Employer/Business Session

Facilitators: Kathleen Murphy, Steven Boydston, SEDL
Research Report: Kathleen Murphy, Steven Boydston
Presenters: Rebecca Salon, Brittany Taylor, LEAD Center
Panelists: Mark Williams, Arun Karpur, Anne Miano

September 17, 2014

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Agenda

2:50 – 3:00  Session overview and guiding questions – Steven Boydston (SEDL)
3:00 – 3:20  KTER Employers/business Research Report – Kathleen Murphy, Steven Boydston (SEDL)
3:20 – 3:40  "Best Practices in Employee Retention and Return-to-Work: Lessons Learned from Employers" – Rebecca Salon, Brittany Taylor (LEAD Center)
3:40 – 3:50  BREAK
3:50 – 4:40  Panel discussion – Facilitator, Kathleen Murphy
Mark Williams (USBLN)
Arun Karpur (Cornell EDI)
Anne Miano (Microsoft)
4:40 – 4:50  Employer/Business session wrap up and takeaway message – Kathleen Murphy
Barriers and Facilitators to Research Uptake in the Business Community: Focus Group Findings

Kathleen M. Murphy and Steven Boydston

September 17, 2014

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Overview of KTER Center’s Research Goals

R.1) Identify evidence from the literature in selected specific employment topic areas for persons with disabilities,

R.2) Describe factors that impede or facilitate the use of employment research, and

R.3) Test effectiveness of KT strategies that promote research use.
Guiding Questions

• **What is the evidence?**
  R1. Systematic reviews and research synthesis

• **What are barriers and facilitators to use of the evidence?**
  R2. Concurrent investigation of barriers to the use of research in four target audiences:
  o Vocational rehabilitation professionals
  o People with disabilities
  o Policymakers
  o Business people (Employers)

• **What are the best strategies to promote use of evidence?**
  R3. Testing of strategies to promote use of KTER systematic review findings among target audiences.
## Methods, Samples and Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study #</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Data</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R1.1 &amp; R1.2</td>
<td>Systematic reviews</td>
<td>Studies of interventions that facilitate 1) RTW for adults with TBI 2) Employment for cancer survivors</td>
<td>Effect sizes pooled from various studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>R2.1</td>
<td>Online survey</td>
<td>VR professionals in six states (Northeast, East, South, South, Southwest, West)</td>
<td>N=535</td>
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<tr>
<td>R2.2</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Federal and state-level policy makers</td>
<td>N=25</td>
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<tr>
<td>R2.3</td>
<td>Focus group</td>
<td>Business people</td>
<td>13 groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2.4</td>
<td>Focus group</td>
<td>People with disabilities</td>
<td>6 groups</td>
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Method

• Focus groups (n=13) held Nov. 2011 – Sept. 2012 with a total of 51 members of business community. Many from disability-oriented U.S. Business Leadership Network chapters.

• Recruitment and facilitation by Valerie Brooke, Katty Inge and Carolyn Graham of KTER’s partner, Virginia Commonwealth University.

• Use of semi-structured instrument. Conversational interview style. Open-ended questions allowed variation and elaboration.
Sample demographics

- **Gender:** 70% women; 30% men
- **Age:** 50 years (both median and mean), range from 26 - 73
- **Race:**
  - 70% White
  - 17.6% African-American/Black/Black Caribbean
  - 7.8% Latino/Hispanic
  - 1.9% Asian
- **Education Levels (terminal degree):**
  - 70% college
  - 19.6% graduate
  - 3.9% high school
  - 3.9% missing
Participants’ Company Size (Employees)

- Small (<50): 20
- Medium (51 - 200): 9
- Large (200+): 22
Analysis

- Content analysis of verbatim transcripts conducted by Murphy and VCU staff to develop initial framework of topics (“codes”) and their definitions, to be applied to all of KTER transcripts.
- Murphy and Boydston coded sample of transcripts from all 3 datasets (business, consumers, policymakers), then refined framework per grounded theory approach (Creswell, 1998).
- Coding done independently to sets of 3 – 5 transcripts, then meeting held to come to consensus where there were inconsistencies in code applications to guard against interpretive drift (Piantanida, Tananis & Grubs, 2004).
- Data entered into NVivo software.
- Goal was to inform selection of KT strategy to test in R3 activity (consistent with French et al., 2012) Theoretical Domains Framework approach to KT study design.
Results: Defining ‘research’

• Information gathering: Research or research; primary vs. secondary
• Review of descriptive data such as demographic datasets, esp. from federal sources
• Collection and summary of their own client/customer data (for example, TV ratings)
• Results of scientific process: “the practice has, um, been tested in a therapeutic or scientific, um, process by which outcomes have been able to be measured and, um, charted so that the practice is known to be an effective practice” (FG5).
Defining ‘evidence’ or ‘evidence based practices’

• Synonymous with best practices?

