

Strategies for Effective Employer Engagement



Joe Quick, AIR

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Retaining Employment and Talent
After Injury/Illness Network

 **AIR**[®]


ODEP
Office of Disability
Employment Policy

Speaker and Facilitator



Joe Quick

Senior TA Consultant

Workforce Program Area, AIR

jquick@air.org | 517.290.8610

What did you get yourself into?



- Welcome and Intros (in chat)
- Employer Priorities and Pain Points
- Establishing Rapport, Building Trust, and Sustaining Engagement
- Recruitment, Placement, and Retention Considerations
- *Discussion:* Promising Practices, Strategies to Overcome Challenges

Employer Priorities & Pain Points

What Keeps Businesses Up at Night?

Ongoing Priorities

Employers are juggling a lot.

- Profitability, productivity, and performance
- Finding and retaining qualified talent
- Maintaining quality of product and service
- Maintaining a safe and productive work environment (especially re: pandemic)
- Meeting customer needs
- Innovating and competing in a global market



Persistent Business Pain Points



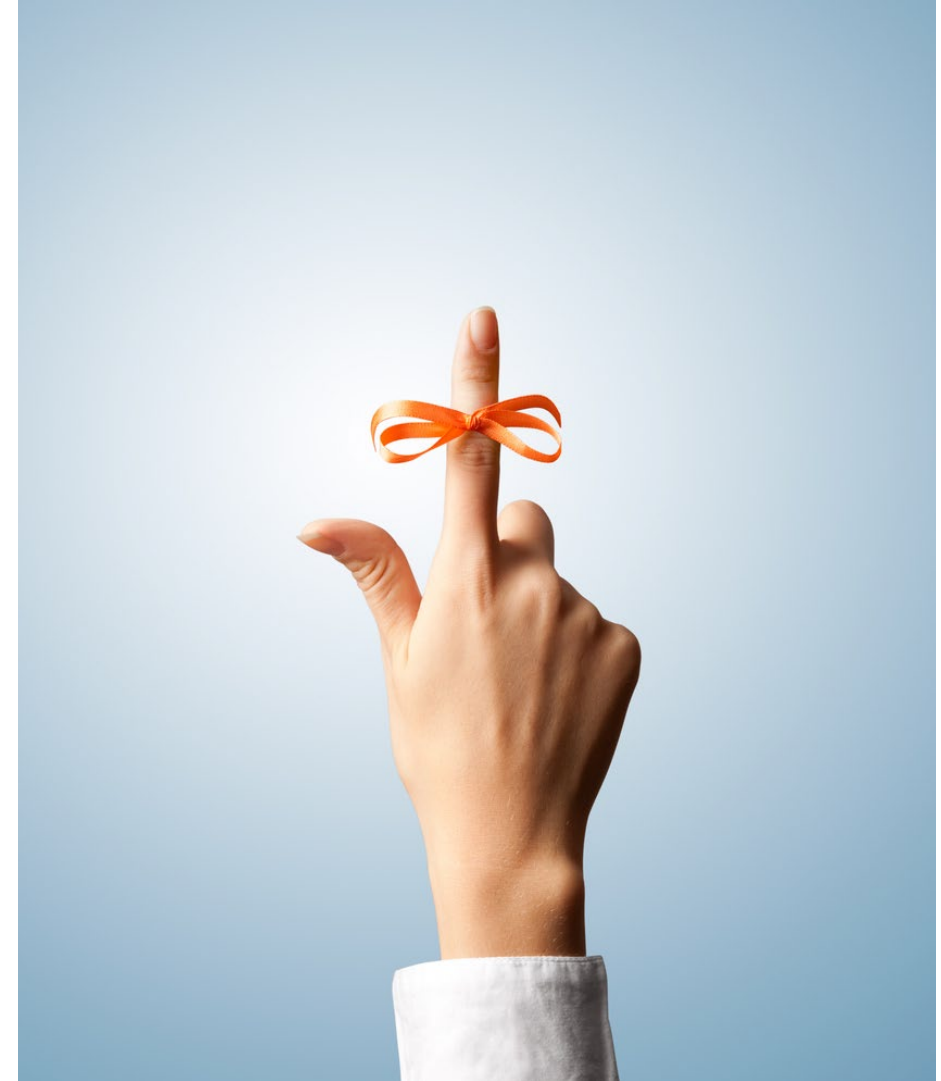
- Persistent and growing talent gaps
- Rapid pace of technological advances and associated skill needs
- Changing work environments and requests for flexibility
- Lack of awareness and clarity on the what, where, who, and how of available services
- Contact fatigue from partners
- Need for consistent and clear communication with training/education and service providers
- Barriers to employment and employee success
- Cost of training and upskilling
- Lack of knowledge regarding DEIA approaches, regulations, and strategies for balancing reasonable accommodations with productivity
- Others?

