

Position Description for DVR Employment Specialist

Position Purpose

To expand competitive employment opportunities for persons with disabilities by establishing partnerships with community agencies and representing Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to the business community. This position will provide comprehensive placement services to individuals with disabilities and specialize in assisting businesses to identify workforce recruitment needs that can be met through what is considered a non-traditional candidate pool of individuals with disabilities that are involved with the VR program. This position provides consultation and training to DVR teams regarding local, regional, state, national and global labor market issues, business climate, current and future demand-driven business needs, placement resources and economic development issues. The DVR Employment Specialists specializes in arranging for and providing consultation and training that results in the effective employment of people with disabilities.

Position Summary

The DVR Employment Specialist is a critical member of Wisconsin's DVR field staff. Primary responsibilities for this people-centered position include the provision of high quality customer service, such as skills training, case management, mentoring, job search assistance, placement, career development, retention, and career advancement to DVR job seekers while meeting the needs of area businesses. Other responsibilities include identifying and meeting business workforce needs, business outreach and recruitment, communication with workforce partners and area businesses, problem solving, innovation and leadership.

An employee in this position receives general supervision. The position applies current program knowledge; performance goals, labor market information, internet-based tools, especially JobCenterofWisconsin; wage and trend information regarding high growth and high wage industries and occupations, workplace needs; worker skills, qualifications and interests'; career assessment, development and planning strategies; and knowledge of the local, regional and statewide labor market and business community needs to provide assisted self service, case management, one on one, and group services to DVR job seekers.

It is essential that the position work and communicate effectively with partner agencies and area businesses, is able to work with and serve a diverse group of coworkers and customers, is readily adaptable to change conditions and is able to balance multiple priorities. Performs all duties in conformance with federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations, and policies governing public sector employment, equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in the workplace.

Regular travel will be expected as part of this position. As part of the DVR region, it is expected that staff will provide services via a regional network of locations (Job Centers, other DVR locations, or points of contact). The vast majority of this travel will be regional and not require an overnight, though occasional travel may be statewide and require an overnight.

Clientele: Individuals with disabilities referred by Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and employers; Employers recruiting for or in need of employees; business needing consultation on disability-related employment issues; workforce partners; community service providers; and other rehabilitation related partners such as Independent Living Centers and long term care providers.

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Principle Responsibilities, Tasks, and Indicators

- 25% A. **Provide market driven placement services and advanced individualized placement services that achieve the alignment of business needs with VR consumer job placement goals.**
- A1. Coordinate and manage referral process with VR counselors
 - A2. Provide VR Counselors and consumers specific and general labor market and other appropriate information to assist in the development of relevant Employment Plans.
 - A3. Develop and modify Job Placement Plans jointly with referring VR Counselor and consumers that are consistent with the VR Employment Plan. Recommend appropriate amendments to the Employment Plans.
 - A4. Analyze job requirements relative to consumer capabilities, disability related factors, and interests. Apply results by developing recommendations regarding prospective jobs and projected needs for job modifications and accommodations.
 - A5. Work with referring VR counselor and consumer to identify, select and provide appropriate job placement services to meet the consumer's needs.
 - A6. Network with community and employment resources to identify appropriate jobs for individual consumers referred by VR counselors. Develop and maintain an employer network by building relationships with businesses through on-going in-person and telephone communication. Coordinate activities with workforce partners.
 - A7. Recommend appropriate job opportunities to consumers. Develop appropriate supports to enable the consumer to obtain the identified job.
 - A8. Research, analyze, and apply labor market information to the needs of the consumers related to their jobs search and Employment Plan development. Work with DWD LMI analysts to learn and apply regional, state and local LMI resources to a consumer's job search. Provide focused salary surveys related to consumer job goal.
 - A9. Inform VR team of current employment market, hiring trends, and occupational/skill projections.
 - A10. Document placement activities (e.g. develop and maintain case notes regarding job placement activities and services, citing employer contacts, job leads provided, and job development activities) and provide written reports of job placement results activities for the consumer VR case record.
 - A11. Provide all consumers ongoing opportunities to make informed choices regarding goals, objectives, and services related to potential jobs.
 - A12. Determine and purchase necessary job seeking and employment supports and approve payment of purchased services in consultation with counselor or other DVR personnel.
 - A13. Provide employers and workforce staff with a greater understanding of disability factors that may affect VR consumer on the job.

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25% B. Establish and maintain professional relationships with business and community entities to expand employment for people with disabilities.

