Workforce Solutions

WEBSITE REDESIGN RFP REPORT

Prepared exclusively for the

GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD – WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

August, 2021

In support of the:
Wrksolutions.com RFP Technical Recommendations
And
Expanded Virtual Customer Service Offerings

Submitted By:
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SAVAGE BRANDS

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Media & Public Affairs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Willowbrook Career Office

As the largest public workforce agency in Texas, serving more than 250,000 residents and nearly 30,000 employers annually, Workforce Solutions is a critical pillar of our regional economy. The Gulf Coast Workforce Board and Workforce Solutions exist to keep our region a great place to do business, work and live. It does that by carrying out its mission: to elevate the economic and human potential of our region by meeting the diverse needs of the businesses and individuals we serve. Together with partners in industry, education, and commerce, Workforce Solutions helps employers meet their human resource needs and people build careers, so both can compete in the global economy.

Providing important services in a changing labor market landscape means constantly improving and evolving better and more efficient tools for meeting customer needs. In the current digital environment, this requires expanding the virtual service capacity to connect customers to the resources they need to thrive.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the pace of these changes, they will remain an important part of the agency's service offering long after the virus has passed. Businesses and the human beings who run them will continue to see benefits from the greater flexibility brought about by the need to work from anywhere, and the increased service options required to conduct business everywhere. Workforce Solutions is transforming the way it delivers services by reimagining how technology can better meet the needs of the region. Creating a web portal system will allow Workforce Solutions to standardize service delivery across all contractors, to develop and communicate product offerings to meet specific market needs of employers and residents and activate staff to deliver on our customer service vision.

Shifting service provision from in-person to online presents both challenges and opportunities to rethink how and what customers need and how to best meet those needs. This begins by examining the two primary classes of users – Employers and Residents – and breaking out how they interact with Workforce Solutions both currently and prior to the pandemic. Mapping the process for how Workforce Solutions services their needs provides a fuller picture of agency operations to determine the best pathways to digitizing those key services.

The research revealed that the pandemic-induced shift to digital service offerings in the Career Office Division has been mostly well received by both residents and staff. Implementation of an appointment scheduling tool (Appointy) has resulted in career office staff not only becoming more organized and prepared to meet with residents, but also allows them to be more productive. The lack of a standardized video conferencing system has been a drawback during the transition; customers are more comfortable using the Zoom product as opposed to Microsoft Teams.

From the Employer Service Division, we learned there have been few, if any, problems with the transition to virtual services. However, two major themes emerged over the course of the interview process: Employers are generally unaware of wrksolutions.com and do not regularly utilize it for information; and when asked, most employers are not regularly using WorkInTexas.com to enter job postings or respond to messages from staff, favoring direct email correspondence.

The interview regarding operations of the Financial Aid Office uncovered the need for greater automation of functions to increase productivity and speed up approval of funding. Additionally, staff find the process to directly contact applicants (Residents) is overly cumbersome and would benefit from an easier means of direct communication.

An in-depth brand audit was conducted in late 2020 through early 2021. The brand audit findings and directional recommendations presented in May 2021 included the following discovery activities:

- Jumpstart Workshop

- Customer Experience Visioning Workshop

- Customer Survey Analysis

- Communication Materials Audit

- Look and Feel

- Messaging

- Architecture

- Digital Audit (Website and Social Media)

- Public Media/Government Relations/External Public Engagement Audit

Additionally, the internal communications and activation plan, and the marketing plan that Savage presented in June 2021 informed the functional and technical recommendations developed for the three audience segments – Employers, Residents and Staff.

This document lays out a pathway for development of a website portal system that will facilitate these important changes and serve to redefine Workforce Solutions' model of service delivery for the long term. The discovery, functional recommendations, and technical requirements will provide a blueprint of the vision for www. wrksolutions.com while anticipating future online growth.

