

**It Pays to Work!**  
*Translating Research into Practice to Build Model Employment Transition Sites*

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**Objective of today's session:**

- Identify how research supports work-based learning
- Examine concept of work being an intervention as well as an outcome
- Discuss common challenges in developing work-based learning experiences
- Provide examples and strategies of how to address those challenges
- Define roles and responsibilities of partners
- Provide resources and identify technical assistance available to support local teams

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**Begin with the end in mind:**

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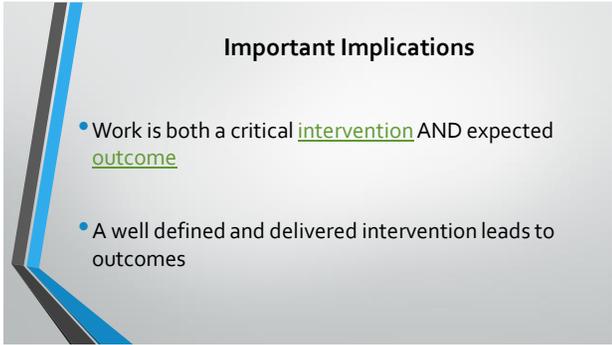
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**Factors to Consider in Creating a System**

- Youth driven process
- Family guidance and involvement
- Collaboration within a supportive system

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**What are your Challenges?**



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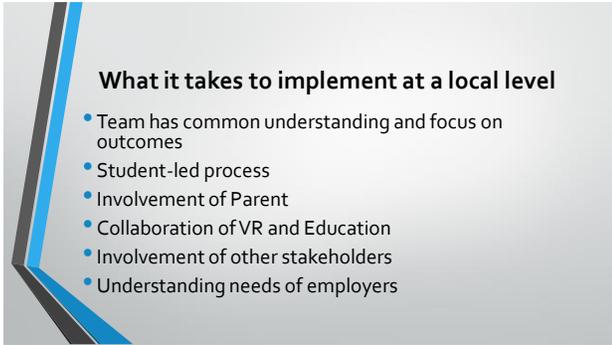
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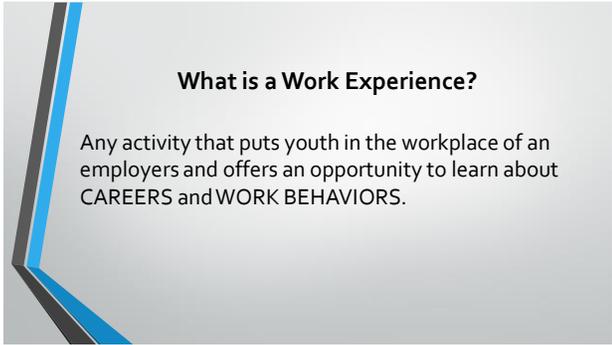
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### "Quality" Work Experiences -Characteristics

- Clear program goals
- Clear expectations & feedback to assess progress toward achieving goals
- Clear roles & responsibilities for worksite supervisors, mentors, teachers, support personnel, & other partners
- Training plans that specify learning goals tailored to individual students with specific outcomes connected to student learning

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### Types of Work Experiences

- Career exploration
- Informational Interviews
- Company Tours
- Job shadowing
- Work sampling
- Service learning
- Internships
- Apprenticeships



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### Why Work Experiences?

- Discover student skills, talents, interests, dislikes, support needs
- Learn what type of work environment is best for each student
- Give students exposure to real work
- Give employers exposure to talented youth
- Develop work behaviors and soft skills
- **Make it easier to get students paid work prior to school exit**

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Early Planning and Experiences to Focus Student Career Preferences



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Phases of Job Development



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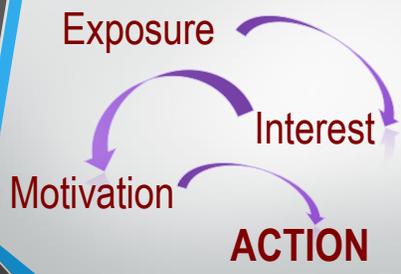
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# Deficits to Strengths

