

Job development set up about 5 years ago. It started with a very small thing in the department of rehab. Part of the rationale on rehab funding, this is something that they are supposed to be doing. What tends to happen is that rehab kind of works with clients on a vocational sense of a to z and we sort of work from the xyz of that whole concept, so by the time the people are coming to us for services they are already job ready. They already have the training, skills, education, work experience, so that they are competitive in a job market. They usually have a pretty good idea, although we do a bit of refinement on that, of where they want to be in terms of what type of job. The other aspects of their life are together, so that they are able to go out and do touting for jobs, which takes a lot of time. So if a person is looking for a house or apartment as well as looking for a job, we tend to refer them to housing. Or if they have psychological problems or a difficult emotional period, or if financially they are not together enough to really be able to sustain a job, there are other units within CIL that we can refer them back to. So we are the last stop on the IL merrygoround. At this point people have achieved IL and have achieved some training or skills, such that they are ready to go out and work, that is where we come in

JE: Was this one of the last departments to start up

Right. It is now really concerned with poor service in that many disabled people are looking for work, and the kinds of frustrations that people face anyway looking for a job are so much compounded if you have any disability. They kind of discriminate, the explanation a person has to deal with going for a job, talking much more about their job limitations, or the accommodations that they are going to need. There's many more hurdles a disabled person has to face and we offer a support network as well as intensive counselling. So our programme has two bents, one is dealing with clients, and in clients we work with them on identifying their job, we talk with them about developing good job seeking skills, resume writing, filling in applications, dealing with interviews, which is really the crux, because the interview is where you are really going to sell yourself into a job. We focus a lot on having a person talk about their disability, the job related limitations of the disability, quickly, succinctly, sort of get it over with, so that you can spend the rest of the time talking about what everybody talks about, your skills. We do encourage clients to deal with their disability on job interview, if it is related to their employment.

If you have a disability that is nothing to do with the job that you are going to be performing, say that, if it is an obvious physical disability, and if it is a hidden disability, you make a judgement, if it is a disability that will not affect you on your job, like arthritis, for example, if you don't need any accommodations on the job, there is no reason to bring it up. However, if you have epilepsy, or something that might well at some point have some effect on your job, we do encourage people to deal with that in a job interview. It can do a lot of good if you deal with that assertively and quickly. We feel that most interviews take such a brief amount of time, it is important to get that over with. We assist people in developing job search strategy, and in that utilize contacts that we have developed over the years in this programme, personnel people that we might know in specific companies we work with the client in a team approach and basically are trying to enable the client to develop the skill they need to look for a job independently. We don't look for the jobs for the client. For example, I might know of a company that has jobs along the lines that the client is looking for and what may in the discussion work out is that the client is... I may make an initial contact or the client may make the initial contact and I supply the names, then the two of us sit down and try to map out, if it is a field that we have not developed a strategy, to locating quarters that the client might have skills in or be qualified for. We meet regularly, we have a sort of a counselling mode and a we have a strong counselling background. Many people will come to a place which is called Job Development, though actually other problems have been going on for quite a time, maybe problems that require intensive counselling. If the client is having a hard time talking about things in an important situation, in an interview situation, then it is possibly

because there may still be some difficulties in accepting their disability, self confidence. It is important that those be dealt with, and that a sensitive client is supported

JE: Do you find that job seeking brings to the surface things which have been pushed aside

Yes. We really push for having very strong counselling skills, within job development, a vocational counselling background. Good counselling skills, good intake skills, good interviewing skills. In the first couple of interviews you are really getting a lot of information from the client, on which we base the judgement of whether the client is job ready, have there been appointment problems in the past, if the client has been fired, why, things he did that need to be dealt with before the person goes on a job search. So that is more or less the clients side of it. Then the other side of the programme is working with employers, concentrating on developing contacts for our clients. To set ourselves up as a resource for employers, even if it is not a referral from our clients, perhaps a disabled person comes off the street who goes for a job, there might be some questions that the employer has about accommodations, or they may have some questions about making their facilities accessible, they may have some questions about how much an interpreter costs, whether the TPV costs Very recently we have embarked on a much more technical assistance kind of approach. In the past we were giving out all this kind of free information to employers and recognise now, in the light of Reagan's budget cut, our programme is going to be scheduled for reduced funding at the end of this month. We are CETA funded, Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, established about four or five years ago to assist groups that had been traditionally unemployed or underemployed, so our programme got CETA funds, but Reagan is doing away with CETA, this is the last year that CETA will be in operation. So we have decided that what we really need to do is set ourselves up as a consultant to employers and provide services on a fee for service basis to employers, such as training on disability, awareness training, to personnel the biggest problems are always attitudinal barriers to getting jobs, it is not the ramp to be fitted, it is the supervisor making a lot of prejudgements based on their ability to accommodate the job. So we have embarked on doing training sessions with employers. We are also providing on a fee for service basis technical assistance aboutt physical access. Talking with employers about how to set up recruitment systems to recruit disabled workers, how to do outreach. All that comes from selling it to employers on a fee for service basis, with that we might be able to actually become self supporting. We have several proposals out right now to receive money for that project. We have done a small sort of test, we got two employers to test out the model of workshops that we have been giving, training and also physical access survey, it got a tremendously positive feed back. Both of those companies have written a good recommendation for our proposal, so we feel quite confident that we have good models. We feel many employers that we talk to continue to express a commitment to hiring disabled employees, whether or not federal regulations are deregulated, which again looks like it will happen withthis administration. They have bought the idea that there is a whole pool of potential workers outthere, but there are still some problems to be worked out in terms of really assimmilating disabled persons into the workforce, we can be there to help that along. Companies pay consultants for a wide range of products, why not this. So I think we are finally, after five years, being forced to get creative, get smart about marketing programmes. Employers that we have established a good reputation with by referring qualified disabled applicants

