Matthews** or **Brittany Taylor** and we will direct the questions accordingly during the Q&A portion.

- ▶ If you are listening by phone and not logged in to the webinar, you may also ask questions by emailing questions to [btaylor@ndi-inc.org](mailto:btaylor@ndi-inc.org).

***Please note:*** This webinar is being recorded and the materials will be placed on the LEAD Center website at [www.leadcenter.org/webinars/customized-employment-moving-beyond-basics](http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/customized-employment-moving-beyond-basics)



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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.



# TODAY'S DISCUSSION

- ▶ Builds on previous webinars provided by the LEAD Center on Group Discovery and Customized Employment. To view the archives, <https://www.leadcenter.org/webinar-archive>
- ▶ The field of Customized Employment is growing and there are several techniques, based on a set of Customized Employment concepts.
  - ▶ Today's discussion will provide you with an excellent understanding of one approach. If you have questions about other approaches or integrating the concepts you learn today with other approaches, please reach out to us at the LEAD Center, [info@leadcenter.org](mailto:info@leadcenter.org).



# AGENDA

- ▶ Review of Learning Objectives
- ▶ Brief Overview of Customized Employment (CE)
- ▶ Discovery As the Foundation of CE
- ▶ Linking Discovery to Employment
- ▶ Employment Supports
- ▶ Ongoing Career Development
- ▶ CE Success Story
- ▶ Question and Answer

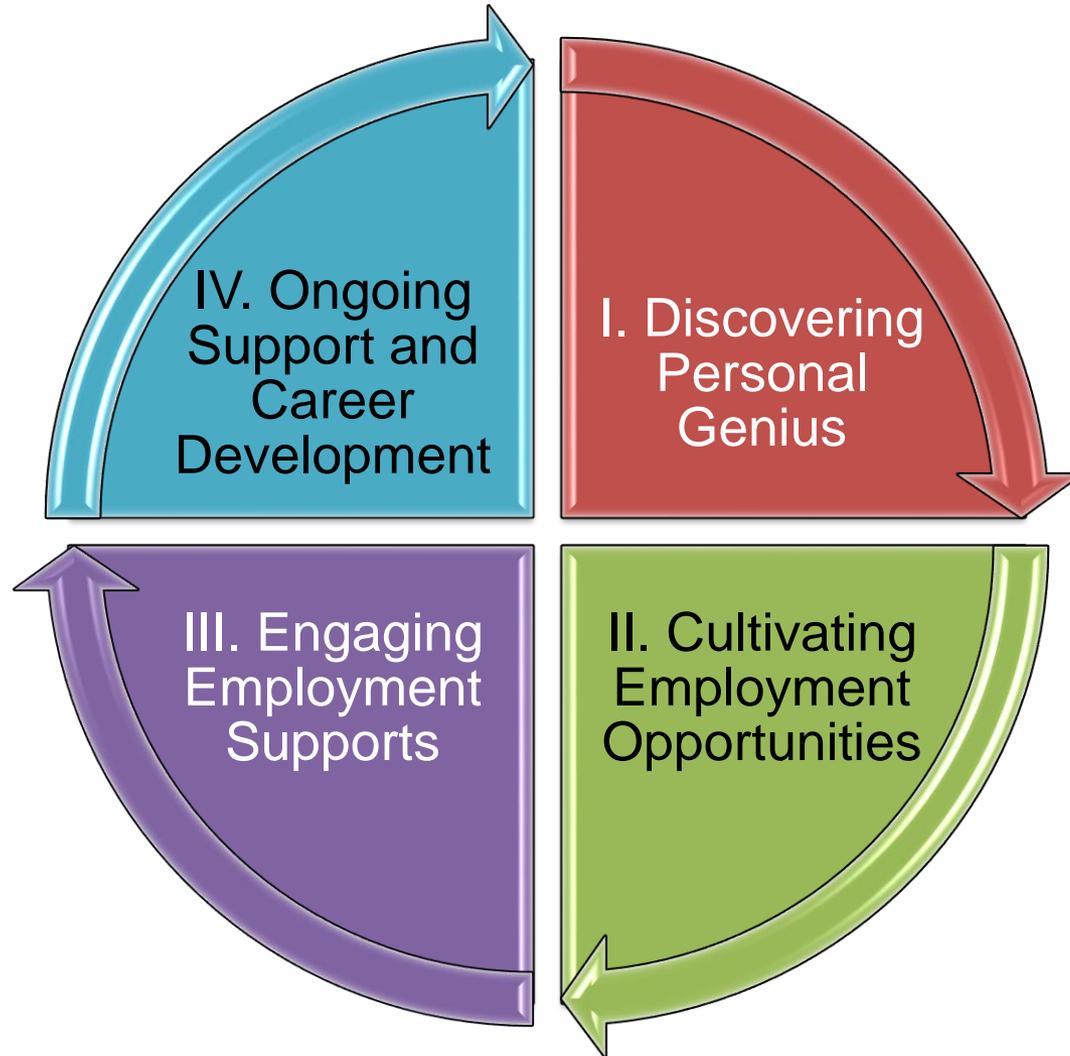


# WEBINAR OUTCOMES

- ▶ Attendees will understand the 4 Phases of Customized Employment
- ▶ Attendees will learn how to use information gleaned in Discovery to guide job development and employment supports
- ▶ Attendees will learn how to discover the abundance of businesses in the community
- ▶ Attendees will hear an actual Customized Employment success story.



