



Taking Care of Business

The NTJN's New Employer Engagement Toolkit

Community Advocates

Milwaukee, WI

May 13, 2015

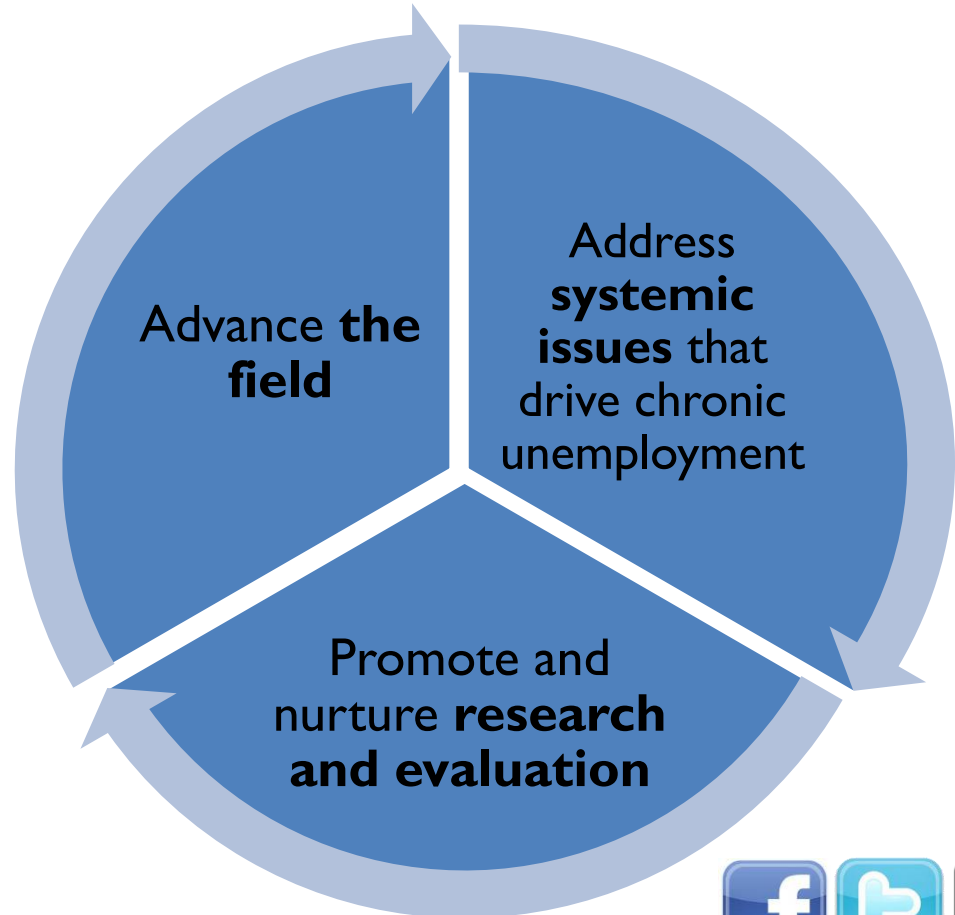


National Initiatives on Poverty & Economic Opportunity

Dedicated to ending chronic unemployment and poverty.

We work at the intersection of **practice, policy, and research** to catalyze change that is practical, informed by evidence and grounded in experience.

Through our field building we provide support and guidance that fosters more **effective and sustainable employment efforts**. Our policy and advocacy work advances solutions to the systemic issues that **drive chronic unemployment**.



National Transitional Jobs Network (NTJN)

The NTJN is a national coalition dedicated to getting chronically unemployed Americans back to work. We advance effective employment solutions, including Transitional Jobs (TJ), to help individuals with barriers to employment succeed in the workforce.

NTJN opens doors to work through:

- Technical assistance to TJ programs.
- Research and evaluation.
- Education and training.
- Policy advocacy.



#EEToolkit



Overview

- Principles for educating employers
- Employer Engagement Toolkit:
 - Taking Care Of Business: Transitional Jobs and Subsidized Employment Programs Benefit the Business Community
 - Effective Job Development: Strategies for Working with the Chronically Unemployed
 - Examples of resources for program providers
 - Employer Guide to TJ Participant Development

Discussion: What's your experience?

- What is the biggest challenge you've faced in getting employers to partner with you?
- What is your most successful technique for engaging employers?