A Few Things to Remember

- Employers structure their jobs differently – work environment, industry, etc.
- Employers want the *best* talent to fill a role.
- Employers often don't know how or when to work with certain programs, providers, or services.
- Employers are interested in new ways to keep employees safe, happy, and productive.
- Employers want a clear value proposition for partnership.

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Establishing Rapport, Building Trust, and Sustaining Engagement

The 9 Cs of Business Engagement

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The 9 Cs of Effective Employer Engagement

Get ready for alliteration overload!

- **C**oordination
 - **C**ollaboration
 - **C**alibration
 - **C**larity
 - **C**reativity
 - **C**onsistency
 - **C**ooperation
 - **C**redibility
 - **C**ommunication
-

The 9 Cs of Effective Employer Engagement (cont. 1)

Creativity



A willingness from partners to try new approaches and brainstorm ways to scale existing ones. A creative, adaptive, and responsive mindset to collaborate on new solutions. Bring your expertise to the table. Don't assume businesses know everything *or nothing* about key approaches. Share expertise.

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Credibility

Just as with their providers and business partners in their supply chain, businesses want credibility and consistency of quality from their talent solution partners. Leverage existing relationships with orgs that already have credibility and an established relationship to achieve success and get your foot in the door. Use data to build clout.



The 9 Cs of Effective Employer Engagement (cont. 2)

Clarity

Clear language to describe efforts, solutions, and constraints of your resources, talent populations, and associated benefits. A “no wrong door” approach at accessing these resources from “the system.” Employers shouldn’t have to struggle with where to access services.



Consistency

Whenever possible, maintain resources across geographic lines, company locations, service levels, and communication efforts. Follow-through and trust are paramount in employer engagement and consistency breeds trust. Getting conflicting answers and varying levels of service can be frustrating.

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The 9 Cs of Effective Employer Engagement (cont. 3)



Coordination

An integrated/unified approach to serving business, across partners and programs. Alignment of outreach, fact-finding, solution design, and service delivery to meet holistic needs for recruitment and retention. Solutions to complex challenges are often “all hands on deck.” Those hands need to be coordinated.

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Collaboration

Service providers, government agencies, placement and recruitment teams, and education training providers are all *partners* to business in creating and implementing solutions. Business is not just your customer, but a partner in creating talent pipelines for a dual bottom line.



The 9 Cs of Effective Employer Engagement (cont. 4)

Communication

Constant communication with business partners is key, as business needs and the business environment may change frequently. With changes in business needs come changes in skill and talent needs, work environments, and resource needs. Establishing single point of contact are a great way to minimize duplicative outreach and coordinate solutions – in both directions.



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Cooperation

Maintaining any relationship requires consistent negotiation between needs and constraints, goals and barriers. Shared value requires cooperation with timelines and requirements on both sides of a partnership. Get constant feedback.

The 9 Cs of Effective Employer Engagement (cont. 5)



Calibration

While every solution, program, resource, and talent population has their own needs, constraints, and associated timelines, solutions to business customers should line up with their needs, hiring timelines, and HR lifecycles. This ensures relevance and timeliness of solutions to maintain their own measures performance, productivity, and profit.



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Recruitment, Placement, Return, and Retention Considerations

Industry-Driven Solutions and Consultative Partnership

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Deliver Solutions that Solve Specific Challenges

