NEBRASKA

Meet You Where You Are Model

Nebraska VR's mission is to help people with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep jobs while helping businesses recruit, train, and retain employees with disabilities. In support of this overall vision and dual customer approach, Nebraska VR implemented the Meet You Where You Are Model (MYWYA). The model addresses the needs of Nebraska VR clients seeking employment and businesses looking for qualified applicants to hire in a state with one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country.

Clients are introduced to the MYWYA Model during the initial interview, known as the Employment Discussion. A Vocational Evaluator and/or a Placement Specialist may join the VR Counselor in these discussions to assist clients in identifying next steps. Motivational Interviewing techniques are used to insure that all clients participate in some aspect of the Model.

The following services, available within the Meet You Where You Are Model, are not exclusive to each other and may occur simultaneously:

- Placement
- Rapid Engagement
- Discovery Phase
- Employment Services

Placement
Placement Specialists work to advocate for Nebraska VR clients with businesses and provide clients with job seeking skills and job leads. Immediate placement is provided when the VR Counselor and client agree the client is ready to work.

Rapid Engagement
This "soft touch" approach allows the client to explore their interest area in a competitive work setting. The employer also has the opportunity to try out a potential job candidate in a low-risk environment rather than making an initial commitment to hire. Rapid engagement activities may include job site tours, employer mock interviews, job shadowing, paid and unpaid on-the-job evaluations, and on-the-job trainings. Evidence suggests these competitive work experiences have a stronger impact on the eventual long-term success of individuals with disabilities than other approaches.

The Rapid Engagement approach is used when the individual:

- expresses an interest in an occupation and needs exploration to determine if the job is a good fit.
- has uncertain physical stamina and/or capabilities to perform a particular job.
- could benefit from an understanding of the soft skills needed for employment.
- has work history gaps or no work history.

Meet You Where You Are Model

Everyone is ready for something.

Placement

Rapid Engagement

- Job site tours
- Employer mock interviews
- Job shadowing
- On-the-job evaluations
- On-the-job trainings

Discovery Phase

Employment Services

Clients who benefit most from Rapid Engagement may need more support than the traditional VR Counselor model can provide. Examples of individuals who may benefit:

- Youth and young adults under 25
- Supported employment cases
- Individuals with psychiatric and cognitive disabilities
- Individuals with a corrections history

Nebraska VR enlists staff Business Account Managers (BAM) to build relationships with businesses. The goal is to be seen as a valuable resource for filling current and future job vacancies. BAMs connect with existing business and agency partners while seeking new relationships specific to the goals and interests of individual clients.

Discovery Phase

A critical component of the MYWYA Model is exploration and discovery phase. This client centered planning process involves getting to know the individual in order to develop a plan for employment. Nebraska VR Counselors, sometimes a Vocational Evaluator, and the client together seek to understand the individual's abilities, interests, existing skills, and environmental needs. The goal is to identify the work conditions that provide meaningful and rewarding employment.

The Discovery Phase may be completed during the Employment Discussion or during follow-up meetings depending upon the individual situation. The activity is particularly useful for individuals who are struggling to identify vocational interests. This is also an opportunity to assess hard and soft skills.

Employment Services (VR Services)

The Meet You Where You Are Model (MYWYA) also addresses the needs of job seekers who come to Nebraska VR with a clear occupational goal. A variety of services or post-secondary training may be required to meet the client's job goal without further assessment. Clients may also choose to explore their area of study or job goal through Rapid Engagement.

Nebraska VR's MYWYA model builds on the belief that every client is ready for something. It creates momentum to move the client towards their job goal by engaging in a work experience early in the VR process. Nebraska VR believes early engagement is essential for clients to make informed choices, become competitively employed, and achieve self-sufficiency.

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