



# ENHANCING EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

ACHIEVING A GREATER NUMBER OF EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES



## THE CHALLENGE

Organizations focused on employment outcomes (VR, welfare, workers comp, onestops) have the mandate to get people jobs. Aligning employment preparation activities directly with job development activities results in the most effective and efficient road to employment outcomes. Aligning inputs to employment outcomes also justifies continued existence and funding.

This alignment can come under stress with changes in the operational environment. Changes such as a clientele with more complex issues, less robust or tougher to work in economies, or a demand for more results with fewer resources. The misalignment indicators are staff concern about how the system is functioning, or stakeholder/clientele complaints about results.

Job development staff will grumble about the quality of the candidate referral. They will express an inability to meet outcomes goals because many candidates referred are increasingly problematic and not ready to work. They will voice

concern that they can find jobs but not the candidates to fit them, or that candidates are so unprepared to work they are hard to present to the employer. They will ask for a quality change in the candidate's referred.

Counselors or case managers, on the other hand, will protest that their candidates are prepared for work, but the jobs that are developed are not the ones their candidates can do. They will see little connection between their caseloads and the jobs that are developed. While acknowledging that marginal candidates are often referred to job developers, counselors have no other reasonable service option. The hope is that job developers will get lucky, or work magic.

These opposing perspectives represent misalignment. This misalignment leads to tensions, ineffective interventions and a greater sense of frustration and futility. Candidate preparation and job development cannot continue this lack of alignment and expect to be

effective. Staff will under-perform even when working harder, and become overwhelmed. Negative effects will ripple throughout the organization.

**By focusing on straightforward and clear process while developing core competencies, organizations can maximize required outcomes.**

The good news is that re-alignment and improved employment outcomes are easily within reach of each employment organization, while using existing resources. By focusing on straightforward and clear process while developing core competencies, organizations can maximize required outcomes.

DTG-EMP can provide these simple and clear solutions to ensure employment organization alignment and to obtain employment outcomes results.



## TOWARDS A SOLUTION

Simplicity of purpose is the place to start. Employment outcomes are the result of appropriate candidate preparation combined with effective job development. The challenge for employment organizations is to rigorously organize around this simple idea.

**Let's look briefly at each key component of a successful employment outcome process:**

- Ensuring a candidate's MRD employability status (Motivated, Reliable, Dependable).
- Ensuring job market penetration capability as per the candidates needing jobs.

## STEP 1: APPROPRIATE CANDIDATE PREPARATION

There is only one fundamental requirement for candidates—the motivation to work. Therefore, the first task of an agency is to assess the degree of the candidate's motivation to work. Saying you're motivated to work doesn't make it so. The preparation process assessment activities must provide certainty about the candidate's level of motivation to work. Agencies must have the capacity to identify, ignite or increase the motivation to work through interventions.

Candidate Preparation begins with establishing the minimum criteria for employability using the model MRD. We have already mentioned the first foundation element, **Motivation**—the willingness to work, which enables the next two. The second element is **Reliability**, which is the willingness to show up to work everyday. The third element is **Dependability**, the measure of the ability to stay on task at work. MRD together is the essential determinant of employability. All three are needed for employability.

After establishing **MRD**, a set of decisions is required about the appropriate level of investments to be made in the candidate's soft and hard skills development. This should be a function of the resources that are available to the agency and the gap that exists between the candidate's current job readiness and minimum employment requirements.

This sounds simple. It is in theory. It is not always easy, however, to establish and adhere to processes that follow this approach.

## STEP 2: EFFECTIVE JOB DEVELOPMENT AND JOB MARKET PENETRATION

Job Development that results in job market penetration must be based on each candidate's job placement needs profile. There are three broad profiles:

- **Self Placement Candidates** can assume responsibility for self placement by learning self-marketing through their participation in job clubs or programs. (**Profile "SP"**)
- **Assisted Job Placement Candidates** with visible barriers have many of the same personal characteristics of the self placement candidates but, in addition, they have visible employment barriers. These barriers (age, disability, race, ethnicity, ex-offender status etc.) represent the candidate type

that employers would not traditionally hire. These candidates require the assistance of a job developer to contact employers on their behalf and to implement a strategy that focuses on the employer's priority needs to get them hired. (**Profile "JD1"**)

- **Assisted Job Placement Candidates with visible barriers and limited skills** have visible employment barriers combined with skill limitations. For example, they may be slow at performing jobs due to their disability. These candidates require the assistance of the job developer in contacting employers on their behalf and implementing strategies to

overcome the negative perceptions of employment barriers, plus any skill limitations. The job developer must refocus the employer to review their minimum hiring requirements to get the candidate hired. (**Profile "JD2"**)

The principles of effective job development are not complex. The skills required to deliver assisted job development are, however, somewhat sophisticated. The challenge for organizations is to refine their job development processes around these three types of candidates, strengthen their job development skills, and stay committed to the approach.