Remember: Listen, Ideate, Collaborate, Implement, Iterate

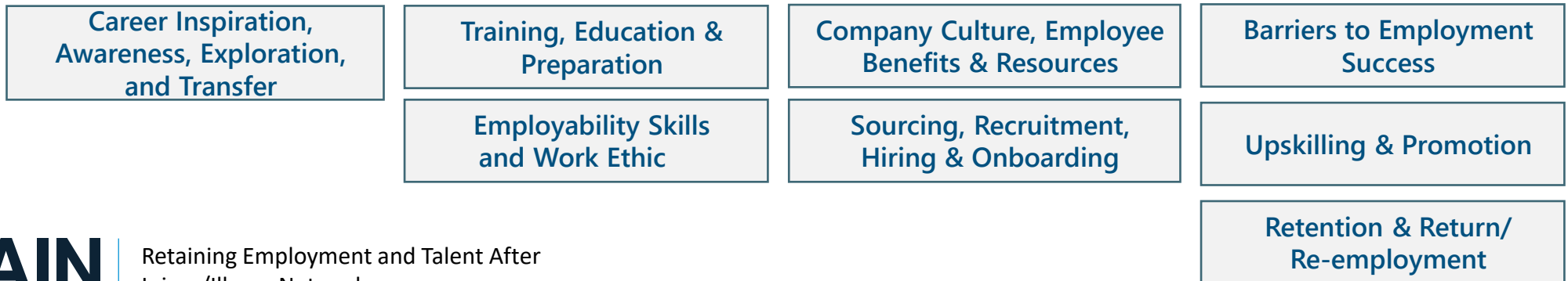
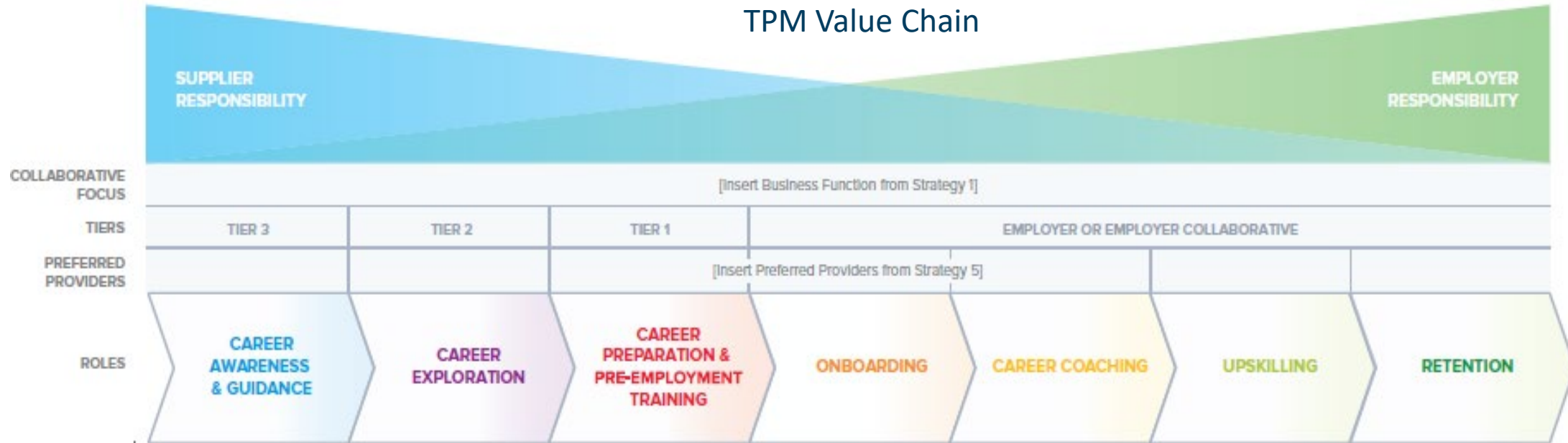


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Align Your Resources to Business and Talent Lifecycles

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Talent Pipeline Management®¹
 TPM Value Chain



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¹ U.S. Chamber Foundation TPM Curriculum: <https://tpmacademy.uschamberfoundation.org/the-curriculum/>

Recruitment and Placement Considerations

- Learn an employer's current processes, strategies, and priorities in the recruitment process
- Understand skill needs—both technical and employability—and how your talent and/or resources may meet these needs
- Learn about their experience with re-employment and retention strategies—what has worked, what hasn't, and what knowledge gaps exist.
- Find the gaps your resources and talent populations may fill, and how they are an appropriate solution.
- Understand culture, workplace conditions, existing flexibilities, and knowledge gaps in ways to improve or adjust. Can you provide value here?



Advocate to Resonate

- Use language that presents the talent you are working with as a qualified candidate and solution to a talent pain point
- Focus on ability, not disability
- Be careful about the way you talk about incentives and support that may accompany a candidate returning to work
- Present workplace accommodations, innovations, programmatic supports, and ergonomic adjustments as distinct advantages to all employees
- Discuss diversity (including neurodiversity) as a benefit to business creativity and innovation



Discussion

- What are your roadblocks and challenges in working with employers?
- What strategies are working for you?
- What seems to resonate?
- What is most important to the individuals you serve with employment/re-employment services?
- What partners are most important in your return-to-work and retention strategies?



Your Turn!

THANK YOU

