

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

THE BENEFITS OF PERSON-CENTERED JOB PLACEMENT: RESULTS FROM PROVIDERS UNDERGOING ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION FROM SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT

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Abstract:	Recent national and state-level policy changes have created an imperative for service providers to transform from sheltered work to competitive integrated employment. The current study sought to understand the impact of participation in a 1-year, technical assistance pilot designed to support service providers to transform away from sheltered workshops towards competitive integrated employment and delivering job development supports. Findings showed competitive integrated employment is attainable if given the appropriate organizational emphasis and when effective job development practices are implemented to a strategically identified group. Implications highlight the values of slowly preparing individuals for integrated employment; facilitating an active, person-centered job placement process; engaging key stakeholders in job development; and focusing on individual job placement in the context of organizational transformation.

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Abstract

Recent national and state-level policy changes have created an imperative for service providers to transform from sheltered work to competitive integrated employment. The current study sought to understand the impact of participation in a 1-year, comprehensive technical assistance pilot designed to support service providers to transform away from sheltered workshops towards encouraging competitive integrated employment and delivering job development supports. Findings showed competitive integrated employment is attainable if given the appropriate organizational emphasis and when effective job development practices are implemented to a strategically identified group. Implications highlight the values of slowly preparing individuals for competitive integrated employment; facilitating an active, person-centered job placement process; engaging key stakeholders in job development; and focusing on individual job placement in the context of organizational transformation.

Keywords: Provider transformation, integrated employment, intellectual and developmental disabilities

The Benefits of Active, Person-centered Job Placement: Results from Service Providers Undergoing Organizational Transformation Away from Sheltered Employment

There are significant disparities in employment rates for people with and without disabilities. The 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) indicates that the employment rate for working-age adults without disabilities (74.8%) is more than twice the rate for working-age adults with disabilities (36.3%) (Winsor et al., 2019). Moreover, research indicates that individuals with disabilities have less job security, receive less company-sponsored training, and have lower rates of participation in decision-making when compared to workers without disabilities (Mitra & Kruse, 2016; Schur et al., 2009).

For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), these disparities are far greater. Data from the National Core Indicators (NCI) Project suggest that in 2018–2019, only 19% of working-age adults supported by state IDD agencies were employed in a paid job in the community, and only 15% were employed in an individual integrated job (National Core Indicators, 2021a). A survey of 190 US community rehabilitation providers reported that only 17.5% of adults with IDD served in FY 2014–2015 worked for pay in individual jobs (Domin & Butterworth, 2016).

Recent national and state-level policy changes (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2011; 2015), along with a growing dissatisfaction with sheltered workshops and non-work services among individuals with IDD and their family members (Migliore et al., 2007), have created an imperative for service providers. Service providers, also called community providers, or community rehabilitation providers, are the primary source of employment support for individuals with IDD in the US, with over 8,000 service providers nationwide (Butterworth et al., 2016). The majority (over 70%) of those served by these service providers are people with

IDD, and over two-thirds of service providers offer both work and non-work services (Domin & Butterworth, 2012). Historically, most service providers predominantly offered sheltered or facility-based employment services with limited community-based or competitive integrated employment options. For the purposes of this study, competitive integrated employment is defined as full-time or part-time work at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits similar to those without disabilities performing the same work, and fully integrated with co-workers without disabilities.

These service providers have been challenged to change their organizational structures and service delivery models from primarily sheltered work to competitive integrated employment. Ongoing phasing out of sheltered workshops and the transition to competitive integrated employment, however, has created challenges for service providers when adapting their models (Rogan & Rinne, 2011; Timmons et al., 2019). It has been long established that “moving to integrated community services necessitates a complete rethinking of mission, vision, values, and practices” (Rogan & Rinne, 2011, p. 250), yet many organizations lack the strategic planning needed to complete the process successfully.

