



Improving Efficiencies in Supported and Customized Employment Services

A Service Provider Business Model

The need for quality supported and customized employment providers is growing. Explore the following tips on how to maximize the efficiency of supported and customized employment to improve employment outcomes at a cost that is reimbursable through state funding streams.

These tips are based on an in-depth quantitative analysis focused on a Wisconsin employment provider's cost of service hours compared to their paid invoice amounts for services completed, and a qualitative review of their case notes.



How can employment service providers improve their business model to meet the need for quality supported and customized employment services without losing money?



JOB MATCH IS KEY

The goal of employment services is to match a job seeker's interests, skills, and abilities to local employers' needs. Supported Employment and Customized Employment services provide additional time and tools to identify a quality match and additional on the job training and supports.

DISCOVERY & CAREER PROFILE

Current payment rates from Wisconsin DVR for Discovery and Career Profile is more than the rate for a Job Preparation and Development Plan under traditional job development. This increased amount allows the service providers more hours to identify good job matches.

JOB SHADOWS

Typically, when the Discovery process includes two to three job shadows, the provider can negotiate a subsequent Trial Work Experience with one or more of the sites. Job seekers, developers, and employers benefit most from direct exposure and observation of the job environment, duties, culture match, etc.



RAPID ENGAGEMENT

Individual Placement and Supports (IPS) fidelity includes rapid engagement. Progressing through employment services, reaching goals and meeting with potential employers is associated with higher employment outcomes. The same benefits of rapid engagement applied to Supported and Customized services.

TRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE

When job seekers have little or no recent work experiences, Trial Work Experiences are more likely to lead to a job placement than job search and placement alone.



JOB PLACEMENT

Good job placement requires on the job experience, so connecting job seekers with employers through job shadows and trial work experiences increases the likelihood of a quality match for the job seeker and employer. **Spending time and effort to secure community-based job shadows and work experiences isn't just best practice, it's good business.**



ON THE JOB TRAINING AND SUPPORTS

On the job training and supports through the job seeker's network or by the employer are more cost-effective and consistent.

EXISTING JOB SEEKER NETWORKS

Jobs are often found through existing networks. Make sure to explore the job seeker and their family's networks for possible job shadow, work experience, and/or permanent job leads. Utilize leads already identified through the job seeker, family, DVR, school or existing resources.

BUSINESS SERVICE CONSULTANT (BSC)

Understanding the needs of local businesses is key to meeting workforce needs and finding a good job match. **Employment providers new to an area, and even those familiar with an area, can benefit from reaching out to the local DVR BSC** who are experts on local business needs.



QUALITY STAFF

Cost of service will depend on quality of staff. Higher quality staff, training and technical assistance supports will cost more, but the higher the quality of staff, the quicker staff can complete the service. Therefore, a higher cost per hour maybe worth the extra cost if staff accomplish services quicker.



EFFICIENT CASE NOTES

Case notes that are too long and detailed take too much time to write and review. Case notes that are too short lack the detail needed to justify additional or continued support. In the interest of process efficiency, including case note reviews, train staff to include only relevant information.



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Providers should be aware of the technical specifications for services, what the provider is expected to do, and what exactly the provider gets paid for. [Find out more about DVR technical specifications.](#)



MONITOR HOURS SPENT ON SERVICES

Implement a system to track the number of hours spent to identify when services are taking longer than budgeted based on authorized payment amounts. Employment providers should calculate service cost and monitor hours expended, so average hours of service maintain a break-even point. For example, if payment for service is \$950, and cost of service averages \$65 per hour, the service provider should budget 14.5 hours for this service. If the service provider needs more time to complete the service, it should be negotiated with the funder, as possible.



PAPERWORK

Create efficiencies and reduce confusion by providing training and/or centralizing paperwork and processes (e.g.TWE and on the job training paperwork, reports, and processes). More efficient processes keep services and supports moving and expedite payment for services.