wrksolutions.com
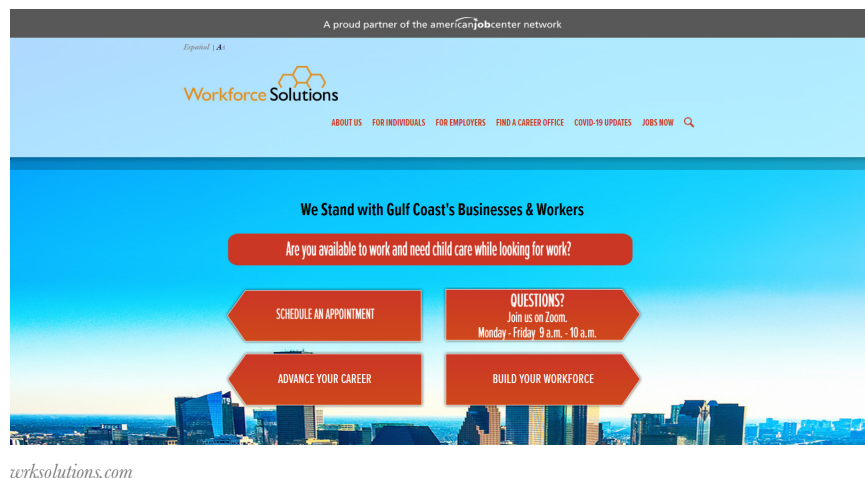
INTRODUCTION

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board's Workforce Report Card 2019 declared "the nature of work is likely to change" much faster than expected.[1] Less than six months after it was published, that assessment proved accurate. The world, from national governments to the private sector, to the general populace, was confronted with the disruptions caused by the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic.

The emergency closure of nearly every economic sector resulted not only in record high unemployment, but a fundamental shift in the way people work and interact. For those individuals who suddenly found themselves out of work, their ability to look for new employment was hampered by the same forces that led to their job loss in the first place. The pandemic also forced Workforce Solutions to alter its service delivery model, and the transition to virtual services was a challenge that required fresh strategic and tactical thinking.

Based on trends highlighted in the 2019 Report Card, Workforce Solutions was already planning on a highly digitized future that included additional remote service offerings. At the outset of the pandemic, when it appeared the emergency shutdown orders might only last a couple of months, interim business continuity measures were implemented to allow virtual interaction with customers. As the pandemic continued, it became clear that virtual service offerings would need to be more robust and mimic, as closely as possible, the in-office customer experience.

As a publicly funded entity, Workforce Solutions is required to provide basic services designed to help residents get a job, keep a job, or find a better job.[2] Presently, this is achieved by operating a network of career offices in the service region offering the public access to technology, job listings, job search assistance, and recruitment & placement support, among other essential services. Except for access to technology, many of these services are already available at www.wrksolutions.com, or can be delivered through an online customer portal. Expanded service offerings such as skills assessment, job search seminars, individualized job search and development, and career planning assistance require more staff time and expertise,[3] and require one-on-one interaction, whether that is in person, by telephone, or video conference.

This presents a unique challenge in terms of providing live support in a virtual space. We now have an opportunity to connect with Residents at a relational level rather than a transactional one. In automating high-volume/low-value activities, staff can then focus its efforts on engaging in meaningful dialogue with customers to understand what they need, where we deliver the greatest value, and how we can better serve them so we can focus efforts in the areas of highest impact.

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[1] *2019 Workforce Report Card, pg. 38.*

[2] *Appendix ii: Workforce Solutions Basic Service Guidelines & Job Descriptions, pp. 1-3.*

[3] *Appendix iii: Workforce Solutions Expanded Services Guidelines & Job Descriptions, pp. 1-3*

RESEARCH & FINDINGS
Outreach Strategists

RESEARCH PROCESS

Over the course of eight weeks between mid-February and early April, Outreach Strategists and Savage Brands conducted a series of interviews with Workforce Solutions Staff in the Career Offices, Employer Service Division, Financial Aid Services, and with a select group of Employers, to determine what service offerings can be virtualized. These interviews also helped assess what technologies are currently in use and may need to be integrated into a robust website allowing for ease of use by the three primary user classes: Residents, Employers, and Staff. The research team spoke to a total of 17 stakeholders including seven office managers or supervisors, a regional team manager, one board staff member, three business consultants, and two recruiters to gather feedback about the customer experience and processes involved in providing services. Additionally, the three Employers were queried further to ascertain their awareness and utilization of the website.

The research was qualitative in nature and comprised of open-ended interviews and a review of existing technologies and software applications to inform the recommendations. Using this approach allowed the research team to glean insights about the processes and tools staff utilize on a regular basis as well as to determine which positions, across the three divisions, have a significant impact on the overall customer experience.