While certain service providers have successfully transformed their services (Brooks-Lane et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2006), many have either not begun, or have struggled to do so, despite growing demand for competitive integrated work opportunities (Martinez, 2013). Research also suggests continued service and philosophical variation within the service provider community, making the creation of a unified vision for service delivery difficult (Office of Disability Employment Policy, 2014). Many service provider administrators believe that facility-based programs are essential, and many do not have a formal plan to expand (Inge, et al., 2009). Front-line staff also experience confusion about job development responsibilities, do not feel

prepared to engage the mainstream business community, and have little training in providing appropriate supports (Migliore et al., 2011; Rosenthal et al., 2012; West & Patton, 2010).

Furthermore, front-line staff report difficulties helping individuals with IDD achieve competitive integrated employment, particularly individuals with IDD who had high support needs (Rogan & Rinne, 2011). Murphy et al., (2014) argue that service providers continue to allocate resources to program services focused on community outings and socialization rather than employment.

One factor for the stagnation of competitive integrated employment for individuals with IDD is lack of information for service providers and job developers regarding best practices. According to Migliore, Nye-Lengerman, Lyons, et al. (2018), “While extensive literature about effective employment support strategies is available, research indicates that these strategies are not consistently implemented (p.4).” One such effective strategy is active, person-centered job placement. The active, person-centered job placement process has seen success in this disability field (Bose & Timmons, 2010; Condon et al., 2005; Gervey, et al. 2009; Gunty et al., 2019; Hasnain et al., 2003) but several barriers have prevented widespread adoption, including low expectations for individuals with IDD; the belief that people must be “job ready” before entering competitive integrated employment; and issues surrounding funding, transportation, definitions of employment models, and lack of training on the business world (Rosenthal et al., 2012).

Another promising practice in employment is the involvement of friends and family members. Each friend and family member brings their own set of personal resources as well as their own perspective about the individual. According to guidance from the Administration on Community Living (ACL, 2019), family engagement is a crucial part of person-centered planning. Research has also supported involving family members in the job placement process (Kramer, 2018; Migliore, Nye-Lengerman, Lyons et al., 2018). Involving family members is a

crucial aspect of trust-building between the job developer, job seeker, and with family members. Family members help provide a wider perspective about the job seeker. They may be able to help address many of the issues surrounding competitive integrated employment for individuals with IDD, including transportation and spotting potential workplace crises. Yet, according to Timmons and Wolfe (2011), families might perceive the job developers as experts and thus limit their involvement in the job-finding process. Conversely, Kramer (2018) found little to no guidance from disability systems or vocational agencies on how to engage families in the job-finding process, thereby limiting engagement to all but the most proactive families and job developers.

The Current Study

Service providers experience these aforementioned barriers to organizational transformation, including lack of a strategic transformation plan, lack of job development experience, and lack of information on best practices in employment. Job developers also experience challenges in implementing best practices such as active person-centered job placement, including the false belief in “job readiness” and lack of information on how to engage job seekers’ friends and family. In response to these barriers and challenges, the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at University of Massachusetts Boston sought to develop a framework to support service provider transformation that could be brought to scale. Beginning in 2016, ICI researchers conducted an iterative Delphi panel process involving experts in the organizational transformation process to identify the most essential elements necessary for service providers to achieve success. Results revealed 10 critical elements ranked in order of importance. These included the establishment of clear and consistent goals, a culture that values inclusion, active person-centered job placement, strong internal and external communications,

reallocation and restructuring of resources, investment in staff professional development, customer engagement, performance measurement, a holistic approach, and diverse community partnerships (Lyons et al., 2018). Researchers then conducted case studies of service providers who had successfully transformed from sheltered employment to competitive integrated employment to investigate how each of the 10 elements was implemented on the ground (Kamau & Timmons, 2018; Timmons et al., 2019). Findings from these studies suggested a plethora of implementation strategies, notably, an active, person-centered job placement process. “All four providers reported using a deliberate placement plan that identified priority individuals from the workshop that would be influential to others and create a positive snowball effect. Person-centered discovery was essential to uncover each individual’s interests, skills, and passions. This process included family members, friends, neighbors, and anyone else requested by the job seeker” (Timmons et al., 2019, p. 310).