JE: You will be able to stay on the road then

Yes, we are hoping. Most of the boards who review this proposal need thought, so we probably will lose our funds before we get other moneys, however I feel fairly confident that one of the proposals at least will come through and that the programme will be able to continue in some form

JE: Do you see any trends, types of people you are helping

We have primarily focussed on serving severely disabled persons. That has not so much been the problem, I think the greatest resistance comes, for some reason, in hiring a blind person. I think it is based on a stereotype, it really requires a blind person to be able to go in and explain how they have done work in the past or how they have training. We have worked with a real broad range of disabled persons and a broad range of skills as well. We don't have a field enquiry base, but whether a person is job ready. Job ready can be a high school diploma and some work experience or they could have just graduated from law school, we work with that kind of range of people. In terms of trends I would say that one real bright new field that is really opening up to people is the computer field. I think that has happened because there is such a it is one of the few occupations that still at this point has great number of openings, and because of that disabled persons who have been trained in this field are getting employment because they desperately want workers, and it is lucrative. Many of the companies then retrain people

JE: I thought there was a separate computer set up

U We work together, but pretty much they work with their own clients

JE: Can you give me any figures

We have worked with approximately 550 clients, of whom we have maintained a placement rate of between 60-65%, this is tremendously high, the national average placement rate for the disabled population is about 20-25%. I think the model of the programme that we have developed is very successful, intensive high impact, working very closely with clients, many of the clients who have not been placed have dropped out of the job search for one reason or another, personal problems, exacerbation of disability. It has been recognised as a model programme by the president's committee

JE: Do you co-operate with any other CILs

We have done a lot of training of other ILPs, unfortunately many of the new ILPs, job development is about the last ...

U JE: How do you rate job development in the IL programme

I think it is very important, there are not any kind of services out there. Rehab pays a lot of attention to people up until they are trained, then they don't have the time to work with people individually in really getting their job seeking skills sorted out, that's when you fall, if you don't have good job seeking skills all the training in the world is not going to get you a job. Personally I feel it is a really needed service, however, if you have a limited budget and the choice is attendant referrals, peer counselling, housing, job development, and you can only run two of those programmes, I really do hope that at some point the government or someone recognises these services as vital and that they will be funded at a level literally a third of our time is spent in survival, seeking out funding, reporting back to the government

JE: Who does that

We all do, it is not centralised. I am the director of a programme, so I do more of that and less of the client contact, however, it is very frustrating, I prefer to spend my time drumming up more business contacts, establishing a business advisory board, getting a group of employers who are very committed and building on our technical assistance programme, that is where I prefer to spend my time, rather than researching foundations and looking for money, which is what I find myself doing. In terms of CIL as a whole, something that would be helpful would be to have a centralised group to do that for the whole agency in a more planned kind of way, however it is very difficult to get money from those kinds of positions, and it is really

a kind of Catch 22, specially right now, it is very depressing, every month there is a new programme that is leaving, the Reagan administration is just killing us, it is very sad to me. I spoke with a blind man from England, who had a show on TV called 'Does he take sugar', he did talk about Thatcher and it was like a blueprint for what is going on here. What gets funded here by charity are places like Goodwill, workshops for disabled people that do nothing to encourage people to IL, it makes me so angry, things like Gerry Lewis telephon, things that are almost totally run by able bodied persons, which is not in itself bad, but people whose philosophy and mind set is very old fashioned and those programmes get huge amounts of private funding. CIL, we are in a strange position because politically we are activists and for that the Reagan administration would love to see us wither away, and in some way that is happening, on the other hand, we provide services that are extrememly vital. I am looking forward to about 5 or 6 years from now, when they are swinging the other way

JE: How many staff do you have

We have lost staff along the way because of funding, at our largest we were 12 and now we are 4, and we will be losing three of those people at the end of the month unless we get other funding, so even at CIL it may be possible that there won't be a job development programme, but we are trying to be optimistic and we are sending out a lot of positive information about the programme.

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