# THE PHASES OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT



# COMPONENTS OF CE

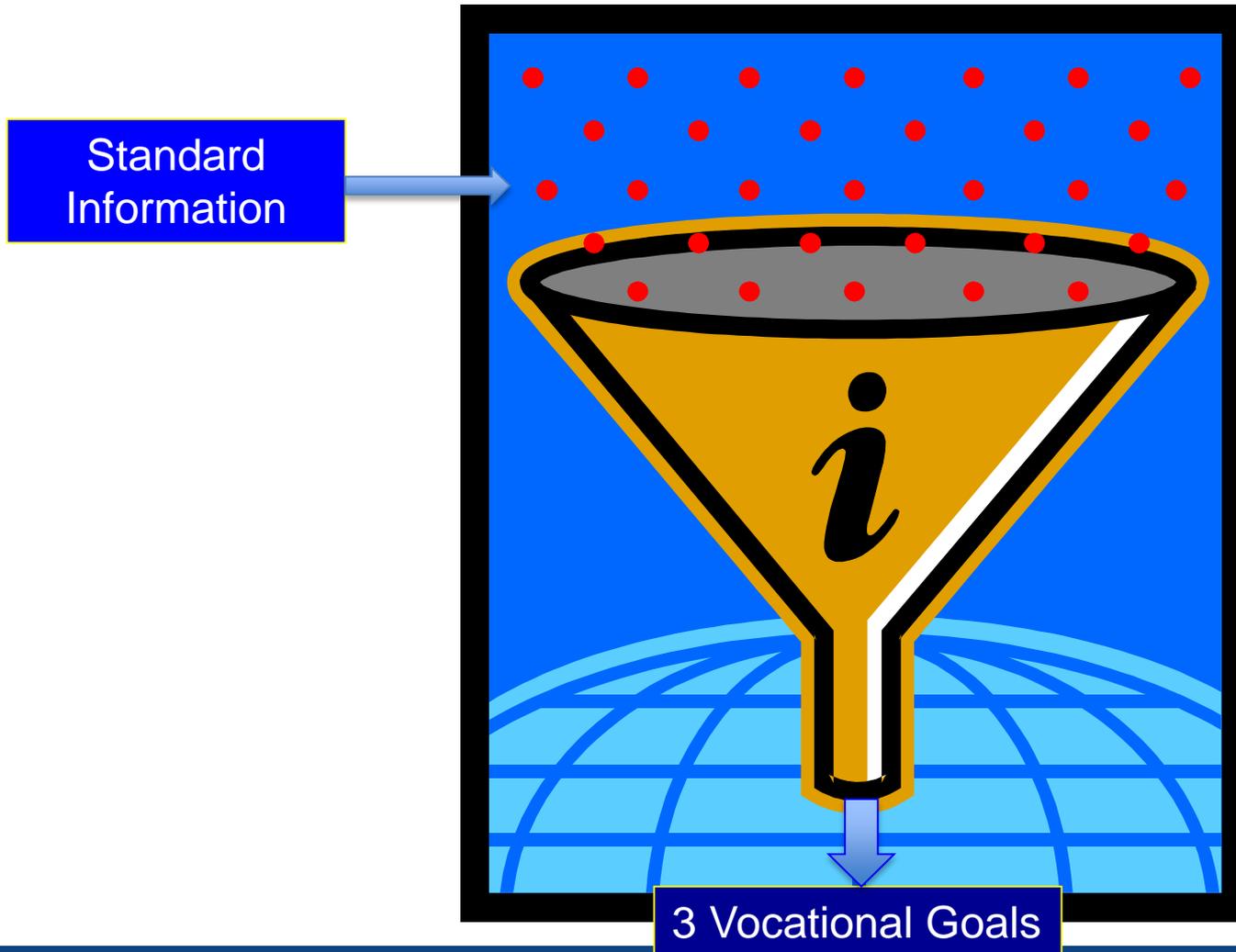
- ▶ Discovering Personal Genius <sup>TM</sup>
  - ▶ Vocational Themes <sup>TM</sup>
  - ▶ Interests and Skills
  - ▶ Ideal Conditions of Employment
- ▶ Casual Job Development
  - ▶ Informational Interviews
  - ▶ Paid Work Trials
- ▶ Employment Supports
  - ▶ Systematic Instruction
  - ▶ Co-worker Training and Support
- ▶ Ongoing Employment Consultation