Using the 10 elements uncovered in research with our Delphi panel and implementation strategies derived from case study research as our foundational content, ICI researchers developed the Provider Transformation Network (PTN). The PTN was a 1-year, comprehensive technical assistance pilot designed to support service providers seeking to transform services away from sheltered workshops and toward competitive integrated employment. Ten service providers, all chapters of the Arc of the United States, participated in the pilot over the course of two years. This model, based on the previously identified 10 elements of organizational transformation, is composed of a collection of activities including: an in-person, 2-3 day site visit; an organizational self-assessment whereby service providers ranked themselves against the 10 elements; additional service tracking techniques; an in-person leadership summit and focused action planning; individualized technical assistance calls; and monthly topical webinars with

opportunities for PTN participants to share information and experiences. Project staff did not deliver specific trainings to the providers, rather, the project team developed and distributed a resource-intensive, online toolkit to providers (<https://act.thinkwork.org/>). Project staff guided providers to local or online third-party trainings if they wanted to learn more. With competitive integrated employment as a critical need to service providers, a major focus of the PTN was guidance around active, person-centered job placement. This paper seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. Did involvement in the 1-year Provider Transformation Network (PTN) and a focus on active, person-centered job placement have an impact on individual employment outcomes?
2. Is an active, person-centered job placement process achievable at a variety of service providers with different populations, in varied geographic locales, and in different places along the continuum of change in the transformation process?
3. What specific job development strategies enabled an active, person-centered job placement process?

Methods

The following methods section describes 1) recruitment and selection procedures for the Provider Transformation Network (PTN), 2) an overview of the measure used, 3) data collection procedures, and 4) data analysis.

Recruitment and selection

To be considered for this study, eligible service providers needed to 1) serve primarily individuals with IDD, 2) indicate a commitment to moving away from sheltered workshops and toward competitive integrated employment, regardless of how far along they were in the

transformation process, and 3) be a chapter or affiliate site of the Arc of the United States that currently operated or recently closed a sheltered workshop and/or held a 14(c) certificate. A 14(c) is a certification from the Department of Labor that “authorize employers to pay subminimum wages to workers with disabilities that impair their productivity for the work they perform.” (United States Department of Labor, 2021).

The ICI distributed a recruitment flyer explaining the goals and the purpose of the study nationwide through its professional networks, including the Arc of the United States, the Association for Persons Supporting Employment First (APSE), the Association of University Centers on Disability (AUCD), and TASH. The recruitment flyer offered a link to an online application process. The application contained several open-ended questions where service providers could outline their commitment to organizational transformation. Applicants were asked to describe the organization’s history; the organization's mission, vision, and goals; the role and perspective of their board of directors as it relates to service transformation; and their “commitment to lasting organizational change that will substantively change the focus of services from center based and/or reliance on 14(c) to competitive integrated employment, including supported employment.” Furthermore, the applicant provided information about organizational characteristics, including geographic setting, size of the service provider, and populations served.

Fourteen service providers completed the application process and 10 of those providers were selected to be part of this study. The 10 service providers were then paired by similar characteristics such as size, location, and how far along in the transformation process they were. We used a coin toss to determine which five service providers would participate in the PTN in Year 1, and which five service providers would participate in Year 2.

The 10 service providers chosen represented eight states across the US. Four providers identified their location as rural or semi-rural areas, four providers identified their location as suburban areas, and two providers identified their location as urban areas. Four service providers were in the same state, two in one state and two in another. However, in each instance they were in different years of the pilot and represented different geographic settings, with two identifying as rural and the other two identifying as urban. The average number of individuals served across each of the 10 service providers was 417 (min=140, max=900) with an average operating budget of \$4,158,046 (min=\$944,000, max=\$14,415,426). All but two of the service providers held a 14(c) certificate.

Measure

Researchers created an Outcomes Tracking Log (OTL) to track the progress of up to 20 job seekers at each service provider over the course of the 1-year Provider Transformation Network (PTN). The overarching goals of the OTL were to be able to track the number of times individuals achieved competitive integrated employment job placements during the service providers' participation in the pilot, as well as the number of individuals who set off on a path toward competitive integrated employment over the course of the year. The latter was measured by the delivery of job development supports, which is described in more detail next.