- B1. Develop marketing strategy to regularly contact local employers in person and by phone staff to offer placement services available through Vocational Rehabilitation to promote the hiring of consumers for existing job vacancies as well as future vacancies.
- B2. Contact area employers, in coordination with Job Service and other workforce partners to assess their workforce needs, market VR placement services and expand the employer network to improve job opportunities for VR consumers.
- B3. Work with consumers and employers to develop new positions that meet a consumer's select abilities and goals so that suitable employment is obtained.
- B4. Work with consumers, employers, and other appropriate resources to develop and implement job support strategies (short and long term) to enable successful long term employment.
- B5. Develop local employment resources.
- B6. Provide information to individual employers regarding ADA, human rights, rehabilitation technology, and pertinent local, state and federal employment regulations.
- B7. Provide information, as requested, to area employers about work incentives related to hiring people with disabilities.
- B8. Coordinate efforts with other placement agencies and resources.
- B9. Participate in the Business Services initiative to enhance employer network to increase consumer job opportunities.
- B10. Attend organizational meetings that address the needs of VR consumers.
- B11. Inform employers about various disabilities and resulting vocational implications, rehabilitation technology, job accommodations, government incentives to employers and current disability related legislation.
- B12. Maintain relationships with employers so they consider Vocational Rehabilitation a preferred or primary resource to hire employees and a resource for developing their awareness of disability issues/implications in their businesses.
- B13. Conduct disability awareness seminars and present to area employers and partners.
- B14. Provide job leads to VR counselors and other VR placement staff.
- B15. Participate, when appropriate, in assigned task forces/committees of the state VR division, Workforce Investment Board, Job Center and Department of Workforce Development.

20% C. Provide on-site consultation, formal and informal training to consumers and businesses to increase successful employment performance and retention.

- C1. Arrange for necessary job supports.
- C2. Consult with consumers, employers, co-workers, and service providers to promote and maintain consumer's successful job performance.
- C3. Assist consumer to effectively identify and explain their assets, limitations and accommodations to their employer, co-workers and service provider that will facilitate job success.
- C4. Provide work site analysis to identify need for job accommodations or modifications.
- C5. Recommend and implement necessary accommodations or supports at work sites.
- C6. Coordinate with community services, if needed, to support the employer and consumer for successful employment.
- C7. Analyze jobs to determine that working conditions are safe, accessible and consistent with the consumer's capabilities and functional capacities.

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- C8. Arrange resources and negotiate agreements for work experience and on-the-job training as needed.
- C9. Negotiate and recommend final hiring agreements between the consumer and the employer. Ensure that both parties understand any obligations and responsibilities which have been made by each concerning job related reasonable accommodations.
- C10. Document activity and results for individual consumer VR case record.
- C11. Consult with partner agencies, such as Job Accommodation Network (JAN) as necessary.

20% D. Assure the development and provision of comprehensive and relevant job seeking and job retention skills. Provide follow-up by contacting the VR consumer, employer, VR counselor and other appropriate stakeholders to determine job satisfaction and performance levels so that VR consumer successfully retains employment.

- D1. Assess consumer's job seeking skills and assure the appropriate provision of training to all consumers so that they will become skilled in seeking employment. Assist consumer to connect with employment resource of the workforce partners. Provide job seeking skills training that compliments other training by specifically dealing with issues related to disabilities.
- D2. Teach/coach consumers regarding job seeking and retention skills including: resume writing, interviewing, job finding, and personal needs assessment, ADA and other local, state and federal employment regulations and opportunities.
- D3. Teach/coach consumers how to develop strategies to resolve issues that may become a barrier to obtaining or maintains desired employment.
- D4. Consult with the VR counselors concerning referred consumers and their unique placement needs.
- D5. Conduct job task analysis, as appropriate, and work with the consumer, employer, and appropriate resources to facilitate effective development and implementation of reasonable accommodations.
- D6. Consult with the appropriate VR team members to identify resources regarding job site modifications, and other necessary adaptations to the potential job.
- D7. Work with appropriate resources to develop and implement job modifications to effectively expand job opportunities with consumers.
- D8. Establish a trusting and confidential relationship with consumers and encourage their full participation in their placement plan activities.
- D9. Assist consumer in re-location and other job related factors by coordinating with the VR team members and appropriate community resources.
- D10. Intervene and/or mediate with the employer/consumer/counselor/service provider regarding barriers to employment or adjustment issues identified through follow-up activities. Determine when necessary to refer consumer to VR counselor for additional services to achieve job stabilization.
- D11. Continue to provide regular follow-up contacts until assured of consumer and employer satisfaction, consumer's successful job performance, and the maintenance of employment.
- D12. Establish effective communication mechanism for employer or consumer and market availability for future intervention or mediation to prevent issues that could jeopardize job retention and satisfaction.
- D13. Identify prospective workforce needs with the employer and develop strategies for DVR to help meet those needs.
- D14. Contact consumer/employer/counselor to determine satisfaction with job and job performance and recommend to referring VR counselor consumer readiness for VR successful case closure.
- D15. Document activity and results in consumer VR case record.
- D16. Abide by the Wisconsin Data Privacy Act and all confidentiality protections for VR consumers.
- D17. Develop and implement appropriate reasonable accommodations/job site modifications or other adaptations.

