The Center on Knowledge Translation for Employment Research (KTER), housed at the American Institutes for Research, presents

Business Outreach Training

Module 1: Recognizing the Importance of Business Relationships





From Research to Practice

Modules will present research findings, followed by the voice of the practitioner.

Research

- Studies from academic and practice settings
- Case studies



Practice

- Experience from the field
- Context to create a balanced perspective







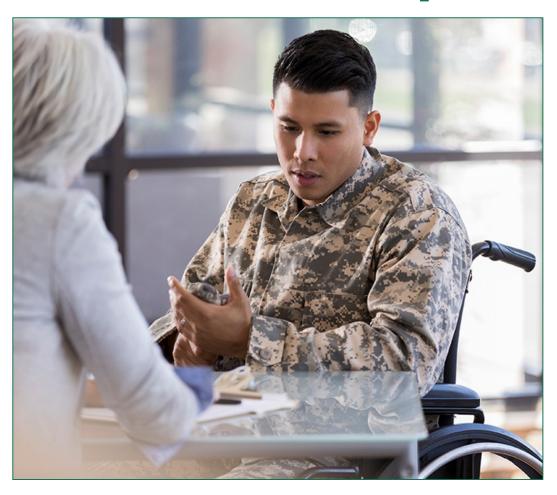
Recognizing the Importance of Business Relationships

Research





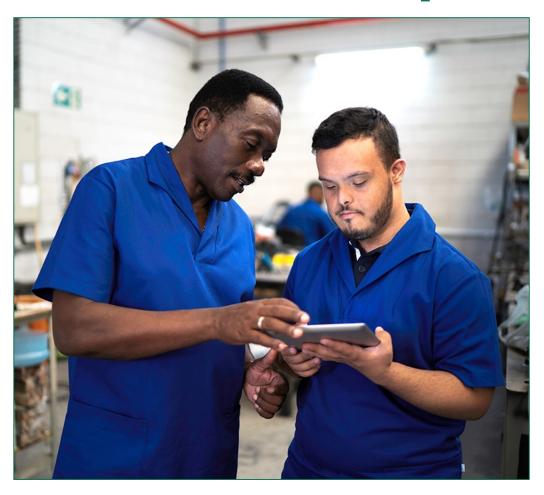
Research: Importance to Candidates



- Engaging with businesses increases likelihood of returning individuals with disabilities to work.¹
- Establishing a relationship with a business predicts likelihood of hire.²
- Having a positive business-vocational rehabilitation (VR) relationship directly benefits candidates.



Research: Importance to Businesses

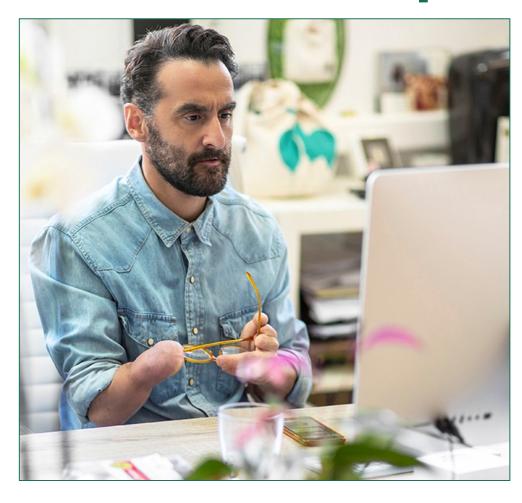


- Businesses value personal relationships.³
- Businesses consider their confidence in the VR employment specialist when making hiring decisions.⁴
- Businesses must find the VR employment specialist to be trustworthy and professional.⁵





Research: Importance to VR



- Stronger relationships provide better information about placement opportunities.⁶
- There is a mandate to cultivate demand-side, dual-customer approaches.⁷
- Implementation of WIOA^{7,8}
 - Training and technical assistance (TA) on employment of individuals with disabilities
 - Working with business on opportunities and awareness
 - TA on accessible recruiting, hiring, and retaining
 - Available support for accommodations and hiring



Recognizing the Importance of Business Relationships

Practice





Practice: Dual Customer Strategy⁹

- What: Builds on demand-side approach of acting as consultants to businesses⁶ to treating businesses as customers, just as people with disabilities are customers⁷
- When: 2004 after National Employment Conference¹⁰
- How: Feedback from business roundtable
- Why: Create opportunities, career paths, and the doorway to success for people with disabilities





- Goal 1: Focus on understanding business needs, not "selling" a service
 - Business relations versus job placement

VR-Business Relations Goals¹¹

Goal 1: Focus on needs over selling





 Goal 2: Build relationships and trust VR-Business Relations Goals¹¹

Goal 1: Focus on needs over selling

Goal 2: Build relationships and trust





- Goal 3: Understand business needs
 - Business versus employer
 - Understand needs across lines of business

VR-Business Relations Goals¹¹

Goal 1: Focus on needs over selling

Goal 2: Build relationships and trust

Goal 3: Understand business needs



- Goal 4: Develop a strategy with a business
 - Identify where support is needed
 - Build a talent pipeline
 - Develop learning opportunities
 - Support upward mobility
 - Focus on retention

VR-Business Relations Goals¹¹

Goal 1: Focus on needs over selling

Goal 2: Build relationships and trust

Goal 3: Understand business needs

Goal 4: Develop strategy



- Goal 1: Focus on understanding business needs, not "selling" a service
- Goal 2: Build relationships and trust
- Goal 3: Understand business needs
- Goal 4: Develop a strategy with a business

VR-Business Relations Goals¹¹

Goal 1: Focus on needs over selling

Goal 2: Build relationships and trust

Goal 3: Understand business needs

Goal 4: Develop strategy



Recognizing the Importance of Business Relationships

Conclusion





Summary

- Relationships with businesses are important to:
 - Candidates
 - Businesses
 - VR agencies
- Dual-customer strategy benefits VR agencies and businesses
- Relationships with businesses are vital to VR goals and implementing WIOA





Thank you!

You have completed Module 1!





References

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- ⁶ Gilbride, D., & Stensrud, R. (1999). Demand-side job development and system change. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, *42*(4), 329–343.



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- ⁹ Business Roundtable at the National Employment Conference, Washington, DC, 2004.
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- ¹¹ West-Evans, K. (2014). *VR's work with business and employers: The rehabilitation act and WIOA*. Presentation at the Council of State Agencies of Vocational Rehabilitation, Fall 2014 Conference, Arlington, VA.



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