# PHASE 1: DISCOVERING PERSONAL GENIUS™

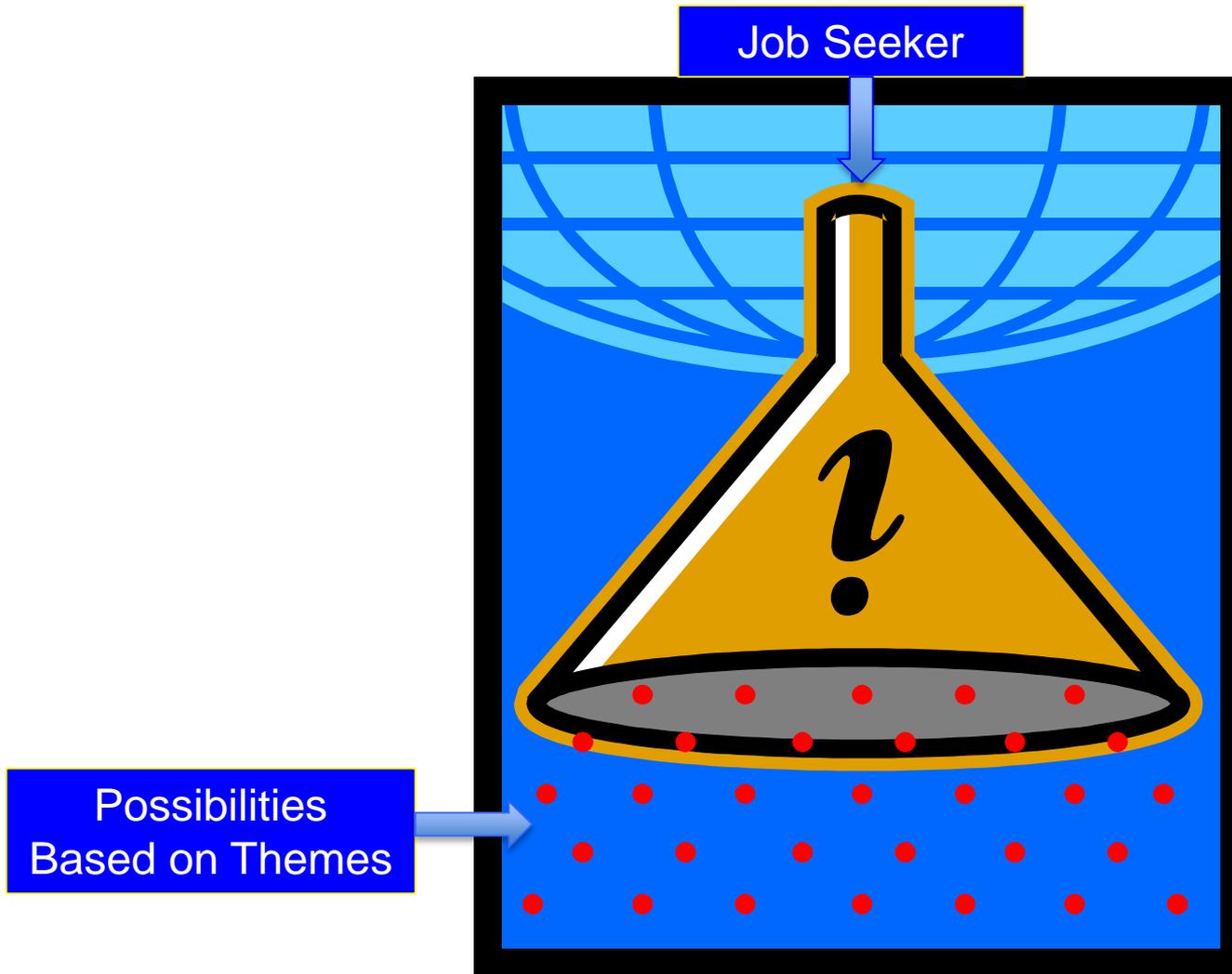
- ▶ Answers the basic question: “Who are you?”
- ▶ DPG identifies 3 Vocational Themes for Each Individual
- ▶ Each Theme generates a List of 20 places in the community where the Career Makes Sense
- ▶ Informational Interviews and Paid Work Experiences narrow the targets for Job Development