Educating Employers

Educating Employers

- Employers should understand barriers to employment
 - Be frank about strengths and challenges
 - Describe your role in helping workers manage barriers
 - Once they understand the business case, get them on board with your mission
 - Offer training, guidance, and support for effectively supervising transitional workers

Educating Employers

- Employers should understand their role in participant development
 - Maintaining communication
 - Offering frequent, constructive feedback
 - Using corrective discussions as learning opportunities
 - Providing experiences that build skills
- Help employers see this as an *investment*—they are helping the individual grow into the person they want to hire permanently

Educating Employers

- Employers should understand the hiring expectations you have of them
 - Prospective employer partners should have positions that they want to hire for
 - If the worker is working out well, they are expected to hire the individual
 - Employers that are just looking for free labor should not be retained
- Worksite agreements should outline these expectations

Educating Employers: The “Business Case”

- In addition to subsidized workers, there are many other things you do that help an employer’s bottom line:
 - Human resources functions like assessment and matching
 - Retention services to reduce turnover
 - Work readiness and soft skills training for in-demand skills
 - Supportive services like transportation and childcare make workers more dependable
 - Transitional workers have a recent work history

Preparing Participants

- Make sure the TJ experience is developmental
 - Establish feedback mechanisms
 - Connect classroom learning and workplace learning
 - Create opportunities for peer support
- Assess for strengths and interests
 - Sometimes TJ functions as situational assessment
- Provide robust work readiness and support services
- Dedicate resources for retention services
- Remind transitional workers that this is their chance to demonstrate their value to the employer

Employer Testimonial

BREWED Fort Worth - Next Step Program



Joey Turner

Co-Owner // BREWED Fort Worth



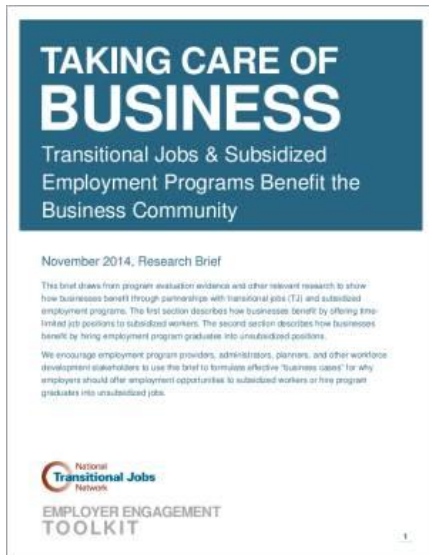
Employer Engagement Toolkit Overview



Employer Engagement Toolkit Overview

- Find the toolkit online here: <http://bit.ly/EEToolkit>
- Six research brief & resources, based on employer survey data and other relevant research.
- Two videos featuring employer partners who have worked with TJ programs highlighting the benefits of this partnership.
- Links to external resources:
 - Connecting with Employers & Exploring Occupations
 - Engaging Employers & Maintaining Positive Employer Relationships
 - Making the Case for Hiring Individuals with Barriers to Employment
 - Building Staff Capacity and Skills

Taking Care of Business: *Transitional Jobs and Subsidized Employment Programs Benefit the Business Community*



Find it online: <http://bit.ly/11DAbex>



How Businesses Benefit from Offering Subsidized Positions to Transitional Workers

- Reduced wage costs lead to increased capacity
- Improved business performance
 - Financial health
 - Productivity
 - Customer satisfaction
- Opportunity to “try out” a prospective employee at reduced cost

How Businesses Benefit from Offering Subsidized Positions to Transitional Workers

- Quality workers with built-in supports to promote workplace success
- Enhance competitive advantage by leveraging a commitment to socially responsible business practices
- Conduct Business in an Economically Stronger Community

Social and Economic Impact of TJ & Subsidized Employment Programs

- Stronger families.
- Benefits to children.
- Better-equipped youth.
- Decreased reliance on public benefits.
- Economic independence.
- Reduced recidivism.
- Increased community safety.
- Local economic growth.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT:

Transitional Jobs and Subsidized Employment Programs

STRONGER FAMILIES.
Employment, earnings, and economic stability strengthen families and support positive outcomes for children by improving relationship quality and stability between co-parents as well as among parents and their children. [Learn more here.](#)

BENEFITS TO CHILDREN.
Parental participation in TJ improves children's educational outcomes, pro-social behavior, and attitudes toward work. [Learn more here.](#)

BETTER-EQUIPPED YOUTH.
Helping youth gain a foothold in the labor market is essential to this country's future. Research on unemployment's effects on youth shows that loss of work leads to lower lifetime wages and worse economic prospects. TJ and subsidized employment programs can be a first step in positioning these youth for future earnings as productive members of the labor market. [Learn more here.](#)