The OTL collected basic demographic information for each of the job seekers, including gender, race, and age range, as well as previous work experience and level of needed supports (ranging from intermittent to pervasive). In addition to demographics, the OTL then sought to track job development supports each individual received. These job development supports included: person-centered planning (defined in the OTL as a process whereby a person with a disability works with other important people in their life to plan their future); discovery activities

(activities designed to get to know the job seeker's interests, goals, and abilities); engagement with family and friends (practices that encourage active participation and maximize the expectations of family and friends during the employment process); time spent with employers (working directly with employers to develop employment opportunities, which includes job creation, bringing together a combination of new job tasks to create a new position, and/or job carving, changing existing staff responsibilities to create a new job).

The OTL was also designed to track individuals who obtained employment during the course of the year. For those individuals who obtained competitive integrated employment, the OTL asked follow-up questions about the job, such as hours worked per week, hourly wage, job title, the existence of benefits, and the start date.

Data Collection

Researchers identified one project liaison at each service provider location. This project liaison, in conjunction with other key staff at the service provider location, identified up to 20 individuals that they felt were likely to obtain competitive integrated employment during the course of the 1-year intervention. Project staff made recommendations to the liaisons based upon previous research (Bose & Timmons, 2010; Lyons et al., 2018) to first choose individuals who had expressed interest in obtaining competitive integrated employment. The project liaison completed the OTL three times over the course of the project year: first after the initial site visit where the instrument was explained and the job seekers were identified, then again at six months into the pilot, and once again at the conclusion of the pilot.

Analysis

The OTL was analyzed by exporting the service provider's Survey Gizmo data into Excel and tabulating the change in employment outcomes for each job seeker from each OTL

administration. Researchers calculated change in percentage of job development supports delivered based on the number of job development supports each service provider provided, divided by the total number of job seekers chosen to transition into competitive integrated employment during each OTL administration. Researchers calculated wages and hours per week worked for each year of the study by averaging the reported hourly wages earned and hours worked per week of each individual at each service provider who found competitive integrated employment. Researchers only used data reported from those job seekers noted in all three OTL administrations to calculate the final results.

Results

The following results section offers 1) an overview of the job seekers that providers felt were likely to obtain competitive integrated employment, 2) the job development supports delivered to these job seekers to put them on a path towards competitive integrated employment, and 3) the employment outcomes attained during the 1-year pilot.

Demographics.

Table 1 shows the demographics of the job seekers chosen by the project liaisons for both years of the Provider Transformation Network (PTN). A total of 186 individuals were chosen across the 10 service providers to obtain competitive integrated employment over both years of the PTN. However, six individuals in Year 1 and one individual in Year 2 left their respective service providers before completing all three OTL administrations, which resulted in a final sample size of 179 individuals (93 in Year 1 and 86 in Year 2). For both years of the PTN, the individuals chosen to obtain competitive integrated employment were primarily white, male, non-Hispanic, and between the ages of 25 to 34. Additionally, 94% of the individuals in Year 1 of the PTN and 90% percent of individuals in Year 2 already had some previous employment

experience; however only 15% of those individuals in Year 1, and 30% those individuals in Year 2 had ever worked in competitive integrated employment. In addition to choosing individuals with limited exposure to competitive integrated employment, the service providers chose individuals with varied levels of support needs over the course of both years of the PTN. Forty-four percent of Year 1 PTN individuals were reported to require either extensive (“assistance in one area that an individual needs on a daily basis and is not time-limited”) or pervasive (“constant support across all environments and life areas”) levels of support, while 28% of Year 2 PTN individuals required extensive levels of support. This demographic data shows the varied nature of the job seekers in terms of employment experience and their potential need for significant workplace accommodations.

[Insert Table 1 here]

Job Development Supports

Table 2 shows the job development supports delivered across both years of the PTN. Project liaisons were asked whether each of the four indicators of job development were delivered to each individual they selected to help transition from sheltered work to competitive integrated employment during the previous four months from the point at which the survey was administered. The four indicators of job development were: Person-centered Planning (defined as “a process in which a person with a disability works with other important people in their life to plan their future); Discovery (defined as “activities designed to get to know the job seeker's interests, goals, and abilities”); Engagement with Family or Friends (defined as “practices that encourage active participation and maximize the expectations of family/friends during the employment process”); and Time Spent with Employers (defined as “working directly with employers to develop employment opportunities”). Any discussion or negotiation between a job

developer, employer, and job seeker with a disability that leads to a job being created or adapted includes the use of job creation (defined as “bringing together a combination of new job tasks to create a new position”) and/or job carving (defined as “changing existing staff responsibilities to create a new job”) and Person-Centered Planning (defined as “a process in which a person with a disability works with other important people in their life to plan their future”).