# TRADITIONAL ASSESSMENT

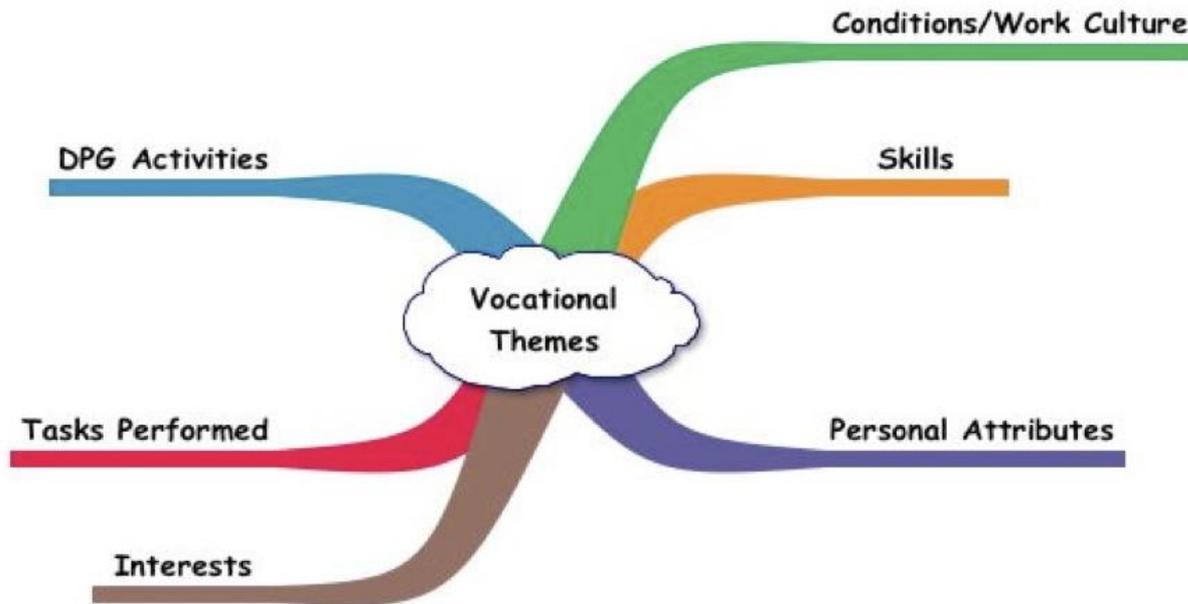


# A DIFFERENT APPROACH



# DIVINING VOCATIONAL THEMES

Griffin-Hammis Associates:  
Elemental Flow Chart for Developing Vocational Themes



# VOCATIONAL THEMES

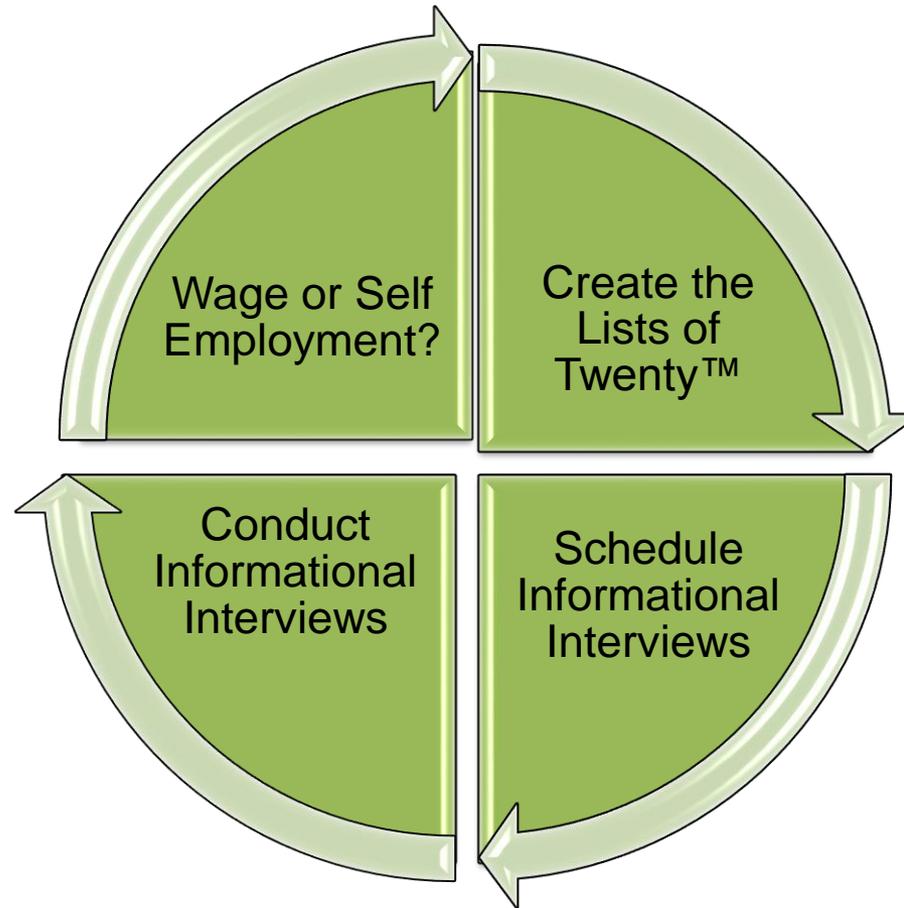
Themes are NOT Job Descriptions

- ▶ Themes are big and hold many, many jobs
- ▶ Themes open up the possibilities in even the smallest communities

# VOCATIONAL THEMES

- ▶ Why three? One isn't enough. If we have two and throw one out, we're back to one
- ▶ Themes are imprecise but provide guidance for DPG activities & career development
- ▶ Themes are Not The Sum Total of Skills, Tasks, Attributes, or Interests...but they make the Theme stronger

# PHASE 2: CULTIVATING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES (JOB DEVELOPMENT)



# RETHINKING TRADITIONAL METHODS

- ▶ The Discovery (i.e. Discovering Personal genius or Community-Based Functional Assessment) process reveals overarching Vocational Themes that allow for a broad collection of possible jobs, many unknown or unseen by the public.
- ▶ People connect over shared interests and employers connect to potential employees in the same way.

# RETHINKING TRADITIONAL METHODS

- ▶ Circumventing Human Resource (HR) departments and connecting the job seeker directly with the business owner or manager often works best, especially in smaller companies with little formal HR function.
- ▶ Employers are *ALWAYS* hiring. They are hiring people with similar interests, values and especially those who can generate profits.
- ▶ Skills, and ability to learn new skills, are critical to job creation.

# RETHINKING TRADITIONAL METHODS

- ▶ Sales training is an important tool in the job developer's arsenal.
- ▶ Workforce professionals must know how to manage their time, understand their services and represent job seekers in a respectful manner.
- ▶ Quality employment is built on the match between personal contribution and the needs of the work place.