DECREASED RELIANCE ON PUBLIC BENEFITS.
TJ can play a role in decreasing reliance on public benefits such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), or welfare. An evaluation of a Philadelphia-based TJ program found that 82 percent of participants sustained unsubsidized employment for at least six to nine months following program completion, allowing them to stay off public assistance. [Learn more here.](#)

ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE.
TJ and subsidized employment generate immediate earned income for low-income individuals, increasing their ability to pay for basic needs including food and clothing. Workers also earn quarters toward wage-based tax incentives such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which has been proven to lift individuals and families out of poverty. Taken together, earned income and tax-based credits can mitigate poverty's harmful impacts and foster economic independence. [Learn more here.](#)

REDUCED RECIDIVISM.
TJ participants among individuals recently released from incarceration significantly reduce recidivism rates and can generate cost savings to society of up to \$8,300 per participant. [Learn more here.](#)

SAFER COMMUNITIES.
TJ participation among individuals recently released from incarceration significantly reduces recidivism rates by connecting a new crime, indicating that TJ programs can increase safety in communities. [Learn more here.](#)

LOCAL ECONOMIC GROWTH.
Low-income workers tend to spend earned income in their communities to meet immediate needs. Increasing local demand for goods and services. An evaluation of a Chicago-based TJ program estimated that over a 10-month period, the program increased demand by over \$5 million and generated 44 new jobs. [Learn more here.](#)






Find it online: <http://bit.ly/1xqSnnv>



How Businesses Benefit from hiring TJ participants for unsubsidized positions

- Reduce the cost of hiring qualified workers
- Hire people who are work ready and motivated to succeed
- Leverage job retention services to reduce employee turnover costs
- Save money by taking advantage of the Work Opportunity tax Credit (WOTC)
- Protection against loss or liability with free Federal bonding

Effective Job Development: *Strategies for Working with the Chronically Unemployed*

EFFECTIVE JOB DEVELOPMENT

Strategies for Working with the
Chronically Unemployed

November 2014, Research Brief

Transitional jobs (TJ) programs provide experience, skill building, and earned income to chronically unemployed job seekers with the goal of helping them secure permanent, quality employment in the competitive labor market. Job development, or the process of helping to identify, cultivate, and create job opportunities for subsidized workers to transition into the unsubsidized labor market, is a core component of the TJ strategy.

This brief draws from available research, program evaluation findings, and input from experts in the field to offer promising strategies to improve job development success. We encourage employment program providers, administrators, planners, and other workforce development stakeholders to use this brief to help plan and implement an effective job development strategy and better engage with employers.



EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT
TOOLKIT

Find it online: <http://bit.ly/1uSTqf3>



Program Planning and Implementation

- Provide adequate resources and support for Job Development
- Hire the right employees for the job
- Use labor market information to target sectors that fit the populations served
- Assess for skills, interests, and work readiness to make a good match
- Begin Job development on day one

Effective Employer Engagement

- Take a “Dual Customer” approach
- Target the right employers
- Effectively engage and network to develop long-term employer relationships
- Make the business case for TJ employers
- Continually evaluate Job Development success

Sample Documents

The following resources are intended for use as a *templates* that program providers can reference in creating their own, program-specific documents. They are **NOT** to be duplicated and distributed as-is.



Your business benefits when you offer job opportunities to subsidized workers

- Use this type of document to help cultivate new relationships and build a robust network of employer partners
- Use this example as a **template** of a one-page hand out that program providers can develop to give to potential employer partners in order to make the case for TJ



Your Business Benefits When You Offer Job Opportunities to Subsidized Workers.

Grow Your Business at Reduced Cost

With TAKE TWO subsidizing wages, partnering with us will help you fully staff your business or expand your workforce at reduced cost. Employer survey data shows that when businesses pair up with subsidized employment programs, they can create new positions or fill roles that they couldn't afford to staff without a wage subsidy. Whether you're looking to create a new position or fill an empty one, bringing on subsidized employees is a cost-effective strategy that will increase your business' capacity.

Improve Your Business Performance

Increased productivity, improved financial health, and higher levels of customer satisfaction are just some of the positive outcomes that employers attribute to offering job opportunities to subsidized workers. These key improvements are likely to yield a healthier bottom line for your business, and we're confident that TAKE TWO's subsidized workers can play a central role in making your business even more successful.