Zoom Interview with Brenda Wood, Acres Homes Office Manager

FINDINGS

Career Offices Operations

The research team interviewed seven career office managers and supervisors and one regional team manager to better understand the processes involved when new or returning Residents begin their journey through the Workforce Solutions system. Overall, there are two types of Residents seeking assistance: those required by law to begin receiving, or continuing to receive, some form of public benefit, and Residents who voluntarily seek assistance while actively looking for a new or better job and need expert advice and/or education and training to advance in their career or break into a new field.

The Greeter

The research indicates career offices operate in a mostly linear fashion (illustration 1). New and returning Residents first interact with a greeter who is, according to the position's job description, the "face of Workforce Solutions"[4] for most Residents, and as one career office manager said, "can determine [a person's] whole experience."[5] This initial touchpoint is a critical element for recreating the customer experience in a virtual setting. Greeters are also trained to make an initial assessment of a person's job readiness based on visual cues and a short, guided conversation. Based on this assessment, the greeter either hands the person off to the resource specialist to continue with the delivery of basic services, or places them into the customer service queue, via the Appointy scheduling software, to access expanded services including employment counseling or case management services.

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[4] *Appendix ii - Workforce Solutions Basic Service Guidelines & Job Descriptions, pg. 1*

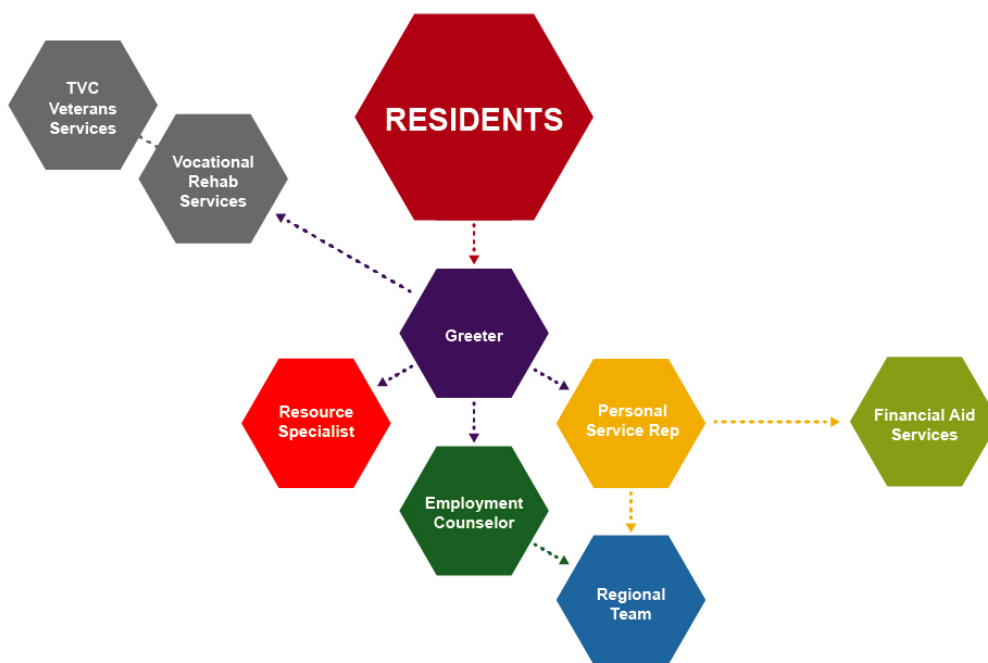[5] *Appendix i - Discovery interview transcripts, pg. 59.*

Illustration 1: Customer Service Pathway - Career Offices

The Resource Specialist

In the traditional career office setting, the greeter directs Residents to a resource specialist to continue basic service offerings which can include technology access and support, creating (or recovering) their WorkInTexas.com profile, offering limited job search assistance, resume critique, and employment and career information, among other services. While career offices remain closed, the resource specialist's role has necessarily shifted to include some greeter responsibilities, providing curbside services, and assisting on special projects.

In the virtual career office experience, this role may have only limited interaction with Residents since many of their functions, such as providing information on the local labor market, support services for working families, and employment and career information would be offered on an ad hoc basis.

