

Transition to Integrated Employment Brief

A publication of the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities @ RI College

Conversion: From Workshop to Integrated Employment



Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities

In February, Rhode Island College and the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities hosted the first of a series of public forums and workshops to promote a comprehensive approach to transition and integrated employment. **Conversion: From Workshop to Integrated Employment**, a day-long workshop held at RI College, was well attended by providers, advocates, and family members. Workshop presenters, recognizing that conversion from center-based services is multifaceted, shared a variety of programmatic, staffing, and fiscal strategies that support a strong emphasis on employment. This **Brief** highlights those strategies, as well as related resources for ongoing learning.

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Blue Print for Success: Employing Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

In 2013 the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Disability Services developed a five-year plan to transition employment services from center-based to community-based. The Massachusetts' process engaged stakeholders, took a critical look at system strengths, capacity gaps, and state policies, and identified resources to implement services to increase community integrated employment. ["Blue Print for Success: Employing Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities in Massachusetts"](#) provides a state-wide guide to:

- Raising expectations from community integrated employment,
- Increasing provider and staff capacity,
- Engaging stakeholders, and
- Technical assistance for providers and state agencies in the development of new business models and to deliver quality services.

Margaret Van Gelder, Statewide Director of Employment and Family Supports at the Central Office of the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services, indicated in her presentation that the "process of systems evolution is not easy, but it is well worth it." Over the next five years, Massachusetts will continue to evolve state policies, refine funding resources, increase consumer and provider capacity, and engage the business community to grow employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Adapted from:

[A Blue Print to Employment First, The Massachusetts Experience](#), presented by Margaret Van Gelder, Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services

Employment First

embraces the benefits of integrated employment experienced by individuals with ID/DD, the community, and business.

"Work makes me excited and happy, especially when I do something new, for instance when learning new tasks. Getting a paycheck makes me feel proud that I earned it myself." (Adult with ID)

Agency Transformation: Strategies for Transitioning to Integrated Employment

Individuals have unique support needs to help them successfully explore careers, as well as find and keep jobs. Organizations must consider how to change their business models toward a flexible array of services that will support these diverse needs and interests. The following strategies and tips support conversion success:

- **Leadership:** With leaders providing an unwavering commitment to evolving services, create a culture that expects community integrated employment for all individuals.
- **Engage Stakeholders:** Involve stakeholders, especially individuals, families, boards, staff and community in the change process. Provide sufficient information, training, and support to stakeholders. Engage stakeholders in developing solutions.
- **Strategic Planning:** Change does not happen without intentional planning. Critically analyze resources, get stakeholder feedback, and develop a plan that is clear and share with all. Obtain technical assistance to gain additional perspectives and for support as you implement the plan. A recommended resource is the [APSE Supported Employment Quality Indicators](#).
- **Quality Outcomes and Benchmarks:** Identify, communicate, and monitor quality outcomes and benchmarks. Make sure outcomes are measurable and focus on continuous improvement. Report results regularly and make it a practice to celebrate progress.
- **Organizational Infrastructure:** Quality services are reflected in daily procedures, staffing models, and competency. Recommended resources include the [APSE Supported Employment Competencies](#) and [ICI Service Delivery Sample Process](#).
 - **Staff Roles:** Revise job descriptions to support flexible staffing patterns and the skills to work off-site. *Determine if you will use a generalist or specialist approach.*
 - **Staff Competency:** Revise training for new hires to reflect priorities of community inclusion and employment. Managers and direct line staff have unique training needs. Require employment specialist/job coaching training for staff. *Reinforce implementation of career exploration, job development, and job coaching skills with proactive supervision and quality control practices.*
 - **Braided and Blending of Funding:** Develop diversified funding options based on available resources such as, DDD, Vocational Rehabilitation, SSA Ticket To Work, and fee for service.
 - **Foster Multiple Pathways to Employment:** Establish person-centered planning practices that support individualized ISP goal development, career exploration, and skill development. Base job development and coaching strategies on individual strengths and support needs. *Use generic resources along with creative strategies and supports (accommodations, natural supports, creative funding, etc.).*
- **Reward and Recognize Success:** Reinforce effective strategies, creativity, successful employment outcomes and other achievements. *Nothing promotes change like celebrating success!*

Adapted from the following presentations:

[Conversion to Community Integrated Employment Services](#), Rick Hawes, Berkshire Arc
[Effective Pathways to Employment](#), David Hoff, Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI)
[Planning for Staffing Needs](#), Lara Enein-Donovan, Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI)
[Transformation to Community-Based Services](#), Sharon Smith, Work, Inc.



Individuals and Families

Rick Hawes, Berkshire Arc

- Involve individuals, families, & residential providers in decision making from the onset
- Legitimize and work through concerns
- Educate and inform individuals and families of benefits of supported employment

Staff Skills - Values Most Important!

