



BUSINESS SERVICES/JOB DEVELOPMENT

Department: Office of Economic & Workforce Development

Effective Date: July 1, 2008

Policy/Procedure #: WIA107-A

Supersedes: N/A

Overview

Job development is essential to ensuring that WIA participants obtain permanent, unsubsidized employment at a sustainable wage in a timely fashion. Job development is proactive in nature and is designed to provide each participant with enough appropriate employment opportunities to keep the amount of time spent between the initial job search and placement to a minimum.

Business Services as a Sales Position

Business Services staff are first and foremost salespeople. Staff “sells” applicant screening, matching and referral services to employers. Staff also sells participant skills, abilities, education levels, and any other attribute that might make an applicant a desirable candidate for a vacant position. Staff will present and promote participants to employers as individuals and/or as part of the larger collective applicant pool depending upon the needs of the employer and the participant.

Job Openings vs. Job Leads

A **Job Opening** is a vacancy with an employer where staff is in contact with an internal contact with whom they can speak directly, follow up, request additional information as needed, etc. Job openings are often exclusive to the agency until and unless we cannot fill them (at which point an employer usually pursues other avenues for assistance). A **Job Lead** is a vacancy where we do not have any meaningful relationship with the employer (i.e.: leads found on websites such as Monster.com or Craig’s List, found in the classifieds, found in public announcements). **Note:** On average, Business Services Representatives are expected to develop two new Job Openings per week for each participant actively seeking employment (see *Performance Expectations*).

Mining “The Hidden Job Market”

Job opportunities that have been made available to the public create large scale competition for participants. Ideally employers will work directly with a Business Services Representative for assistance with filling a vacancy *before* posting their openings anywhere else (providing WIA participants with the opportunity to apply before anyone else). To help ensure this occurs, Business Services Representatives must proactively reach out to employers in an effort to develop and/or maintain a meaningful working relationship. Seeking out and identifying unpublished vacancies is referred to as mining **The Hidden Job Market**.

Finding New Job Openings

There are numerous means of finding new job openings. All of the practices described below should become regular duties of each Business Services Representative.

Cold Calling: Calling businesses directly and asking to speak with the manager in the department of interest to begin to establish a working relationship and to subsequently provide applicant referral services.

Letters of Introduction/Mailers: Sending out letters of introduction and/or mailers or marketing materials will help to ensure employers are aware of the services available and create an opportunity for staff to make a follow up call (to ensure the business received the information).

Responding to Blind Advertisements: When staff discovers a published job lead that does not include direct employer contact information (a **Blind Advertisement**), staff will respond to the advertisement with a letter of introduction or marketing materials. Ideally, the employer will then contact the Business Services Representative for assistance with filling the position. Staff will never simply send participant resumes to a blind advertisement.

Sponsoring Association Events

Many professional industry associations have local chapters and local chapters often struggle to find a location to “host” their monthly, quarterly or annual association meetings. Business Services Representatives will contact local association chapters to offer to provide meeting space at their respective One Stop Centers. Free meeting space will be provided in “exchange” for the opportunity to make a brief presentation about available Business Services to the attendees. Meetings like this provide a “captive audience” and allows for the opportunity to reach multiple potential employers in one sitting.

Resources for Identifying Potential Employers

The following is a list of resources that may be used to find employers with whom Business Services Representatives have not yet developed relationships:

- ✓ Business Journal’s Annual Book of Lists
- ✓ Association Membership Lists
- ✓ Telephone Business Directories
- ✓ Chamber of Commerce Membership Lists
- ✓ Through Community Based Organizations
- ✓ Employment Websites
- ✓ Through Attending Community Events
- ✓ Networking Groups

Career Fairs

Sponsoring Career Fairs is an excellent way to draw employers to your One Stop Center and to involve participants in their own job search. It is expected that each Business Services Representative will sponsor a minimum of one (1) Career Fair at their respective One Stop Centers each quarter (see *Performance Expectations*).

“Stacking the Deck” of Applicants

There is a place for every participant. Knowing the strengths, skills and abilities of your participants is the first step in making a good applicant/job match. Business Services staff can give participants a competitive edge when interviewing by “stacking the deck”. Limit the number of applicants referred (if an employer has too many choices, the hiring process may be delayed). Pit “stronger” applicants against similarly skilled “weaker” applicants, pit “weaker” applicants against “weakest” applicants and advocate for the very “weakest” of applicants. Presenting applicants to employers in this fashion helps Business Services staff to *orchestrate* which applicant will be hired by creating a “stand out: applicant in each situation.

Participants Identifying Companies of Interest

Participants should be encouraged to participate in their own job search as much as possible. One way to involve participants directly is to act as a “bridge” to companies for which they would like to work. Have participants provide a list of five companies to you (including address and phone number). Contact each company to inquire about available positions for which that *individual* participant might be appropriate. “Sell” the participant’s individual skills and abilities. If no positions are currently available, use this opportunity to request an “informational interview” for your participant (which often results in an employer “creating” a position if they like the participant).

Maintaining A Varied Available Applicant Pool

Business Services staff must be prepared to screen, match and refer applicants with varying levels of skills, experience and education in order to respond to each employer’s need. This requires maintaining a “Varied Available Applicant Pool”. All One Stops are required to provide “Universal Access” to all job seekers. This means a diverse group of applicants will be accessing the One Stop Center. However, when an employer requests assistance with filling a vacancy for which there is no appropriate candidate, the Business Services Representative will network with one or more of the following groups to see if they have appropriate applicants that they can refer to you:

- ✓ Other Business Services Representatives
- ✓ Community Based Organizations
- ✓ Social Service Agencies
- ✓ Placement Departments of post secondary education institutions
- ✓ Placement staff of approved training facilities
- ✓ Search the Calwoks jobsite

If no appropriate applicants can be identified/referred within a reasonable amount of time, contact the employer to let him/her know that no applicant is currently available but that the search will continue until an applicant is found or until the vacancy is no longer available. It is better to send no applicant than an inappropriate applicant and explaining this to the employer helps to establish/confirm the Business Services Representative's credibility.

Job Board

Each Business Services Representative is required to maintain a **Job Board** at their respective One Stop Center. Publicly published *Job Leads* may be posted and may include contact information so applicants may self-refer. *Job Openings* should be posted without contact information. This requires interested applicants to meet with the Business Services Representative in order to be referred. This allows staff to document the referral, to contact the employer to "pitch" the applicant and to follow up with the employer to see if the applicant was hired.

Employer Incentives

Often businesses are eligible to receive incentives when hiring participants from targeted employment groups. Tax Credits and the Federal Bonding Program are examples of offerings that can be extremely valuable to employers and can often mean the difference between hiring a WIA participant and a non-WIA participant. Business Services Representatives are required to provide employers with information about such programs. Further information on the programs mentioned can be found by visiting www.oewd.org

Single Point of Contact

Business Services Representatives are expected to act as a **Single Point of Contact** for employers needing assistance.

Referring Applicants from other Organizations: When a Business Services Representative seeks assistance in identifying appropriate applicants from other agencies to fill a job order, the applicant information should be sent to the Business Services Representative, not directly to the employer. Once an employer is contacted directly by another agency, he/she now has multiple contacts to deal with making it more difficult to access services and it may delay the hiring process.

Services Outside the Normal Scope of Duties: When an employer requests information or services outside a Business Services Representative's normal scope of responsibility, the staff will still be able to serve the employer by identifying the appropriate contact at the appropriate CBO, social service agency, public agency, etc. and providing the employer with the contact's name and telephone number.