Try Out a Job Candidate at Reduced Cost Before You Hire

It's essential to hire well-matched, high-performing employees to drive your business and reduce turnover costs. By partnering with TAKE TWO, you'll get to give a job candidate an extended, low-cost "trial run"—and you won't need to commit to hiring until you're sure our participant is right for your business.

Have Access to Quality Workers with the Supports They Need to Succeed

At TAKE TWO, we're in your corner to ensure that our participants perform well on the job. In addition to paying their wages, we exclusively offer our participants supports to help them succeed at your business, including job coaching. It's no surprise that research shows employers find that subsidized workers meet or exceed their other employees in attendance, punctuality, and occupational skills—and that the overwhelming majority of employers would offer job slots to subsidized workers again.

Enhance Your Competitive Advantage

Nine-in-ten consumers have a more positive impression of companies that engage in socially responsible business practices, and consumers are more likely to be loyal to those companies. That's why it's important that businesses take steps to strengthen their reputation through a commitment to social responsibility. When you partner with TAKE TWO to offer subsidized jobs to low-income individuals, you're contributing to the social and economic well-being of your neighbors and community—and you can leverage your partnership with us to grow your customer base.

At TAKE TWO, we believe everyone deserves a second chance—and the opportunity to work. TAKE TWO provides transitional jobs to help motivated individuals build skills, succeed in employment, and achieve economic independence.

Your business benefits when you hire our graduates

- Use this type of document to help cultivate new relationships and build a robust network of hiring partners
- Use this example as a **template** of a one-page hand out that program providers can develop to give to employers partners to make the case for offering permanent, unsubsidized jobs to TJ and subsidized employment program graduates



Your Business Benefits When You Hire Our Graduates.

Save Time and Money with Qualified Candidates

At **TAKE TWO**, developing job candidates is only a part of what we do. We know it's important that our job seekers fit your business, and that's why we network with our business community and talk to employers about their workforce needs. With an in-depth knowledge of our graduates' strengths and employers' needs and culture, we present only those candidates we believe will thrive in your company. With **TAKE TWO** making sure you're tapping into the right candidate pool, you can reduce employee screening efforts and hiring costs, accelerate time-to-hire, and improve new hires' reliability.

Employees Who Are Work Ready and Ready to Work

The best indicator that a job candidate will contribute productively to your business is that person's motivation to succeed. By the time our graduates reach your interview seat, they've already shown that they're committed to success—all of **TAKE TWO's** graduates have completed work readiness training, honed highly-desirable skills such as punctuality and effective communication, and have successfully worked in paid, transitional employment for 480 hours in the past four months.

Employee Retention Services Aimed at Reducing Turnover

The cost of employee turnover can have a significant impact on any business' bottom line. At **TAKE TWO**, we provide job retention services to our graduates to help ensure their long-term success. We check in with you to see how our graduates are performing on the job, offer on-going job coaching, and make sure that our graduates have reliable child care and transportation. We're proud to say that 65 percent of our graduates remain in their jobs for at least one year.

Tax Credits to Bolster Your Bottom Line

When you hire a **TAKE TWO** graduate, you may be able to claim the [Work Opportunity Tax Credit](#) (WOTC). WOTC is a federal tax credit available to employers who hire workers from special target groups including veterans and long-term public benefits recipients. WOTC can yield significant financial benefits for your business, with tax credits of between \$1,200 and \$9,600 per employee. [Applying for WOTC is easy](#)—and we're happy to help.

Protect Against Loss or Liability with Free Federal Bonding

We have the highest confidence that our graduates are trustworthy workers—and with the [Federal Bonding Program](#), you can rest assured that's a guarantee. The Federal Bonding Program offers free fidelity bonds to employers who hire disadvantaged job seekers, protecting you against any loss of money or property due to employee theft, forgery, larceny, or embezzlement. If you're interested, we can arrange for our graduates to be bonded—and there's no paperwork needed on your end!

At TAKE TWO, we believe everyone deserves a second chance—and the opportunity to work. TAKE TWO provides transitional jobs to help motivated individuals build skills, succeed in employment, and achieve economic independence.

Activity: Draft and Pitch a One-Page Handout

- Based on “*Employer Engagement: Your Business Benefits When You Hire Our Graduates*” in the Employer Engagement Toolkit, briefly outline a handout that reflects the benefits your program offers employers
- In groups, role-play a pitch to an employer for hiring program graduates. Employers—feel free to be skeptical!
- Report back: how effective were your talking points? What were the most challenging objections? What would you change?