• Sources of evidence: “I mean, we created our own evidence I guess by what our program and project is. But that would not mean that I wouldn’t be interested in seeing research from other areas…”(FG3)

• Terminology used: “Tested, proven, measurable, effective, successful”

• In general, most people say their organizations value it, but not clear what referent they used when saying they valued “research”—could be any of concepts listed above.
Cyclical definitions?

Evidence-based practice → Proven successful

Best practices → Research
How have employers used research?

• *Used to promote or support an approach to service*: “We assess current past research and other guidelines and resources along with relevant literature to give us the best high quality care to both of our patients and our employees.” (FG2)

• *To document that a product is effective*: “Clinical studies have been done of how beneficial our product is to a person’s health.” (FG12)

• *To analyze potential demand for a product or service*: “A lot of the research we have focused on is about the market itself (...) to prove our reason for focusing on disabled consumers.” (FG9)

• *To benchmark industry standards, especially in relation to salaries.* (FG7, FG13)

• *To select vendors.* (FG12)
How have employers used research?

*To comply with a mandate:*

“Sometimes it’s not related to profitability but it’s a mandate and you’re trying to figure out how to comply with it.” (related to building a hydropower station) (FG11)

“An employer researches how to handle an applicant that comes and has a disability. Maybe when they research how to handle that they come across the ADA legislation or the, you know, something to do with a legal mandate.” (FG13)
Larger companies use research more

- *In larger companies, used to advocate to internal audiences as well as customers:* “Every time we need to present a recommendation on whatever it is, you’re going to have to have the data to support it.” (FG4)

- “We have a number of countries outside of the U.S. that are not as inclined to hire people with disabilities. One of the things I have done is provided the research (...) to reinforce obviously a productive hire can come from a source of disabled [sic] candidates. Some of the success stories have come from the research.” (FG6)
Larger companies use research more

Because they have to be more compliance-oriented:

“I have found that in the larger organizations I’ve worked in typically there are bigger, very costly decisions that are being made that impact a greater number of people and they have more of a regulatory environment to deal with and risk to manage. So because of those factors, the validity of the data and who is signing off on the decisions that are based on that data are very mission-critical to them. So it does get more formal.” (FG13)
How is research use related to PWD?

• *To learn about how to accommodate a particular population* (FG2), (i.e. veterans with post-traumatic stress syndrome, FG13)

• *To research selection of particular assistive technologies.* (FG4)

• *To learn about how to make web-based products accessible, including those used for hiring.* (FG2)

• *To select an approach to training employees:* “We use research to develop our competency models.” (FG4)
Research use in relation to hiring PWD

• Frequent mention of Burton Blatt study (Job Accommodation Network, 2014) that found a $500 average cost for accommodations, and awareness of other reasons to hire people with disabilities, i.e. “I think research shows that everyone becomes more productive in that type of environment and I can’t tell you why, but disabled employees seem to have a positive effect on their nondisabled coworkers.”

• Audience not necessarily aware that this study is frequently updated.
Barriers, or What gets in the way?

Time as a barrier:

- *Need findings in time.* “By the time you do that research, we may have gone on to the next project.” (FG11)

- *Time is fragmented.* How much time does a person have to absorb it. No time for “a lot of research and a lot of reading and sifting through things. You really, you’re just moving all of the time.” (FG3)

- *Time is money.* Some perceive that customers do not value research-based nature of product or service. (So, it’s not worth the time.)
Barriers, or What gets in the way?

• *Perception that other kinds of information are more important:*
  “Some of it is gut when I hire people. Obviously the criteria, the prerequisites have to be there but there has to be chemistry. And all the research in the world isn’t going to help that.” (FG11)

  “… using more boots on the ground stuff than looking to research because it’s just not there yet.” (FG13)
How do employers consume research?

- Given broad range of meanings given to the term, wide variation in ways of accessing.

- Preference for data generated by in-house or highly trusted external sources. Talking one-on-one with “subject matter specialists” or other people in the business is the best information source – “it wouldn’t be written research, it would be verbal.” (FG2, 3)

- High value for information channeled through professional networks, either face-to-face or email, listservs etc.
Is social media a good tool to use?