# RETHINKING TRADITIONAL METHODS

- ▶ Over emphasizing selling misses the point of community employment.
- ▶ It is not, as sales approaches sometimes suggest, the charitable thing to do or a matter of convincing employers to hire.

# SALES AND JOB DEVELOPMENT

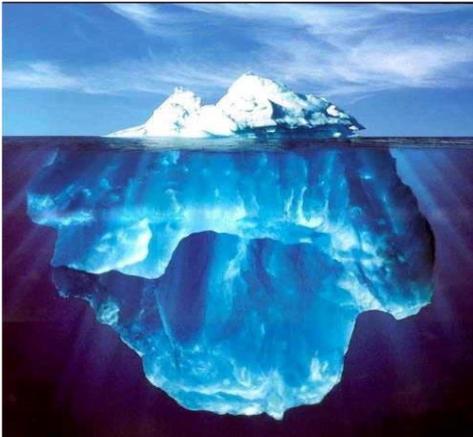
- ▶ Conventional Job Development requires four “sales” for every potential job:
  1. First you must “sell” yourself
  2. Second, you must “sell” your agency/company
  3. Because your agency has human services written all over it, you now must “sell” disability
  4. Finally, you must “sell” the job seeker

# THERE ARE 2 RULES TO SALES AND CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

1. The focus must always be on the individual job seeker
2. Never break Rule 1

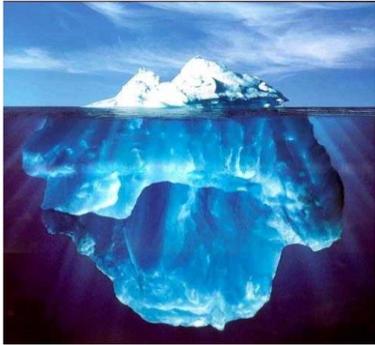
# FINDING THE JOBS BEHIND THE JOBS

Customized Employment Uses:



- ▶ A Positive Vocational Profile
- ▶ Themes instead of job descriptions
- ▶ Ideal Conditions of Employment
- ▶ Informational Interviews

# FINDING THE JOBS BEHIND THE JOBS



## Customized Employment Uses:

- ▶ Development up and down the “supply chain”
- ▶ Small and medium sized businesses
- ▶ Artisanal businesses where people actually “do something”
- ▶ Social Capital

***THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE WHO  
ARE INTERESTED IN THE SAME THINGS  
THAT INTEREST YOU***





# DIVINING VOCATIONAL THEMES: CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT/CULTURE

- ▶ Considerations for good worksite fit
- ▶ Conditions & Cultural Considerations don't change a Theme, they help discern which places are the best match
- ▶ Conditions may include: work hours, use of particular skills or performance of specific tasks, pay, intensity of supervision
- ▶ Work Culture may include: dress, humor, muscles or brains

***THERE'S A PLACE OUT THERE  
FOR EVERYBODY***



Griffin-Hammis Associates



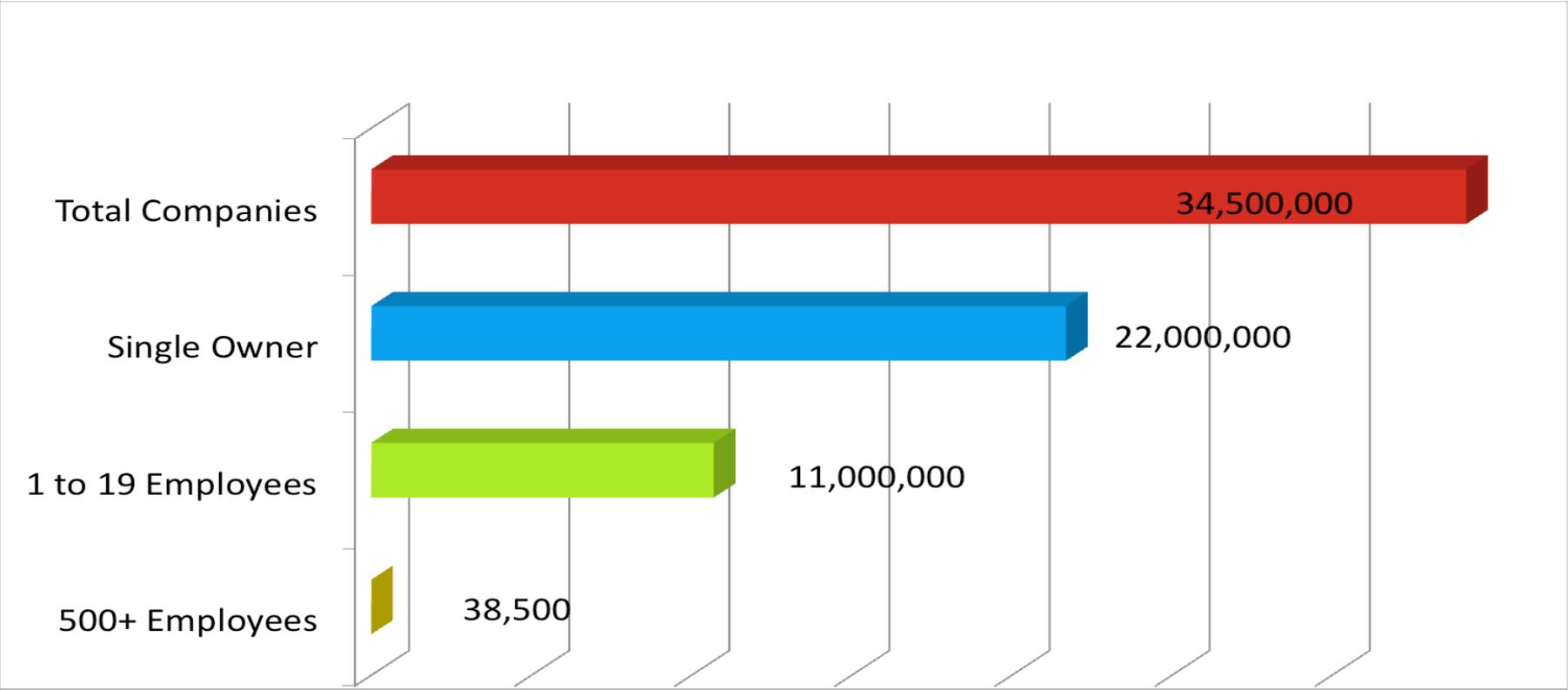
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# WHAT ABOUT THE LABOR MARKET?