[Insert Table 2 here]

While Year 2 data revealed participants were receiving a higher level of job development supports at baseline compared to the Year 1 cohort, results still show all four indicators of job development increased from baseline across both years of the pilot. Of the four indicators, service providers particularly emphasized family engagement in the planning and job development process as well as time spent with employers. Engagement with families increased from only 4% at baseline to 53% at the conclusion of Year 1, and from 47% at baseline to 73% at the conclusion of Year 2. Time spent with employers increased from 4% at baseline to 30% at the conclusion of Year 1, and from 22% at baseline to 35% at the conclusion of Year 2. Furthermore, over the course of Year 1, 90% (84 of 93) of individuals received some job development support, while 100% of the 86 Year 2 individuals received job development supports over the course of the 1-year pilot.

Employment Outcomes: Year 1

Results show that of the 93 individuals selected to obtain competitive integrated employment during Year 1, 27 were able to secure competitive integrated employment (29%), including one individual who obtained two jobs over the course of the year. Providers assisted with making job placements at 19 unique employers, and several employers hired multiple individuals. For example, one restaurant hired three individuals from a provider for three

different paid positions. Employers ranged from fast food companies to data storage facilities, and the jobs individuals obtained varied from janitorial to machine operation. Individuals worked from four to 40 hours per week with an average of 19 hours per week. These individuals earned an average wage of \$9.79 per hour (min=\$7.25/hr; max=\$15/hr), which is over two dollars higher than the current federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, but slightly less than the combined average hourly minimum wage of all five Year-1 states (\$9.89 per hour). Additionally, only four of the 27 placements (15%) were jobs that included benefits.

Employment Outcomes: Year 2

Of the 86 individuals the Year 2 service providers selected to obtain competitive integrated employment, 22 (26%) achieved competitive integrated employment placements. Consistent with Year 1, one individual also obtained two jobs over the course of the year. Individuals achieved job placements at 20 unique employers, with two employers hiring more than one individual. Employers ranged from fast food companies to luxury automobile dealerships, and the jobs obtained by the individuals varied from restaurant server to marketing assistant. Work hours for the individuals ranged from five to 25 per week with an average of 15 hours per week. These individuals earned an average wage of \$9.50 per hour (min=\$7.25/hr; max=\$12/hr), which is slightly above the combined average hourly minimum wage of all four Year-2 states (\$9.22 per hour). Additionally, only one individual who secured competitive integrated employment received benefits.

Discussion

Competitive integrated employment is attainable if it is given the appropriate organizational emphasis and if front-line job developers implement effective job development practices. Even job seekers with significant support needs who have limited experience or

exposure to competitive integrated employment have attained competitive integrated employment. While one might argue that only about one-third of the job seekers each year achieved competitive integrated employment outcomes, which the authors agree is less than acceptable, nearly 100% of those job seekers across the two years received job development supports that put them on a path toward competitive integrated employment, many for the first time. The following discussion section offers considerations for service providers seeking ways to support individuals with finding competitive integrated employment. This includes the values of 1) identifying a priority group, 2) implementing an active, person-centered job placement process, 3) engaging key stakeholders in job development, and 4) focusing on individual job placement in the context of all 10 elements of organizational transformation.

Identify a Priority Group

Results of the study indicated that when service providers focused their job development and job-finding supports on a small percentage of the individuals (20 individuals is about 5% of the average population served by each participating service provider), almost every individual received some job development supports (with many receiving none prior to the pilot).