The Employment Counselor & Personal Service Representative

Expanded services are primarily offered by employment counselors and personal service representatives. These services include skills assessments, guided resume creation, review, and critique, individualized job search and job development, referrals to training programs and/or employment opportunities, making determinations for financial aid assistance (whether limited[6] or expanded[7]), and case management services for public benefit recipients.[8]

Pre-pandemic, an employment counselor and personal service representative largely worked within their assigned roles. In response to the switch to virtual services, and an increase in the number of Residents receiving public benefits, the research revealed that some offices are moving toward greater collaboration/cross-training

A greeter assists a resident make an appointment at Workforce Solutions - East End.

[6] *Limited financial aid includes transportation support and retail gift cards to obtain appropriate work gear*

[7] *Expanded financial aid includes financial assistance for educational programs or supportive services including childcare assistance.*

[8] *SNAP, TANF, and UI, among others.*

between the two roles, particularly when it comes to mandatory orientation sessions for benefit recipients. The transition to offering these sessions virtually has been well received by both Residents and Staff. Particularly noteworthy is the switch to pre-scheduling these sessions through Appointy. One career office manager, who served on the transition team for the application, said Staff reported they are better able to manage their time and are more organized and prepared since the switch.[9]

A Workforce Solutions employment counselor discusses training opportunities with a resident.

However, the research interviews also revealed that there is no standardized technology in place to smoothly facilitate virtual interaction with Residents. Organizationally, Workforce Solutions relies on Microsoft Teams, an application offered through the Microsoft Office suite of products, which the agency already licenses. Residents, according to these interviews, prefer the Zoom platform because of its ease of use, particularly on mobile devices, and many Residents do not have access to Microsoft Office. Developing a solution to bridge this digital gap will be crucial to long-term success with a customer portal.

The Regional Navigator

Researchers also consulted with a regional team member to get a better understanding of their contributions to overall service delivery. Known as 'navigators', these Staff members facilitate job search seminar trainings, make direct outreach to community groups to market Resident-focused services, and assist career offices with matters related to disability and veteran services.

The regional team relies heavily on in-person service delivery, which remains impractical given the limitations of the pandemic. Any video conferencing solution should also be robust enough to allow this team to either deliver their services live to multiple Residents at any one time. The adoption of a Learning Management System to deliver job search seminars on an ad hoc basis should also be considered.

Employer Service

Three business consultants and two recruiters were interviewed to gain insight into the overall communications processes in this division and help determine which offerings should be moved online to better align with a purpose- and values-driven approach. Interviewers also spoke to three Employers to gauge their awareness of the website and the information available to them online.

The Employer Service Division (ESD) offers a wide range of assistance to Employers throughout the 13-county region including outreach to, and recruitment of, Employers and job candidates, assessing an Employer's human resources needs and offering solutions aimed at helping them reach their business goals. Additionally, certain positions act as an intermediary between Employers and job candidates to screen, recruit, and develop talent to fill open positions. Unlike the linear service delivery in the career offices, ESD Staff work collaboratively with Employers and Residents to achieve their goals and objectives (Illustration 2).

[9] *Appendix i – Discovery Interview Transcripts, pg. 26.*

Illustration 2: Customer Service Pathway - Employer Services Division

Issues and themes raised during interviews with the Employer Service Division were backed up by subsequent interviews with Employers. Therefore, this section combines findings from both sets of interviews.

The Business Consultant

Business consultants identify and market Workforce Solutions' services to bring new Employers into the workforce system, maintain existing relationships by helping Employers already in the system add job orders into WorkInTexas.com, and assist Employers to identify opportunities for tax incentives and/or TWC grants, among other responsibilities.
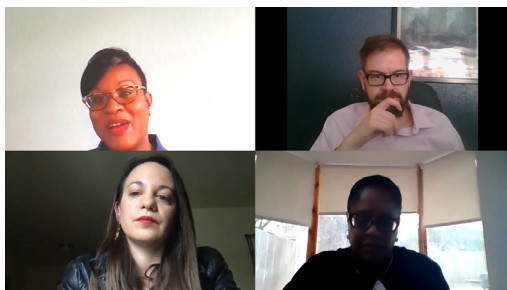
Zoom Interview with Jessica Mollon, Business Consultant (ETC)

The Recruiter

Recruiters are a somewhat hybrid position within the ESD ecosystem, interacting with both Employers and job candidates. They identify, pre-screen, and contact potential job candidates for Employers, assess a candidate's skills and qualifications, and present them to Employers. Depending on a candidate's needs, recruiters may act as a job coach or refer them to a talent development coach for additional assistance.