Lara Enein-Donovan, ICI

- Belief in integrated employment for all
- Typical workplace settings and integrated jobs in general workforce as standard
- Social inclusion as key indicator of success
- Employment search guided by person-centered planning
- Empowerment of individual
- Staff not "in charge" or "caretaker"
- Staff role: facilitation of natural & community support

Agency Lessons Learned

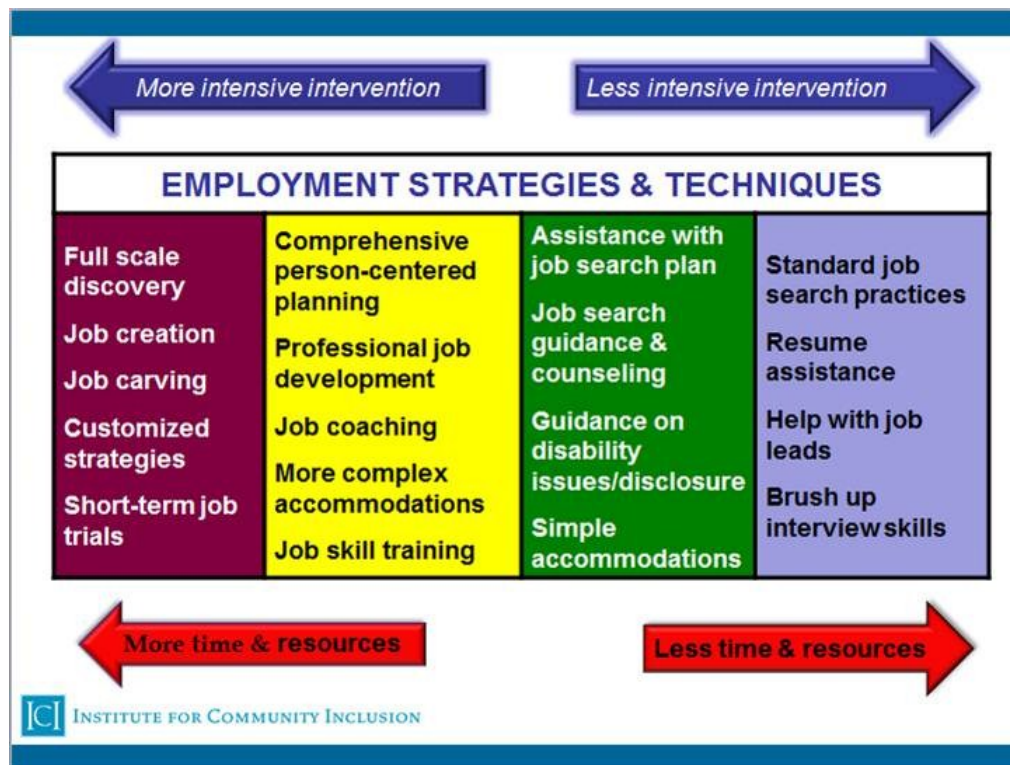
Sharon Smith, Work, Inc.

- Change is hard
- If you ask a question, be willing to listen to the answer
- Create a culture that values change
- People will adapt with support and training
- Unify framework to operationalize your mission
- Set Benchmarks and share progress - seeing is believing
- Reward service excellence

Employment Toolbox

David Hoff, ICI

"There are lots of tools in the employment toolbox. It's important to figure out the best set of tools that will meet the job-seeker's needs." The chart below provides a range of strategies to consider depending on the intensity of the intervention needed and the availability of time and resources.



Resources & Tools

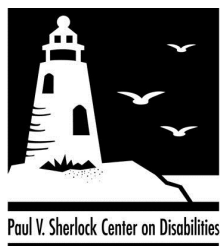
Agency Conversion to Integrated Services Worksheet	http://www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter/integratedemployment/conversionexercise.pdf
RI ORS Supported Employment Fee for Service	http://www.ors.ri.gov/SE.html
MASS WORKS - Forms and documents that support service implementation and process	http://massworks.org/
Office of Disability Employment Policy - National resources supporting systems transformation and quality practices	http://www.dol.gov/odep/ietoolkit/communityEmploymentAgencies.htm
Transition to Integrated Employment – Resources supporting the transition from center-based to community-based services.	http://www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter/integratedemployment.html

Training Resources

New England TACE Center Training Calendar	http://tacene.org/training-calendar
Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) Training Calendar	http://www.apse.org/training
TASH Training Calendar	http://tash.org/conferences-events/training/
Work Incentives Counseling Training	http://www.vcu-ntc.org/training/initial.cfm

Resources from Conversion: From Workshop to Integrated Employment, February 14, 2014

Blue Print for Success: Employing Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities in Massachusetts	http://www.addp.org/images/Nov2013Conference/blueprint%20for%20success%20full%20version%20final%2011.6.13.pdf
<i>A Blue Print to Employment First, The Massachusetts Experience</i> , presented by Margaret Van Gelder, Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services	http://www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter/integratedemployment/blueprintforsuccess.pdf
<i>Conversion to Community Integrated Employment Services</i> , Rick Hawes, Berkshire Arc	http://www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter/integratedemployment/conversion.pdf
<i>Effective Pathways to Employment</i> , David Hoff, Institute for Community Inclusion	http://www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter/integratedemployment/effectivepathways1.pdf
<i>Planning Your Staffing Needs</i> , Lara Enein-Donovan, Institute for Community Inclusion	http://www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter/integratedemployment/effectivepathways2.pdf
<i>Transformation to Community-Based Services</i> , Sharon Smith, Work Inc.	http://www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter/integratedemployment/transformation.pdf



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