Furthermore, over 25% of those individuals across both years found competitive integrated employment within 12 months. Prioritizing individuals who indicate a desire for competitive integrated employment allows for speedier transitions, which can enable staff time to focus on others who may require more support or who might be reluctant. This study supports research that recommends prioritizing and staging groups of individuals away from sheltered workshops with specified goals and timelines in place. Previous providers that have undergone organizational transformation prioritized working with individuals who would experience the greatest financial impact, who have the broadest skillset and work history, or who are seen as

leaders by others in the workshop and can be encouraging to those who are more cautious (Kamau & Timmons, 2018; Timmons et al., 2019).

Furthermore, priority group placement may also address the belief that those individuals with high levels of support needs will have a more difficult time finding competitive integrated employment (Rogan & Rinne, 2011). Seventy-two percent of the 179 individuals who sought competitive integrated employment across both years of the pilot were reported to require “extensive” or “pervasive” levels of support, yet more than 25% of those individuals secured competitive integrated employment. This suggests that a strong desire from the individual to work in the community, combined with concentrated job development efforts by service provider staff, can lead to successful, competitive integrated employment, regardless of the support needs.

Implement an Active, Person-centered Job Placement Process

The authors’ previous research related to organizational transformation ranked “an active, person-centered job placement process” as third out of the 10 elements of successful organizational transformation, indicating its importance in the transformation process (Lyons et al., 2018). An active, person-centered job placement process prioritizes the placement of individuals in competitive integrated employment and helps service providers not to feel overwhelmed. The goal is for service providers to offer individualized, comprehensive discovery activities and deliberate exploration opportunities that expand interests and build human and social capital. In this context, job-finding naturally takes place, even before active job development begins. Although persistence is required, placing individuals creates momentum, one job seeker at a time. A comprehensive, person-centered discovery process helps uncover each individual’s interests, skills, and passions (Timmons et al., 2019). The success of person-centered job placement has been echoed not only in this study, but in standard-use tools at

service providers, such as The 30-Day Placement Plan (Condon et al., 2005) as well as in mainstream job-finding literature, such as *What Color is Your Parachute?* (Bolles, 2014).

Engage Key Stakeholders

Results from our study saw engagement with both family members and employers trend upwards at each data collection point for all 10 PTN service providers over both years of the pilot. These results add to the growing body of research about the essential role that families play both in the person-centered planning and job placement process (ACL, 2019; Kramer, 2018; Migliore, Nye-Lengerman, Lyons et al., 2018). Previous research with providers who have undergone transformation away from sheltered employment indicated that rather than confronting a large group of families who were mostly uncomfortable with competitive integrated employment, it helps to start with families that are most receptive. They also engaged families through informal strategies such as barbeques, picnics, and regular “office hours” at local coffee shops. Such forums provided opportunities for providers to address family concerns and fears and allowed providers to set up plans to reassure them, keep them informed, and ensure transparency (Timmons et al., 2019).

In addition to families, prior research has identified the importance of engaging employers (Migliore, Butterworth, Lyons et al., 2018; Migliore, Nye-Lengerman, Lyons et al., 2018). Providers also built relationships with the business community through staff and board participation in local/county business associations, acting as powerful connectors. Providers engaged with employers about the positive effects of hiring people with IDD on their bottom line. They researched how to improve an employer’s efficiency and profitability, underscoring the value a job seeker would add, and selling employee skillsets that met a business need (Timmons et al, 2019).

Consider Job Placement in the Context of a Larger Transformation Process

While results from our study show strong support for the “active, person-centered job placement” element of successful organizational transformation, previous research has indicated an additional nine elements, each holding a specific weight to the process. Focusing solely on the job placement process without consideration for clear and consistent transformation goals, a communication plan, quality oversight, developing community partnerships, and restructuring resources, will move a service provider no closer to transformation. In fact, as the service provider moves through the 10 elements of successful organizational transformation, they will find most of them are intertwined; increased communication leads to more family engagement in the employment process, community partnerships open networking opportunities, and restructured resources free up funds to hire more job developers. This study has offered further evidence in support of just one of the 10 elements of successful organizational transformation (“active, person-centered job placement”), but service providers committed to change would be best served in considering all of them.