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[10] *Support services include providing transportation cards and gift cards to purchase work wear and equipment.*

[11] *Appendix i – Discovery Interview Transcripts, pg. 250.*

Employers

Employers utilize Workforce Solutions for their employee recruiting efforts. Employers related that system services they benefit from most are support services[10] and financial aid for job candidates and/or current employees to enhance their skills, as well as career counseling and coaching. Some Employers report they are often contacted or serviced by multiple recruiters or business consultants over the course of the recruitment period, resulting in varying levels of service and injecting a degree of confusion into the process.
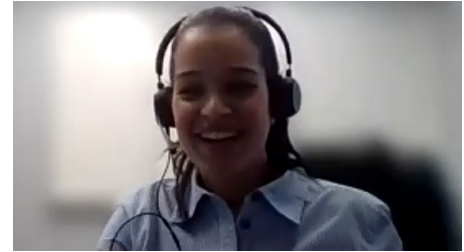
Zoom interview with Lissette Peraza, HR Manager at Leedo Cabinetry

Employers say they would benefit from a streamlined process of interviewing potential candidates, submitting paystubs, and conducting performance evaluations. Prior to the pandemic, in-person interviews with job candidates allowed an Employer to better determine if they qualified for the position. Presently, a link to an online form is sent to job candidates to complete; however, one Employer noted this is time consuming and has created delays in the hiring process and led to the loss of qualified candidates.[11]

Financial Aid Services

Researchers also spoke with a board Staff member to learn about operations at the Financial Services Division. Interviewers learned that all requests for assistance, whether for childcare assistance or training and education programs, are approved and funded through this office. This division also oversees the Education and Training Provider Network, which is grouped into three categories: basic skills, career training, and advanced career training.

When Residents apply for assistance, a personal service representative in the career office reviews the application, meets with the candidate, and makes an initial determination of eligibility based on several factors, including whether the applicant is suitable for the position they want to receive training for, among other factors. The application is then forwarded to Financial Aid Services where an intake specialist reviews the application, ensures all required documents are included, and hands it off to an eligibility specialist for final approval. Once approved, the fulfillment team prepares payment, which is either sent to the training provider or directly to the applicant, in the form of a voucher, at the career office where the application was originally filed. A primary concern expressed during this interview was the manual nature of reviewing and approving financial aid requests. "[W]hen they assign out cases for eligibility, it's a manual process. We'd like for that to be an automatic thing."[12]

Employers are also eligible for financial support for certain programs, such as apprenticeships and on-the-job training programs. These are typically in the form of grants administered by the TWC or other entities. Prior interviews with Staff in the Employer Service Division revealed that business consultants are responsible for identifying suitable Employers who may qualify for these grant programs and submit applications on their behalf.

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[12] *Appendix i – Discovery Interview Transcripts, pg. 277.*

RESEARCH & FINDINGS
Savage Brands

In conducting the brand audit, we found opportunities to align efforts with where we have greatest ability to make an impact. The portal is one of the best tools we can use to clearly communicate the full impact and value of our agency, while focusing our content on what's relevant to each audience.

By building a portal with distinct and customizable areas for Employers, Residents and Staff, we can:

- Segment and prioritize audiences

- Automate low value/high time activities to free Career Center Staff to deliver more value for Residents

- Focus more attention on Employers & other priority audiences

- Deliver consistent experiences throughout the organization that encourage customers to return throughout multiple phases in their career becoming Customers for Life

- Engage in meaningful dialogue with customers to understand what they need, where we deliver the greatest value and how we can better serve them so we can focus efforts in the areas of highest impact

- Deliver distinctive messages for agency Staff, Employers, and Residents

- Deliver messaging and offerings tailored to the specific needs of key audience segments

- Execute a social media strategy that delineates where and how to reach each audience

- Establish a deeper, emotional connection by leading with why we do what we do

- Focus on impact of our services

- Expand delivery of high value/thought leadership content

- Proactive communication (who we are – how we help – how we are different from TWC/WIT)

- Leverage data to place customers into nurture tracks

- Simply and consistently share messaging around services to reinforce the primary value we offer

As part of the discovery process, in-depth interviews were conducted with the Workforce Solutions Information Technology, Procurement, and EO/Accessibility teams to inform the technical requirements for the portal.