- Some businesses use Facebook and YouTube to market their product/service, but these tools are not generally perceived as a way of finding research-based information.
- Some use of social media, but more individualized than at organizational level.
- One mention of Twitter as a good way to publicize “announcements, press releases or snippets of information.”
- Three mentions of Twitter as a source of research-based information (FG3, FG5). All of them from government or non-profit employers.
LinkedIn

- LinkedIn was the social media tool most often used as a source of research-based information.
- Seen as a way to get an overview of a topic: “I use it to get different perspectives when I’m doing my research to make sure that I’m covering things that I probably didn’t think of as an individual. So I do use it but it’s just more like a fishing trip.” (FG12)

“On LinkedIn I see different trends. I sometimes go to the different blogs to get a sense of where the market is, how people are reacting to that.” (FG9)
Final Thoughts

- To address time barrier: 24/7 access of online communication an advantage

Esp. for larger companies, quantitative information relevant to business case or compliance a prerequisite. Once that is in hand, keep in mind:

- Building elements of human interaction into the delivery of information (voice, images, opportunities for dialogue) to embody communication and “flesh out” findings.
- Stories/case studies offer way to connect findings to empirical experience.
References cited


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

State of Science Conference
Hosted by SEDL’s Center on Knowledge Translation for Employment Research

September 17, 2014
TODAY’S SPEAKERS

Rebecca S. Salon, Ph.D.
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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.

This document does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.
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.
Established in October 2012 as an initiative of National Disability Institute.

Funded by the Dept. of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

Focus on Employment, Economic Advancement and Leadership (Public Policy) for people with disabilities.

Collaboration with:
- National Partners and Subject Matter Experts
- Dissemination Partners
- Knowledge Translation (KT) Consortium
NATIONAL PARTNERS

ASAN
AUTISTIC SELF ADVOCACY NETWORK

Cities for FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT Fund

NCIL
National Council on Independent Living

TASH

Business Leadership Network
DISABILITY AT WORK
DISSEMINATION PARTNERS
RELEVANT LEAD CENTER RESEARCH

- Employer Best Practices on Mature Workers and Workplace Flexibility
- Best Practices in Employee Retention and Return-to-Work: An In-Depth Look Inside an Exemplary American Corporation
- Pilot promoting Customized Employment as a Universal Design and Retention Strategy
- Collaboration with Families & Work Institute
  - 2014 National Study of Employers
  - National Study of the Changing Work (coming 2015)
WHEN MIGHT BUSINESSES USE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE RESEARCH TO MAKE DECISIONS?

For Retention and Return to Work Strategies that enable people to resume work in some capacity as quickly as possible, thereby

- Reducing workers’ compensation costs
- Maintaining productivity
- Maintaining connections between employee, supervisor and workplace
- Reducing turnover and retaining talent
USBLN SURVEY FINDINGS USEFUL TO EMPLOYERS

- Overall, workplace flexibility as a retention strategy was valued by and integrated into the company culture of all respondents.

- Two-thirds of respondents reported taking actions and creating policies and practices to become more age-friendly and/or provide workplace flexibility in the areas of Recruitment, Workplace Accommodations and Training, with Workplace Accommodations receiving the most “yes” responses; 21% were not sure if their company took any actions.
MORE USBLN SURVEY FINDINGS USEFUL TO EMPLOYERS

- Flexible work arrangements included
  1) Flex Time
  2) Telework
  3) Job Sharing
  4) Job Carving
  5) Negotiated Job Description

- Flex Time and Telework were the most common responses at 100.0%

- Negotiated job description was the least common response at 8.3%.

- Most reported that they had staff who were trained in accommodations
Return-to-Work (RTW) program is a retention strategy to retain valued employees and to enhance the productivity of the workforce.

RTW programs are designed to return a worker who is injured, disabled or temporarily impaired to the workplace as soon as it is medically feasible.

- often involve a progressive return to full duty
- are part of an overall disability management strategy
- can be managed in-house or through third-party vendors
- may include temporary or permanent accommodations

http://askjan.org/media/downloads/rtwprograms.pdf
BEST PRACTICES IN WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY: A RETURN-TO-WORK STRATEGY

- Workplace Flexibility is a basic business strategy with proven positive impact on turnover and employee productivity.

- Descriptions and examples of workplace flexibility practices (e.g., time, place and task)

- Some, like ODEP’s resources and toolkit, provide targeted information for employees, employers, policy makers and researchers

CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT AS A RETENTION AND RTW STRATEGY

- Customized employment (CE) is a universal strategy designed to personalize the employment relationship between an employer and employee to meet the needs of both.

