H-1B Ready to Work All Group Coaching:
Promising Practices for Increasing Certificate and Credential Outcomes

April 12, 2018

The H-1B RTW Long-term Unemployed (LTU) webinar on *Promising Practices for Increasing Certificate and Credential Outcomes* was designed to provide grantees with information and strategies that can be applied to their program model to engage participants, employers, and education partners in efforts to increase credential and certification attainment goals.

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.

Common Causes of Low Certificate and Credential Attainment

Issue: When only half of individuals that enter into credential attainment program actually earn a certificate or credential, it can mean many things. Some common causes of low certificate and credential outcomes at this stage of the grant cycle include:

- Case managers have not been able to build a strong relationship with the participant to gather outcomes.

- Data is not being entered properly.

- The design of the program did not account for either enough flexibility in how and when the credential could be earned, or credential attainment was not integrated into the course curriculum.

- There is a lack of strong partnerships with key stakeholders. Collaboration with partners can help you modify or adjust the training design if the current curriculum does not integrate credential attainment into the course schedule.

- More participants are being entered into a training or education activity that will not lead to a credential. This is a flaw in the training design, as it does not allow grantees to meet credential attainment measures. (Ex. Entering an internship or OJT that does not lead to credential).

- A participant gains employment prior to the completion of their credential.

Solutions

There are several solutions that can be implemented right away into your program.

Effective Case Management: Case management is just as much building a strong relationship as it is the act of managing a process. Implementing an effective case management design will improve relationships, build trust and lead to more communication.

Documentation and Data Entry: Review your data, conduct a case audit and ensure all information has been captured and entered.

Integrated Credentials: Integrate the credential attainment into the education/training program to ensure that a completion of the program means attainment of credential.

Partnerships: Conduct a meeting with training partners as soon as possible. Discuss the challenges you are facing and ask partners if they are able to modify the training/education program to incorporate the credential attainment prior to or at the time of course completion.

Employer Inclusion: Get your employer partners on board! Ask them if they are able to add the credential attainment into the internship or OJT plan.

Additional Promising Practices

o **Staff Training**: One of the most important things you can do in your program is to develop a staff development plan, where you make sure that your internal and external staff is getting case management follow-up training and best practices for how to retain people in your program. This will make sure that your staff on the ground has what they need to be successful in their jobs and to help your clients through the process. The staff training should be regularly scheduled as well as customized to the needs of the staff.

o **Case Auditing:** Conducting monthly case audits will ensure that documentation/data entry issues are addressed in a timely manner, not once every four months. If someone is making a mistake or unable to follow up with their participants, it will only be compounded by the amount of time it takes to catch it.

o **Transition Planning**: Ensure that each participant is working with their case manager on a transition plan. Mapping out the education/training activity, adding the credential goal and timeline allows both parties to be accountable. This process should be done now if they are in training and can be planned out months in advance. This is part of an effective case management strategy.

o **Curriculum and Schedule Review/Adjustments**: Call a training partner/provider meeting to review the curriculum and the schedule. See if there is a way that the process can be adjusted to integrate credential attainment. If the course is three months long, are there tests or projects that can be completed so at the end of three months the person leaves with their credential?

o **Integrate Credential Attainment into the Training Plan**: When working with the employers to develop an intern's training plan or an OJT, try and have the credential be attached to the intern's other learning experiences. Is there an incentive that employers are willing to offer? Maybe they will start the person at one wage and attach credential attainment to either full-time hire or a wage increase. This requires you to have employers present and active in the process. Employers should also be at the table with your training providers to discuss how employers can support the skills learned in the classroom.

RESOURCES

o In early 2015, Lumina Foundation, in partnership with the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, called for a national dialogue on postsecondary credentialing. View the Connecting Credentials action plan: From National Dialogue to Collective Action: Building Learning-based Credentialing Systems

o **7 Ways Employers Can Transform Credentials**: https://ina.workforcegps.org/blog/general/2016/09/30/18/06/7-Ways-Employers-Can-Transform-Credentials

o **Veterans' Licensing and Certification Toolkit for States**. The toolkit, entitled *Licensing and Certification for Veterans: State Strategies for Successfully Removing Barriers*, identifies common barriers, describes strategies for overcoming them, and presents a blueprint that can inform State-led efforts to accelerate veterans' licensing and certification. https://veteranspriority.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/11/15/07/45/Certification-Toolkit