From the IT session, we developed a systems matrix to outline each technology used within the Workforce Solutions ecosystem along with a description and role for each, the applicable services, the job role that uses them, current and future integrations and how each relates to the portal's functionality.

The Staff portal provides a platform to deepen the understanding of Workforce Solutions' strategic plan and the customer and Staff experience visions, and to share the Workforce Solutions story consistently.

Both the functional and technical requirements are aligned with the recommendations outlined in the marketing plan. The portal will help to elevate perceptions of the agency, increase audience size and reach, and deepen connections and engagement with all audiences – helping to build a "Customer for Life." With various integrations specific to each audience, the portal will be an important medium to help drive some of our marketing programs.

[13] *Appendix v - IT Systems Matrix*

FUNCTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above research, and in keeping with the requirements laid out in the July 2020 Communications Services RFP, Outreach Strategists, Savage Brands, and Xpediant Digital recommend Workforce Solutions transition its current web presence, www.wrksolutions.com, into a robust, user-friendly 'mobile-first' portal that:

- Generates awareness and increased understanding for the breadth of services offered

- Enables Employers and Residents to clearly see the specific value Workforce Solutions can offer them

- Clearly communicates the full impact/value of the agency

- Deepens engagement across all audience segments

- Provides audience-specific content and thought leadership on a variety of topics

This portal should include and allow for user log-in and customization, enhanced communications capabilities (both synchronous and asynchronous), and integration of existing software and technologies. The new portal must provide a functional, user-friendly design that accommodates the needs of Residents, Employers, and Staff alike. It requires a content management system that is easy to use, update, and expand, and can support more than 6,000 concurrent users during peak usage while maintaining 99.5% availability.

The charts below lay out the Technical Requirement, Use Case, Use Case Description, and the Value Workforce Solutions expects to derive upon implementation, broken out by user class. Additional information can be found in Appendix vi – Functional Recommendations.

RESIDENTS

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WFS
R1	Meeting Scheduler	Request, accept or reject meetings	• Residents schedule meetings with Staff by selecting service needed, then preferred date/time, and/or staff member, in-person, or online options, through Appointy web app • Request office resources (desktop, tablet, printer, fax machine, TDD machine, etc.) • Send notifications via Resident's preferred communication method (automated phone message, email or SMS) to provide reminder of upcoming appointment • Enables Resident to change or cancel appointment • Provides robust reporting on service appointments to integrate into CRM to inform personalized communications • Ability for Residents to add to preferred calendar app • Ability for Appointy to sync with Staff's Outlook calendar	• Improves customer service by reducing wait time for Residents • Appointments are assigned to Staff and can be re-assigned if needed • Increases staff productivity with planning and resourcing
R2	Enhanced Communication	Communicate with staff via internal email, chat, or video conferencing; receive SMS notifications from staff	• Email, chat, notifications, SMS and video conferencing • Residents should launch communication choice in simple dropdown or other method that works effectively for desktop or smart phone access	• Ease of communication between Residents and Staff • Residents receive automated notifications and reminders for appointments via their preferred communication method

