

H-1B Ready to Work All Group Coaching: *Strategies for Employer Engagement and Tracking Participants through Grantees' Business Services*

The H-1B RTW Long-term Unemployed (LTU) webinar on *Strategies for Employer Engagement and Tracking Participants through Grantees' Business Services* described how grantees can work with employers to follow-up with and retain program participants. Strategies to maintain strong business relationships were also discussed.

This summary was developed to share the strategies that were presented on the webinar as well as provide additional resources. [Click here](#) to view the presentation.

Strategies to Engage Employers

Maintaining strong business relationships is purposeful and intentional. It requires focusing on the needs of employers as the driving force of everything that the professional business services consultant does. To successfully engage employers, business services professionals should:

- **Use Business Language:** The bottom line of a business is its financial bottom line. All language used should be in reference to how you can improve their bottom line and save them money. This also means avoiding program-centric language, acronyms, and negative scripts that focus on what you can't do for the business.
- **Communicate Effectively:** Communicate in the way that is most convenient for each business (phone, email, in-person, text, etc.) and listen for content. Focus on what the business needs, not your own goals for the meeting.
- **Be Professional:** This means being clear (because people mistrust ambiguity), caring beyond yourself, doing what is right and what you say, knowing your products, building relationships, and being there and following through (even when you don't see immediate profit in it for yourself).
- **Establish a Single Point of Contact:** This reduces confusion and improves customer service.

What Employers Need

Maintaining strong, long-term relationships with employers requires meeting their needs through good customer service.

- **Friendliness:** Always treat others kindly, no matter how they treat you.
- **Understanding and Empathy:** Respect the time and space of employers. Make things easy for them and seek their input.
- **Promptness:** Keep people in the loop. Under-promise and over-deliver.
- **Control:** Let employers have control over what they need.
- **Options and Alternatives:** Sometimes, the best thing you can do for an employer is refer them to someone else. Referral networks need to be large to make the proper referral.
- **Information:** Employers need data to make informed decisions about recruitment, training, and more. Become their go-to source for relevant and reliable information.

Using Business Services to Improve Participant Follow-up and Retention

- **Ask the Right Questions :** Have conversations with employers to learn the direction that industries are moving. Determine whether what you are doing is really relevant by asking whether the trainings make sense within the industry, teach critical skills for occupations with job vacancies, and lead to credentials and certificates that are accurate and reflective of industry standards.
- **Check Results:** This includes examining your data collection efforts. Ask what additional information is needed to guide future activities and promote your program.
- **Assess Employer Satisfaction:** The assessment should be quick, easy, and ask appropriate questions that provide meaningful data. Prepare employers to respond to the survey by telling them why it is important.
- **Build and Maintain Relationships:** Follow-up with participants, their friends and family, employers, educators, and government agencies. Utilize program functions to establish rapport. Following up with government agencies on a regular basis to provide status reports can assist you in the event you are unable to locate the participant and need assistance. You will have better follow-up results if the people you are working with know you and trust you.
- **Inquire about Future Needs:** Determine their short-term and long-term staffing needs and potential skills gaps. Use this information to develop trainings and services that meet those needs.
- **Develop Follow-up Policies and Schedules:** Establish a system identifying when and how often to follow up with participants, employers, and training providers to determine if participants are meeting milestones.