

Tie That Binds

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Attitude is the real disability

Conversation with an Employer

I started my career back in 1977 at Manpower, Inc. At that time the focus was filling in for vacations, medical leave and short term projects. By the time I left were specializing in Wagemastering. That was Manpower taking on the costs of employing someone and adding a profit to the invoice we submitted to a business.

My last conversations with people still in the field, confirm that they are more or less staffing agencies or human resource departments for other companies. My contacts are looking for people that fill a need for their customer.

As job developers we need to approach this staffing company like we would any other business. What is causing them headaches? What do they need? Can we make them look good in the eyes of their customers? Can we help them increase their bottom line? The same benefits we bring to other employers, these employers would be interested.



Now the flip side of the conversation. We need to build rapport and trust. These staffing agencies will have a hard time

selling an on-site trainer (job coach) to their customer. We may have to build relationships with these companies, also. The further we get are away from the hiring source or decision maker the harder it is to place someone.

When I go to conferences and meet with large groups of people, it seems that community rehabilitation providers in large cities have had more success in approaching staffing agencies. In Upper East, there has been some success in using staffing agencies to get into manufacturing plants. Is anyone else in Tennessee having success? I would love to share your success.

Analyzing The Labor Market

Sometimes the businesses we contact are determined by the results of Discovery and the Person Centered Process But if we are contacting 6 companies a week, we have time to go “off the board.”

You need to make these contacts beneficial. You need to prepare before you head out of your office.

Who are the major employers in your area? Do they have a written Diversity Initiative? Does the company have federal contracts? What companies or industries have the most turnover?

Is any company anticipating growth soon? Who has a track record of hiring people with disabilities?

Is there someone new in town?

Is seasonal employment an option?

Does any business have interns?

Case Studies

Most of the employment programs have regularly scheduled staff meetings. In a staff meeting have a discussion on the following situation.

An employee has been having performance issues. You have worked with the employer and used several reasonable accommodations. Nothing seems to be

improving his/her quality and quantity of work. How long does the employer have to go on accommodating the employee before they can fire him/her?

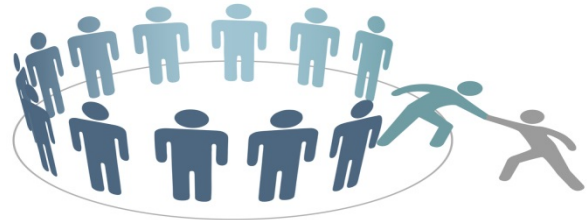
Or, a longtime employee has been using an accommodation and has been successful on the job. New management comes in and says the employee does not need the accommodation anymore. Management says the employee needs documentation and medical signatures to sustain the the accommodation or the employee will be fired. Can they do this?

TNAPSE

We don't often hear about all the things that TNAPSE is doing in Tennessee. There is an active membership that is involved and invited to many of the meetings that are driving employment, the projects and policies in the state.

- ✓ Coordinating CESP Exams across the state
- ✓ Redi Programs
- ✓ The development and operation of Project Search/Project Opportunity
- ✓ Training across the state
- ✓ Updating New Hire training with Vocational Rehabilitation
- ✓ Developing curriculum for job coaches
- ✓ Planning the MegaConference
- ✓ On the board for Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers
- ✓ TNCO Leadership
- ✓ Active in community conversations
- ✓ Parent meetings for students on the Autism Spectrum as they transition from school to work
- ✓ Active in the Employment First State Leadership Mentor Program
- ✓ Serving on the governor's Employment first Task force

- ✓ ADA Leadership Trainers
- ✓ Planning Meaningful Day with DIDD Regional staff
- ✓ IPS Pilot program
- ✓ Active in the TennesseeWorks Partnership, the state project of national significance
- ✓ Active in the TnWorks Statewide Employer Outreach Initiative
- ✓ Leadership role in changing segregated service delivery to fully integrated models
- ✓ Knox Area Employment Consortium (KAEC)
- ✓ Southeast Placement consortium of Chattanooga
- ✓ Participated in APSE Public Policy conference calls
- ✓ Treasurer of the Mayor's Council on Disabilities in Chattanooga



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BY WORKING FAITHFULLY
FOR EIGHT HOURS
A DAY
YOU MAY EVENTUALLY BECOME A BOSS
AND THEN WORK
TWELVE HOURS
A DAY.

-ROBERT FROST