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WFS
R3	Video Conferencing	Video Conferencing communications	• In-portal video conference solution for meetings, trainings, and seminars (Residents are end users only)	• Single platform for all users • Users remain within platform for ease of use and to increase session duration
R4	Online Forms	Residents fill out required forms in portal and submit to Staff electronically	• Online forms (English & Spanish) would be available in drop-down window for users could select • Common forms include Job Search Logs, Financial Assistance Applications, etc. • Automatically submits to Staff for review and submissions are logged in Resident's profile • Site architecture or form architecture to block form spam from bots	• Reduces paperwork • Saves Staff time • Drives more virtual/electronic communications • Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions
R5	Help desk support	Help Desk Support for any service - Phone	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Number shown on portal will be click-to-call • Calls will have Google Analytics goal for tracking purposes • Help desk submission would be automatically routed to designated counselor (or other staff member TBD) • If non-account person, it would be placed in queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot
R6		Help Desk Support for any service - Chat	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Resident could open chat window that goes into queue and connects to help desk personnel to dialogue in chat session • Consider integration of hybrid chat tool (live and automated) to ease burden of Staff and to be available beyond Career Office hours • If non-account person, it would be placed in queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password • Would like for chat tool to integrate with database to track conversations	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WFS
R7		Help Desk Support for any service - email/Form	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Resident could open form located on their portal homepage that goes into queue for help desk personnel to respond • If non-account person, it would be placed in a queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot
R8	Virtual Document Submission	Submit requested or required documentation	• Upload documents digitally to storage location for Personal Service Representatives to retrieve • Example documents could be scanned form, PDF, or JPG, i.e., photo of driver's license using cell phone	• Provides transparency to Residents on required documentation • Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions • Provides tool to more easily manage documents • Reduces Staff time spent on collecting and managing documents
R9	Calendar	Calendar shown on the resident's dashboard that includes upcoming appointments and relevant events	• Listing of job search seminars, online learning, job fairs, other system events that may be of value to Residents • Ability to sort events in multiple ways such as by event/topic, ZIP, career office location, online vs. in-person, etc. • Relevant events could be put onto calendar by Staff probably based on Resident's profile and/or location • Residents could accept or search for another date/location • Include "Add to Calendar" button so Residents can quickly add events to their calendar (Google, Apple, Outlook, etc.)	• Similar to current functionality on wrksolutions.com • Upcoming events and appointment reminders should appear when Resident logs into account
R10	Job Search RSS Widget	Displays new job openings in user's location or in designated area	• Ability to view and sort "Hot Jobs" and "Jobs Now" listings in multiple ways such as by industry, job title, ZIP/location, etc.	• Provides platform to communicate full value of services to Residents • Connects Residents to jobs • Increases engagement with Residents • Better targeting of "Jobs Now" listings to reach specific customers
R11	WorkInTexas.com icon or link	Direct link to TWC job database	• Residents use quick link to reach WorkInTexas.com database	• Ease of use to connect to WorkInTexas.com from Resident's dashboard • Enables Staff to promote importance of creating and building out WorkInTexas.com profile to connect them to jobs

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WFS
R12	Social Media – Facebook	Widgets for Facebook social media service would be available to load in Resident's dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with all stakeholders • Include "share" buttons on content and events	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services • Connects Residents to jobs, events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with Residents
R13	Social Media - LinkedIn	Widgets for LinkedIn social media service would be available to load in Professional Resident's dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with all stakeholders • Include "share" buttons on content and events	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services • Connects Residents to jobs, events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with Residents
R14	Social Media – Twitter	Not applicable to Residents		
R15	Social Media – Instagram	Widgets for Instagram social media service would be available to load in Resident and Young Adults' dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with all stakeholders • Include "share" buttons on content and events	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services • Connects Residents to jobs, events, and tips and advice on host of topics
R16	Easyvirtualjobfair.com link or icon	Residents directly access EasyVirtualJobFair.com, or it is directly integrated into portal, so users are accessing within their user account	• Direct integration with existing virtual job fair platform to allow participation without leaving website • Seamless integration with "drag and drop" widget on dashboard	• Ability for Resident to use same login credentials for both Workforce Solutions portal & EasyVirtualJobFair.com • Better tracking of attendee and their session length • Increases session length on Workforce Solutions portal
R17	Geolocation Mapping	Directs Residents to nearest Career Office location and other community resources	• Displays in map format closest Career Office locations (designates if Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) or Veterans Services available) to user • Shows community resources such as public libraries, childcare facilities, food banks, etc.	• Better targeting of customers to nearby resources • Reduces Staff time researching resources for Residents
R18	Video Player	In-house created videos including marketing and seminars	• All users can view streaming content with call to action • Temporary solution for job search seminar videos and orientations until Learning Management System (LMS) is procured • Video player should provide accessibility for both mobile and desktop (like YouTube does)	• Enables Residents to view videos within portal • Marketing videos urge Residents to create account on portal • Attend virtually job search seminars and online learning for Residents