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- 10% E. Design, develop and maintain an ongoing operational strategy of consultation, training and mentoring while serving as resource to other staff so that placement, team and agency objectives are met.**
- E1. Sharing with co-workers and service providers effective job seeking skills training and job coaching strategies.
 - E2. Participate on VR statewide work groups and committees on placement services and agency placement initiatives involved with developing new agency initiatives which contribute to meeting the developmental needs of new and existing agency placement and VR staff in terms of curriculum development, mentoring, and training topic presentation.
 - E3. Provide guidance and consultation to counselors, co-workers, and service providers in acquiring and developing necessary knowledge, skills and abilities.
 - E4. Provide guidance and consultation to counselors, co-workers and service providers on placement services and labor market conditions.
 - E5. Develop a system for communicating current job openings to VR counseling and workforce partners staff.
 - E6. Identify specific current and future employer needs and economic trends and coordinate employment information.
 - E7. Work with DVR co-workers to identify the training and placement services necessary to enable customers with severe disabilities to fill identified employer needs.
 - E8. Work with DVR co-workers and service providers to identify the community resources available for tailoring training to the individual needs and learning styles of consumers with severe disabilities.
 - E9. Establish working relations with community organizations involved in providing rehabilitation and training services.
 - E10. Maintain communication systems with employers and employer representatives at all levels.

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Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- ◆ Ability to research prospects for targeted outreach to key businesses.
- ◆ Ability to plan meetings to effectively advance employee match requirements.
- ◆ Proven ability to develop and maintain business accounts.
- ◆ Knowledge of how to create rapport to build relationships with partners, individuals, organizations and businesses.
- ◆ Knowledge of how to ask effective questions to develop needs of businesses and individuals.
- ◆ Ability to present solutions, including employer incentives, in response to employer needs.
- ◆ Ability to communicate with broad range of individuals, organizations, partners, businesses.
- ◆ Ability to market to individuals, organizations, partners and businesses, using the necessary tools to highlight available services leading to networking success.
- ◆ Knowledge of corporate and business governance regarding staffing vacancies.
- ◆ Ability to interact with business organizations and multi-state business operations.
- ◆ Knowledge of the employer community.
- ◆ Ability to partner with diverse organizations and businesses.
- ◆ Knowledge of labor market information and workforce trends.
- ◆ Ability to learn of work incentives available to employers.
- ◆ Knowledge of principles, methods and techniques of corporate and business networking.
- ◆ Knowledge of the principles, methods, and techniques of vocational rehabilitation case management, client assessment, ethics, and professional and community interaction.
- ◆ Knowledge of the principles of Workforce Investment Act, the Rehabilitation Act and amendments and the American with Disabilities Act and amendments.
- ◆ Ability to work cooperatively with co-workers as part of an office team to coordinate and network with other agencies, and to interact professionally.
- ◆ Knowledge of methods to deal with difficult persons and situations calmly and with tact (e.g. an angry customer).
- ◆ Ability to get along with diverse populations including persons with different ethnic or socio-economic backgrounds and persons with disabilities.
- ◆ Ability to work in a multi-agency Job Center environment in a cooperative and productive manner.
- ◆ Knowledge of effective oral and written communication skills.
- ◆ Knowledge of effective job search methods.
- ◆ Knowledge of skills, abilities and knowledge required for a variety of occupations.
- ◆ Knowledge of employment and training needs of low income, underemployed, and other groups of persons facing substantial barriers to employment.
- ◆ Ability to travel statewide.

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- ◆ Ability to interpret detailed information.
- ◆ Knowledge of record keeping and record management techniques, including business account management systems.
- ◆ Knowledge of and experience with marketing methods and techniques.
- ◆ Ability to adapt and respond quickly to change.
- ◆ Ability to travel to meet DVR consumers, business customers, and community partners as necessary.
- ◆ Knowledge and ability to use problem-solving techniques.
- ◆ Organizational skills.
- ◆ Time management skills.
- ◆ Knowledge of and experience using computers, including social media tools such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter, and commercial software, (both custom developed programs and commercial packages) and the internet.

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