

SkillWorks Project Manager Training and Peer Exchange

July 2006

Topic: Re-design and management of career coaching programs

Invitees: Project directors of 6 SkillWorks programs and additional staff involved in career coach management or program design. Yariela Kerr-Donovan, John Hopkins Project Reach; Karen Shack and Rebekah Laschman, Boston Private Industry Council

Objective: To provide project directors with ideas for refinement of their career coaching methods/models to enhance achievement of program and participant goals.

Annotated Agenda

A. Introduction 15. min

- Outline of the workshop
- Group introductions (Facilitator will ask project directors to describe their biggest challenges or questions regarding their career coaching component, or some similar question.)

B. Description of models 30 min.

- Yariela Kerr-Donovan: brief (10 min.) description of Johns Hopkins career coaching model and its context: what ed/training program(s) is it a part of; who are the participants (pre-employment or incumbent workers, current jobs, skill/educational level, demographics); how is career coaching structured?
- Karen Shack, Boston Private Industry Council: brief description of career coaching models PIC has designed, managed and/or been an advisor to. Models chosen will differ from JH example (in terms of employment setting and/or pre-employment vs. incumbent worker).

C. Group discussion 2 hours

(The questions below will be posed to the group. JH and/or PIC will be asked to answer first, then discussion will be opened up for anyone else to share their experiences and ask questions of each other. Note, questions have been developed with the understanding that all participants are already familiar with the basic design of career coaching programs, and are interested in refining their model for increased effectiveness. The four questions below will be the “starter” questions and the facilitator will ask follow-up questions as appropriate to draw-out additional information.)

1) Goal Setting.

How do you develop and communicate the goals of your career coaching program (to employers, participants, coaches)?

Discussion should include:

- Identifying employer objectives
- Working with employers to design/re-design programs
- Clearly establishing the goals of coaching – making sure that employers, supervisors, coaches and participants are clear on the goals
- How retention and advancement goals inter-relate

2) Developing effective/efficient methods.

How should career coaching be structured to maximize effectiveness and efficiency?

Discussion should include:

- Integrating career coaching with other advancement resources offered by the employer or other partners
- Logistics related to effectiveness:
 - Determining appropriate caseload size
 - When group work works, when one-on-one is necessary
 - Where and when are services offered
 - **Managing career coaching services when participants are at multiple sites**
- Interacting with supervisors – what's needed to get buy-in
- Managing participants support service needs, while staying focused on career development goals

3) Supporting Career Coaches.

What do managers need to know and do to run an effective career coaching program and support coaches effectively?

Discussion should include:

- Need for managers to understand the career coaching function
- Helping coaches stay focused on the goals of the program
- Helping coaches understand the difference and manage the balance between case management and career coaching
- Helping coaches access resources/information and making it available to participants (e.g. info. on asset development, financial aid, etc.)

4) Measuring success.

How do you know when you are meeting your goals? How can coaches/managers use data to inform/refine their work?

Discussion should include:

- Benchmarks that are strong indicators of success
- The coaches role in data collection
- Using data as a management tool