- CE creates an individualized match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate or employee and the identified business needs of an employer.

LEAD CENTER’S IN-DEPTH LOOK INSIDE AN EXEMPLARY AMERICAN CORPORATION

- Identified Corporation with high retention and low turnover
- Multisite, diverse workforce; mix of full and part-time employees; sites in urban, rural and suburban settings
- Focused on their:
  - Workplace Culture
  - Workforce
  - Benefits
  - Programs
RESEARCH DESCRIBES STRUCTURES WITHIN A CORPORATION

- How it communicates its corporate culture
- How it values its workforce
- How it created integrated collaborative service providers and vendors to support the workforce
- Communication strategies that support retention and RTW
- Training and support for supervisors and managers so that employees receive timely support
Disability management

Collaboration between vendors and managers on stay-at-work, return-to-work, transitional return-to-work and prevention programs

Business agreements are required between the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), workers’ compensation carrier, health care plan, short- and long-term disability carrier, disability management providers & wellness providers
VENDOR INTEGRATION & SUPPORT

- Attendance of all vendors is required at an annual 2-day summit to share information on services.

- Vendors are trained to actively listen and create linkages when needs surface.

- All participate in monthly “grand rounds” to review individual situations and make case review calls.
ANOTHER PROMISING PRACTICE: JOB ANALYSES

- Job descriptions are continually reviewed
- Job analyses are available for every position, and include:
  - Mental & physical demands,
  - Working conditions, and
  - Essential functions.
- Nonessential functions also are listed with physical demands.
MORE ON JOB ANALYSES

- Ergonomic analyses are conducted as needed to determine the need for modifications or accommodations to address safety, training, and specific job functions.
  - Training is done on proper posture and safe lifting techniques.
  - Ergonomic needs, adjustments or equipment are addressed.

- Safety and injury prevention are a strong focus in this corporation, with each location having a safety committee.
ADDITIONAL KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION ACTIVITIES

- Community of Practices
  - CIL-AJC Community of Practice
  - Equal Opportunity Community of Practice
- LEAD Center Webinar Series
  - [http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars](http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars)
- Social Media
- Demonstrations Projects
  - Customized Employment Initiative
  - Financial Capability Initiative
- Partnerships
  - National and Dissemination Partners
  - Knowledge Translation Consortium
KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION (KT) CONSORTIUM

Comprised of federally funded Training and Technical Assistance Centers that address:
- Employment,
- Career Readiness and Development,
- Transition, and
- Accessibility

Purpose:
- Improve coordination, collaboration and information sharing among federally funded Training and Technical Assistance Centers.
- Consider activities that Training and Technical Assistance Centers could accomplish in collaboration.
KT CONSORTIUM MEMBERS

- ADA National Network
- Beneficiary Access and Support Services (BASS)
- Center on Knowledge Transition for Employment Research (KTER)
- College and Career Readiness and Success Center
- Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Technical Assistance Center
- Employment Learning Community
- Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
KT CONSORTIUM MEMBERS (CONT.)

- Knowledge Translation on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (KTDDRR) Center
- National collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth)
- National Employer Technical Assistance Center (NETAC)
- National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTACC)
- Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology (PEAT)
KT CONSORTIUM MEMBERS (CONT.)

- Research and Training Center (RTC) for Pathways to Positive Futures
- Research on Disability collective:
  - StatsRRTC
  - EPM-RRTC
  - IC-RRTC
- Technical Assistance & Continuing Education Centers (TACE)
- Ticket to Work Support Manager
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BREAK

3:40- 3:50 PM
After the Break

3:50 – 4:40  Panel discussion – Facilitator, Kathleen Murphy

- Mark Williams (USBLN)
- Arun Karpur (Cornell EDI)
- Anne Miano (Microsoft)

4:40 – 4:50  Employer/Business session wrap up and takeaway message – Kathleen Murphy
Employer/Business Panel Discussion

• Panelists:
  - Mark Williams (USBLN)
  - Arun Karpur (Cornell EDI)
  - Anne Miano (Microsoft)
Employer/Business Panel Discussion

Guiding Questions:

1. Under what circumstances might businesses use currently available research to make decisions?

2. In terms of employing people with disabilities, what research would be most influential to employers? (i.e. In what forms or formats? Topics? Designs?)

3. How can researchers and employers work more collaboratively to increase the employment rate of people with disabilities?

4. Do you have other thoughts about how researchers—including disability and rehabilitation researchers—can work more collaboratively with business?
Employer/Business Session

Takeaway message: Kathleen Murphy

September 17, 2014

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