- ▶ Labor Market statistics don't tell the whole story.
- ▶ An abundance of employment occurs in less obvious places and businesses.
- ▶ We are not reacting to the labor market, we are creating a labor market.
- ▶ Growth and recession do not seem to affect or change the employment rate for people with disabilities.

# BUSINESSES BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

*34,461,500 Companies with Fewer than 500 Employees*



US Census, Kaufmann Foundation, CFED, 2010-2012



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# INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

- ▶ Informational interviewing is a great way to:
  - ▶ develop work experience settings
  - ▶ build a job development network
  - ▶ discover new kinds of jobs
  - ▶ introduce yourself and your services to businesses
  - ▶ build the mental database that all of us rely on for employment ideas when beginning a job search with someone



# WHY INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS?

- ▶ Helps refine Themes and Lists of 20
- ▶ Reveals Skills and Tasks found in workplaces
- ▶ Reveals Ideal Conditions of Employment
- ▶ Warms up to Job Development
- ▶ Helps avoid thinking in Job Descriptions
- ▶ Casual way to create professional relationships
- ▶ Increases Social Capital for the Job Seeker

# INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

- ▶ Contacting Small Businesses
  - ▶ Dig deep for interesting, artisanal-types of businesses
  - ▶ Emails and dropping in
  - ▶ Phone calls
    - ▶ Preferred method
    - ▶ Keep it casual
    - ▶ Ask for manager or long-time employee
    - ▶ Ask for 15-20 minutes of his or her time
    - ▶ Ask for advice, not a job

# THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

- ▶ Ask for advice and *listen*
  - ▶ Questions to ask
- ▶ Take notes
- ▶ Get as many leads as possible
- ▶ Names, email addresses, phone numbers
- ▶ Determine the next steps
  - ▶ Change your list of 20 to reflect advice
  - ▶ Recognize a good fit (i.e. workplace culture, work environment, etc.)
  - ▶ Follow through with leads
  - ▶ Remember rejection happens more often than not; don't give up

# LANGUAGE AND CONTENT

- ▶ Focus on strengths, abilities, skills
- ▶ “Job Seeker” not Client, Consumer, Participant, Low and High Functioning, etc.
- ▶ Avoid Job Coach, Job Developer, Human Services jargon and terms
- ▶ The business person is the expert
- ▶ Include shared interests
- ▶ Don’t ramble about yourself, your business or your personal experiences
- ▶ Smooth Listening