Business Services Representative - *Job Developer* - Job Description

- This resource is an example of a job description for a Business Services Representative courtesy of Heartland Human Care Services (HHCS). Employment programs may also choose to call this role a Job Developer.
- This document describes a Business Services Representative's essential duties and responsibilities, qualifications, and competencies.
- This resource is intended for use as a **template** that program providers can reference in creating their own, program-specific job description.

Business Services Representative (Job Developer): Key Competencies

- Relevant sales experience generating new accounts and maintaining accounts in both private and public sectors.
- Successful track record of relationship building and leveraging new/existing business relationships to procure additional opportunities.
- Demonstrated ability to research and develop leads, make cold calls, foster innovation, and close deals. Ability to effectively promote and market services to new customers.

Employer Guide to TJ Participant Development

This resource is a one-page handout that program providers can give directly to employer partners who are considering or have agreed to offer time-limited employment opportunities to subsidized workers.

Employer guide to TJ participant development

- Subsidized employment is an opportunity for workers with barriers to employment to earn a paycheck AND:
 - Address barriers
 - Acquire new skills, and
 - Learn how to become workers in the context of a real, wage-paid, time limited job
- Its important for employer partners to understand the role they can play in TJ participant development as well as how TJ participant development can benefit their business

Employer guide to TJ participant development

- Employers and frontline worksite supervisors can play an important role in facilitating participant growth, development, and skill acquisition in ways that do not present additional costs or create undue burdens for managers, including:
 - Foster peer support
 - Be aware of learning opportunities that present themselves in the course of the workday;
 - Make disciplinary or corrective actions as constructive as possible-focus on what to do right next time;
 - Give frequent, consistent feedback to the participant on quality of work, areas for improvement, and progress over time;
 - Hold participants accountable to the same standards as other employees.

Employer Guide to Transitional Jobs Participant Development

Thank you for your participation in the transitional jobs program. Offering employment opportunities to program participants strengthens individuals, families, communities, and the economy. In addition, it offers advantages to your organization by subsidizing wages, screening candidates, and matching applicants' skills and interests with your business' needs.

For participants, successful placement into unsubsidized employment is the program's principal goal. However, the program has multiple additional goals including stabilizing individuals and families with earned income, addressing barriers to successful employment, and helping participants acquire new skills. It is important to note that subsidized employment is more than an opportunity to earn a paycheck. It is also an opportunity to build workplace skills and learn how to be a more successful worker. Participant development also benefits employers by helping workers become more productive, reliable, and effective.

Employers and frontline worksite supervisors can play an important role in facilitating participant growth, development, and skill acquisition in ways that do not present additional costs or create undue burdens for managers. Things that employers and frontline supervisors can do to help support participants include:

- Foster peer support by assigning an experienced coworker to act as a mentor.
- Be aware of learning opportunities that present themselves in the course of the workday; for example, basic skills such as following instructions and providing good customer service can be learned and practiced in the context of work.
- Make disciplinary or corrective actions as constructive as possible—focus on what to do right next time.
- Give frequent, consistent feedback to the participant on quality of work, areas for improvement, and progress over time.
- Provide regular feedback and be proactive in addressing any workplace issues. This includes notifying program staff if any concerns arise. Meaningful feedback can help program staff and participants work together to improve performance and develop successful workplace skills.
- Hold participants accountable to the same standards as other employees.

Transitional employment can and should be mutually beneficial for employers and participants. Employers offer participants an opportunity to earn money as well as a venue in which they can learn and practice the skills necessary to succeed and advance in the workforce. Facilitating this development helps participants, employers, and the economy.

Transitional jobs participant development benefits employers by helping workers become more productive, reliable, and effective.

Employers and frontline worksite supervisors can play an important role in facilitating participant growth, development, and skill acquisition in ways that do not present additional costs or create undue burdens for managers.

“Rollover:”

When Transitional Positions Convert to Permanent Jobs

Helping “Rollover” Happen

- Make the right match for the subsidized job
 - The right candidate has interest in the field and the aptitude to learn the skills
 - The right employer has potential permanent openings, pays adequately, and is willing to invest in development and training

Helping “Rollover” Happen

- Maintain ongoing communication and feedback with the employer and the worker
- Develop worksite agreements that emphasize unsubsidized hiring
- Explore “step down” subsidizes that get employers’ “skin in the game”
- DON’T assume that jobs will roll over—continue providing leads, interviews, etc. even for participants who are doing well with their subsidized employers

Thank you!

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Newsletters: transitionaljobs.net

Email: ntjn@heartlandalliance.org



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