Limitations

There are several limitations to the current study. First, this study employed a convenience sample of service providers who were chapters or affiliates of the Arc of the US with which ICI has had a longstanding relationship. While we took great care to select service providers that represented a wide range of characteristics from population to location, the 10 service providers we chose still operated under the governing rules and regulations of The Arc, to which many service providers in the nation do not have to adhere. Additionally, when choosing the service providers, we asked several long-form questions of each applicant regarding their transformation efforts to gauge how far along each service provider was on the continuum

of change. Unfortunately, no two service providers were in the exact same place. Consequently, this study is unable to say whether certain job development supports or the “active, person-centered job placement process” element is best pursued early on in the transformation process or in later stages. Also, while each service provider received an in-person, 2-day site visit at the beginning of the study, all subsequent technical assistance was provided remotely over the phone and Zoom to the designated project liaisons and the occasional staff member. Therefore, while each service provider was surveyed three times over the course of the pilot and asked whether a job development support was delivered, we had no way of knowing about the quality or consistency of how provider staff delivered these supports and how those factors enabled or impeded the job-finding process. Lastly, while it may appear that there was selection bias among the providers given that most participants chosen for this study were both white and male, the reality is that the participants reflect the demographics the providers support. An upsetting aspect of the IDD system is that individuals from other racial and ethnic groups who have IDD may not receive the same level of public resources that white participants receive. Historically excluded individuals with IDD also receive fewer resources in terms of the distribution of services and the level of expenditures (National Core Indicators, 2021b). While it is good that the field is finally acknowledging these racial and ethnic disparities, much work remains to be done.

Conclusion

Results of this study support previous research around the 10 elements of successful organizational transformation (Lyons et al., 2018) as well as best practices in job development (Bose & Timmons, 2010; Condon et al., 2005; Gervery, et al. 2009; Gunty et al., 2019; Hasnain et al., 2003; Kramer, 2018; Migliore, Nye-Lengerman, Lyons et al., 2018). As service providers increasingly focus on competitive integrated employment for the individuals they support, the

need for guidance on organizational transformation toward competitive integrated employment remains paramount. The findings from this study show not only that active, person-centered job placement can achieve positive results, but that maintaining a focus on best practices in job development supports, including person-centered planning and engagement with key stakeholders such as families and employers, can put even those individuals with complex support needs on a path toward competitive integrated employment during an organizational transformation process.

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Table 1. Demographic characteristics of job seekers by PTN year

	Year 1 (N=93)		Year 2 (N=86)	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Male	54	58	52	60
Female	39	42	34	40
Total	93	100	86	100
Race				
White non-Hispanic or Latino	71	76	57	66
White, Hispanic or Latino	9	10	3	4
Black, non-Hispanic or Latino	10	11	25	29
Black, Hispanic or Latino	1	1	0	0
Other	2	2	1	1
Total	93	100	86	100
Age Range				
15-24	4	4	13	15
25-34	34	37	31	36
35-44	16	17	14	16
45-54	20	22	19	22
55-64	18	19	7	8
65+	1	1	2	2
Total	93	100	86	100
Level of Support Need				
Limited	39	42	29	34
Intermittent	13	14	33	38
Extensive	35	38	24	28
Pervasive	6	6	0	0
Total	93	100	86	100
Previous Employment Experience				
Sheltered Workshop	65	70	60	70
Group Employment	62	67	23	27
Individual, Integrated Employment	14	15	27	31
None	6	6	9	10

Table 2. Job development supports delivered by PTN year

Year 1 (N=93)

	Baseline		6 Mos.		1 Year	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Discovery	0	0	34	37	29	31
Engagement with Family	4	4	48	52	49	53
Reviewing Job Postings	5	5	10	11	19	20
Time Spent with Employers	4	4	9	10	28	30
Person Centered Planning	40	43	55	59	35	38
None	39	42	29	31	27	29

Year 2 (N=86)

	Baseline		6 Mos.		1 Year	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Discovery	60	70	69	80	58	67
Engagement with Family	40	47	64	74	63	73
Reviewing Job Postings	28	32	29	34	36	42
Time Spent with Employers	19	22	24	28	30	35
Person Centered Planning	48	56	81	94	60	70
None	11	13	0	0	11	13