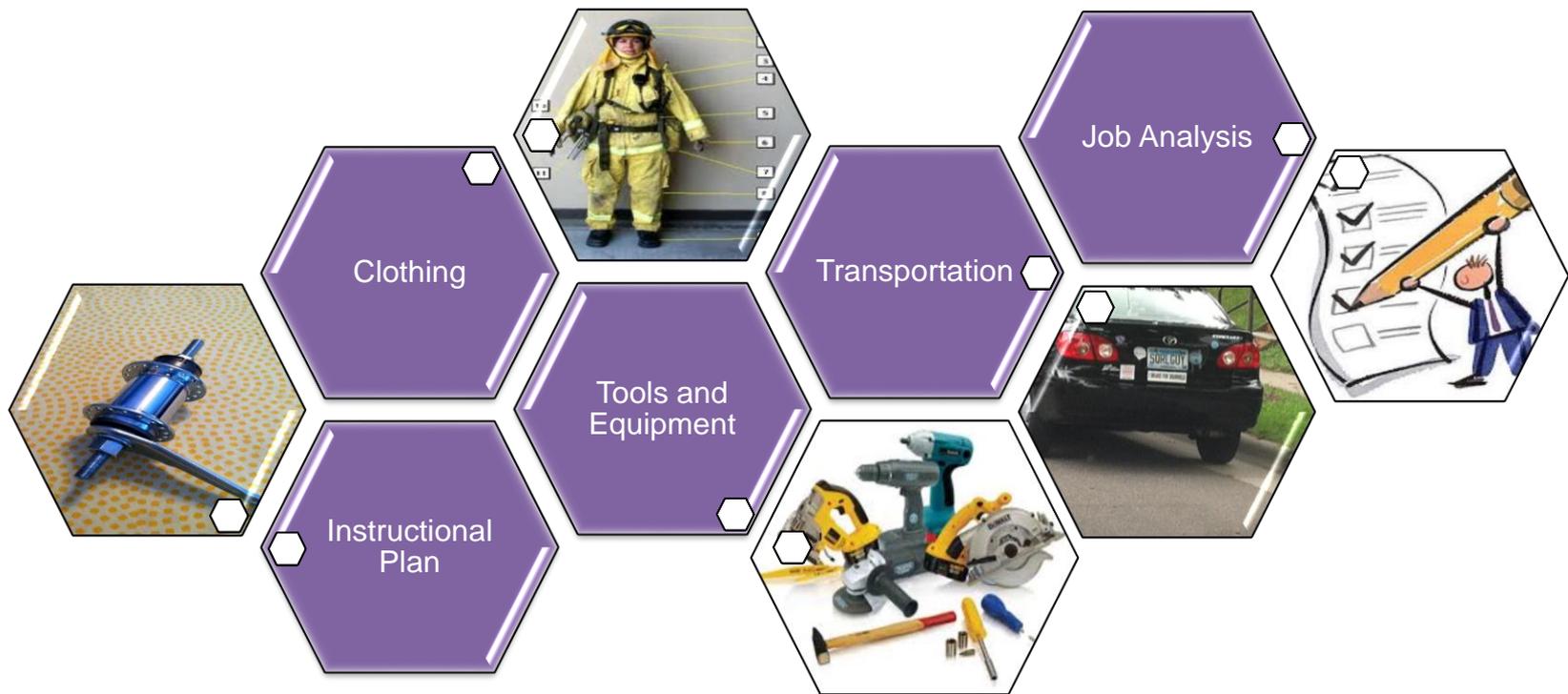
# FROM THEMES TO BUSINESSES

- ▶ What are 20 aspects related to the following themes?
  - ▶ Music
  - ▶ Death
  - ▶ Politics
  - ▶ Construction
  - ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Use this exercise to create a List of Twenty

# CRITICAL REVIEW

- ▶ What led you to that place or business?
- ▶ How did it make sense for the job seeker?
  - ▶ Themes
  - ▶ Ideal Conditions of Employment
  - ▶ Present skill or competency
- ▶ How did you contact the business?
  - ▶ What did you say?
  - ▶ How did you introduce yourself?
  - ▶ How did you introduce the job seeker?
- ▶ What went well?
- ▶ What problems/concerns arose?
- ▶ How did job seeker/employer respond?
- ▶ What would you change?

# PHASE 3: ENGAGING EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

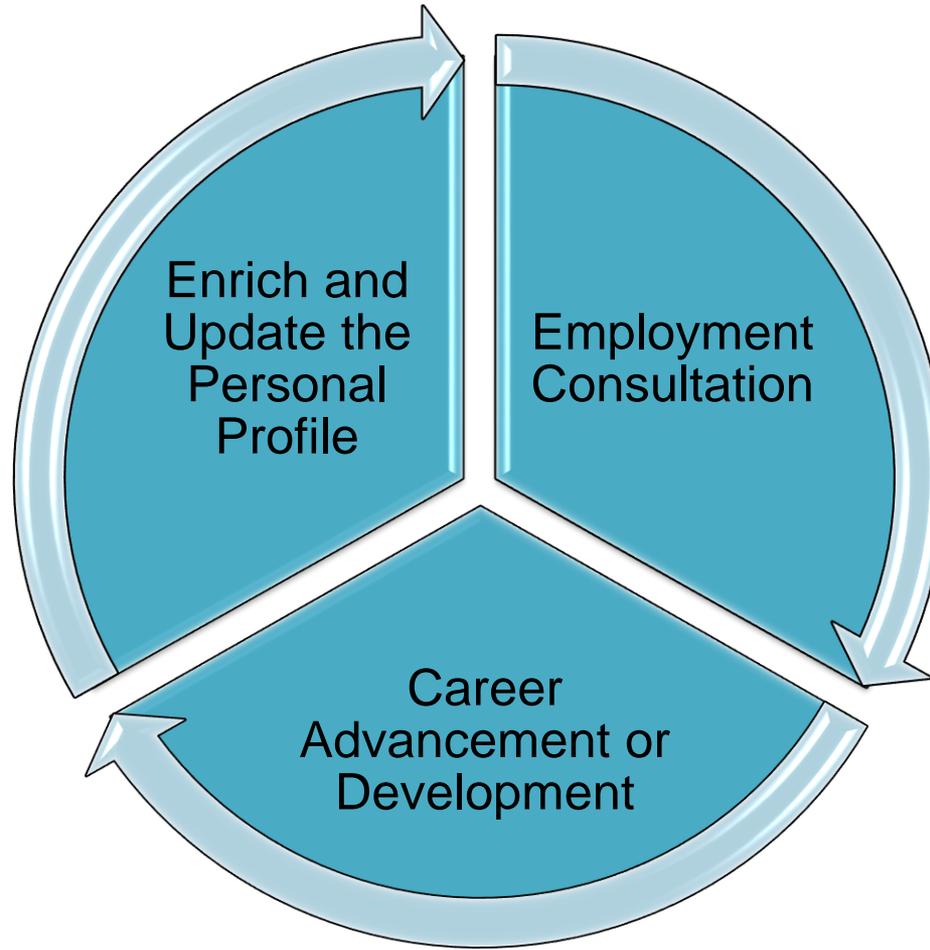


# EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

- ▶ The most typical employment supports include:
  - ▶ A thorough job analysis (tasks and responsibilities)
  - ▶ Instructional plan (what to learn and who will teach)
  - ▶ Clothing or other specialized equipment for the job
  - ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Discovery helps to identify supports before employment begins.