## STEP 3: STRATEGY CHANGE FOCUSES

An MRD candidate with an employment barrier and without a job offer is a result of the job development strategy and efforts. It is not about the candidate. The focus of change should be on improving job development strategies and efforts, not on improving the candidate.

A candidate who turns down appropriate job offers will necessitate a focus of change on ensuring motivation to work, not on the job developer's ability to secure a job.

Management is able to structure, link and change employment

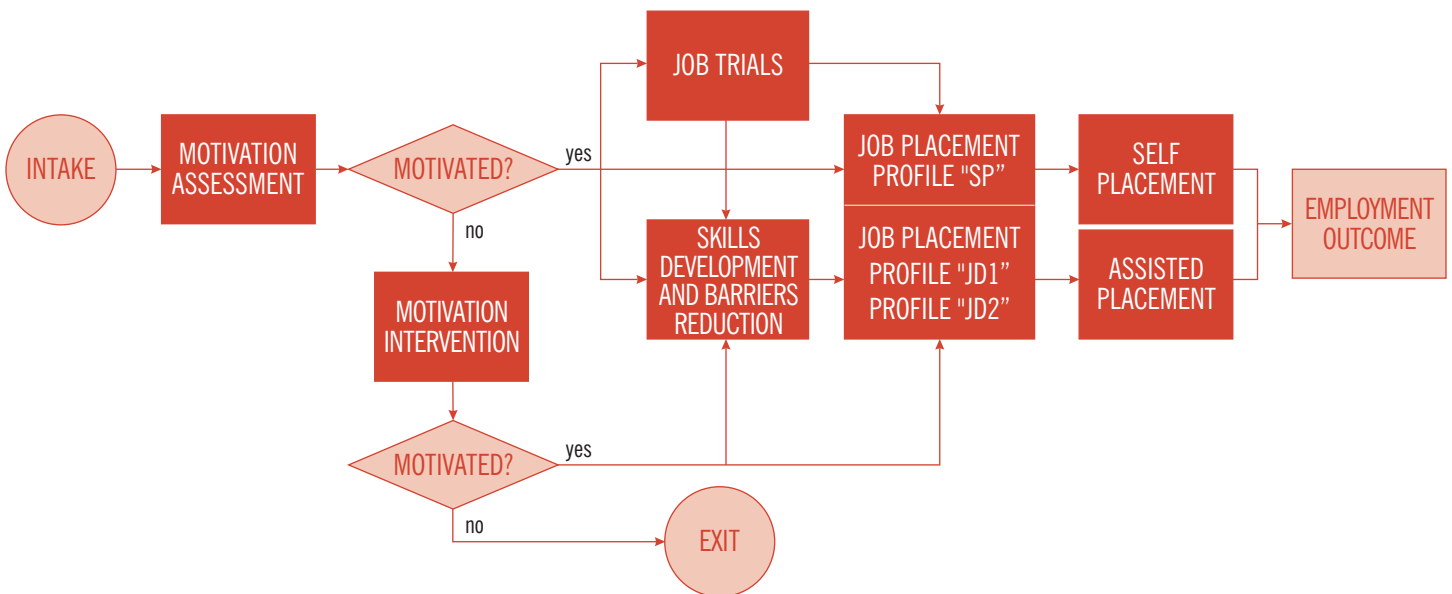
outcomes work by focusing on the effectiveness of the motivation and job market penetration processes as the keys to success.

## IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTION

The solution starts with the knowledge that a candidate that is deemed MRD and who has an employment barrier can become employed. If we are not achieving the desired employment outcomes today, then we need to:

- Refine our candidate preparation processes.
- Improve our job development strategies and capabilities.
- Ensure that our management systems are aligned to these two key functions.

DTG-EMP partners with employment organizations to develop the strategies, models, skill sets and techniques that will deliver results in critical areas.



## FIND OUT MORE

If you need help dealing with complex caseloads and improving employment outcomes, contact us and we will be pleased to assist you in responding to the challenges you are facing.



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