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### A Skills NOT Deficits Approach

- Reframe our perceptions of students with disabilities
- Focus on preferences and what a person can do, not what they can't
- Shifts emphasis to adding value, not what needs to be fixed
- Able to target employment settings where job seeker's unique characteristics and skills will be assets- where they will fit in and make friends

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### We Are Who We Are

- Reframe perceptions of students
- Start working with what they have to offer and their interests
- Focus on the skills not deficits
- Expose students to a wide variety of employment settings
- Prepare them for work

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**A new perspective to our work...**



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**Collaboration works when focused on outcomes.**



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**Early and Ongoing Collaboration**

- Focused on purpose – end in mind
- Use of expertise and resources
- Planning and providing individualized services and supports
- Identification of roles and responsibilities
- Determining "flow of services"

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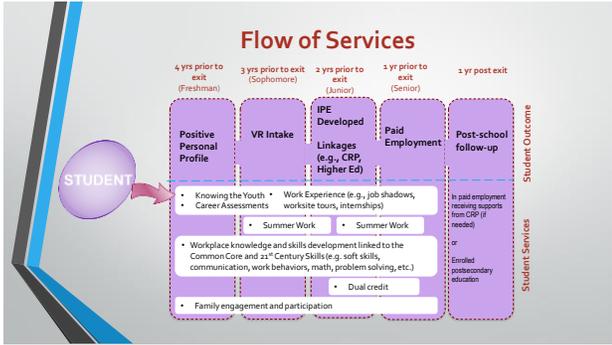
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- ### Strategies for Parent Engagement
- Provide information in a variety of ways
  - Everyone needs to hear information multiple times
  - Be mindful of parent's time
  - Share positive messages about their youth
  - Focus conversation on strengths of youth
  - Solicit information from parents on skills of their youth
  - Use parent's networks in transition planning

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### VR's Role in Planning for Work Experiences

- Natural connection to business – identification of LMI
- Identification of workplace accommodations
- Assessment of youth's work experience
- Involvement of youth in pre-employment transition services
- After school and summer work experiences

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### Collaboration Strategies between VR and Education

- Administration support
- Identification of Core Team
- VR at school on regular scheduled time
- VR staff has an assigned "office" space at school
- School identifies a point-of-contact for VR

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### Collaboration Strategies continued.....

- VR referral process developed
  - Who to refer
  - When to refer
  - How to refer
- Regular meeting times to discuss transition planning as well as individual student plans
- Core team develops a process to determine strengths and gaps of current service delivery system
- Use of data-based decision making

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### Successful Outcomes of Collaboration

- Increased number of students gaining employment experiences
- Alignment of IEP and IPE goals
- Sharing of career assessment and planning information across agencies
- Increase in paid employment and wages
- Improved relationships with business community
- Aligned resources decreased duplication of service development and delivery

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### Developing Business Partnerships



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### "Quality" Work Experiences - Characteristics

- Convenient links between students, school & employers
- Range of work-based learning opportunities, especially those outside traditional youth-employing industries
- Mentor(s) at the workplace
- Assessments to identify skills, interests, & support needs at the worksite

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### Strategies for Employers' Involvement

- Informational Interviews
- Job analysis
- Career Days
- Classroom speakers
- Company tours
- Chamber Activities
- Use your network

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### Successful Employment

- A two way street
- Mutually beneficial relationship
- It is about adding value, NOT charity!



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- Resources**
- The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) <http://transitionta.org/>
  - *A Guide to Developing Collaborative School-Community-Business Partnerships* (2015). Luecking, Deschamps, Allison, Hyatt, and Stuart. [http://transitionta.org/download/PostsecondaryEducation/SCB%20Partnerships%20Guide\\_FINAL%201.pdf](http://transitionta.org/download/PostsecondaryEducation/SCB%20Partnerships%20Guide_FINAL%201.pdf)
  - TransCen, Inc. <http://transcen.org/>
  - Center on Transition to Employment <http://www.transitiontoemployment.org/>

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