# PHASE 4: ONGOING SUPPORT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

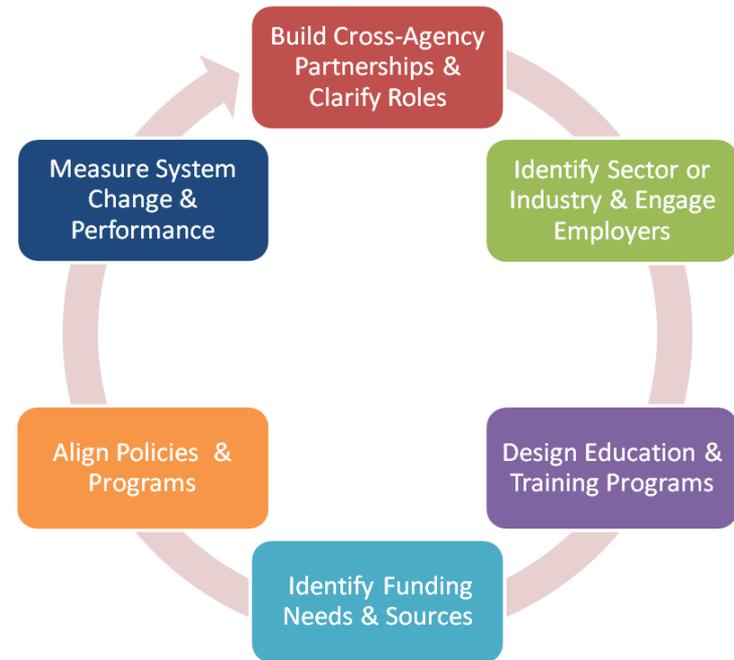


# CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS STORY



# CAREER PATHWAYS

- ▶ The term “career pathways” refers to a clear sequence of education coursework and/or training credentials that:
  - ▶ Build cross-agency partnerships & clarify roles
  - ▶ Identify industry sector or industry & engage employers
  - ▶ Design education & training programs
  - ▶ Identify funding needs & sources
  - ▶ Align policies & programs
  - ▶ Measure system change & performance



# CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER PATHWAYS

- ▶ Discovery and Customized Employment offer potential entry points into Career Pathways.
  - ▶ Identification of skills and qualifications
  - ▶ Targeted goals
  - ▶ Employer engagement
  - ▶ Shift in career expectations



# QUESTIONS?



# NEXT STEPS

- ▶ Next steps you can take to support/implement Customized Employment in your area.
  - ▶ Review the LEAD Centers archives on Group Discovery and Customized Employment,
  - ▶ Explore the DOL ODEP Customized Employment resources,
  - ▶ Shift your view of job placement from sales to securing informational interviews,
  - ▶ Connect with your local AJC partners to learn more about their Career Pathways initiative.



# LEAD CENTER *FREE* WEBINAR SERIES

- ▶ The LEAD Center will provide a new webinar on the last Wednesday of each month from 3:00p.m. EDT - 4:30p.m. EDT.
- ▶ Webinars will include three mini-series on:
  1. Economic Advancement
  2. Leadership
  3. Employment
- ▶ This month launched the employment mini-series, focused on improving outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

<http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars>



# UPCOMING WEBINARS

**August 27, 2014 at 3:00pm EDT**

## **Best Practices in Employee Retention and Return-to-Work: Lessons Learned from Employers**

Disability management and prevention is an important component in retaining talented employees and reducing turnover costs. In 2013, the LEAD Center studied a large successful U.S. Corporation to learn about and document effective retention and return-to-work policies and practices. This is a major focus for the U.S. Business Leadership Network as well as the Families and Work Institute, which just published their 2014 National Study of Employers. Join us for a review of lessons learned including:

- Employer retention and return-to-work best practices.
- How workforce professionals can partner with employers to promote employee retention and return to work.
- How to identify employers with policies that support customized employment.

***Target Audience:*** Workforce Development Professionals, Employers, Policy Makers, Individuals with Disabilities and related stakeholders.



# UPCOMING WEBINARS

**September 24, 2014 at 3:00pm EDT**

## **CILs and AJCs: Strategic Partnerships that Lead to Better Employment and Economic Advancement Outcomes**

A growing number of Centers for Independent Living are providing employment services to meet the needs of their customers and to improve the employment and economic advancement outcomes of individuals with disabilities. Join us to learn about findings and tools from a LEAD Center Demonstration Project completed with five Centers for Independent Living, the National Council on Independent Living and the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals to improve collaboration and coordination between the CILs and AJC management and staff.

***Target Audience:*** Workforce Development Professionals, Policy Makers, Individuals with Disabilities and related stakeholders.



# THANK YOU & CONTACT INFORMATION

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