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WFS
R19	Learning Management System	Residents take online courses, seminars, and orientations	• Ability for Residents to view video courses anytime, anywhere • Allows Resident to come back to continue viewing where they left off • Track completion of video content and report to Staff, i.e. job search seminars, required SNAP/TANF/UI orientations and other similar employment training content • Reminders to start or complete training within specified period via their preferred communication method (automated phone message, SMS or email)	• Platform to house, deliver and manage all training content • Tracks and reports completion of job search seminars and required orientations • Enables Residents to schedule online orientations/workshops at convenient time for them • Provides automated reminders for Residents to complete required training • Allows Staff to focus on services that deliver higher value to Residents
R20	Search	Search all types of files in the Portal	• Residents should be able to search all content and file types such as .PDF, .PPT, .DOC, .XLS, video formats, etc. on portal based on access level • Include "share" buttons on content and events that includes options such as copy link, email, etc.	• Increases usability of portal • Ability for Residents to be able to quickly and easily find information they need • Audit statistics in Search Terms report to serve up relevant content and inform content strategy, SEO, FAQs, etc.

EMPLOYERS

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WFS
E1	Meeting Scheduler	Request, accept or reject meetings	• Employers schedule meetings with Staff by selecting service needed, then preferred date/time, and/or staff member, in-person, or online options, through Appointy web app • Enables Employers to change or cancel appointment • Provides robust reporting on service appointments to integrate into CRM to inform personalized communications • Ability for Residents to add to preferred calendar app • Ability for Appointy to sync with Staff's Outlook calendar	• Improves customer service by reducing wait time for Employers • Appointments are assigned to Staff and can be re-assigned if needed • Increases staff productivity with planning and resourcing
E2	Enhanced Communication	Communicate with staff via internal email, chat or video conferencing; receive SMS notifications from staff	• Email, chat, notifications, SMS, and video conferencing • Employers should launch communication choice in simple dropdown or other method that works effectively for desktop (primary device) or smart phone access	• Ease of communication between Employers and Staff • Employers receive automated notifications and reminders for appointments via their preferred communication method
E3	Video Conferencing	Video Conferencing communications	• In-portal video conference solution for meetings, trainings, and seminars (Employers are end users only)	• Single platform for all users • Users remain within platform for ease of use and to increase session duration
E4	Online Forms	Employers fill out required forms in the portal and submit to staff electronically	• Online forms (English only) would be available electronically either directly in Employer dashboard or via link sent by Staff • Automatically submits to Staff for review and submissions are logged in Employer profile • Site architecture or form architecture to block form spam from bots	• Provides transparency to Employers on required documentation • Reduces paperwork • Saves Staff time • Drives more virtual/electronic communications • Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions
E5	Help desk support	Help Desk Support for any service - Phone	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Number shown on portal will be click-to-call • Calls will have Google Analytics goal for tracking purposes • If non-account person, it would be placed in queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password	• Enables Employers to get qqinformation they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Employers • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Employers to troubleshoot

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WFS
E6		Help Desk Support for any service - Chat	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Employer could open chat window that goes into queue and connects to help desk personnel to dialogue in chat session • Consider integration of hybrid chat tool (live and automated) to ease burden of Staff and to be available beyond Career Office/Employer Service Division's hours • If non-account person, it would be placed in queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password • Would like for chat tool to integrate with database to track conversations	• Enables Employers to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Employers • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Employers to troubleshoot
E7		Help Desk Support for any service - email/Form	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Employers could open form located on their portal homepage that goes into queue for help desk personnel to respond • If non-account person, it would be placed in queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for staff to reset password	• Enables Employers to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Employers • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Employers to troubleshoot
E8	Virtual Document Submission	Submit requested or required documentation	• Employers submit documents digitally through email or direct upload, which would feed to their profile, or to Business Consultant or Recruiter to review and upload to DocuWare • Example documents could be scanned forms or PDFs of job training logs, pay stubs, etc.	• Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions • Provides tool to more easily manage documents • Reduces Staff time spent on collecting and managing documents
E9	Calendar	Calendar shown on the Employer dashboard that includes upcoming appointments, and Workforce Solutions events	• Listing of HR seminars, online learning, job fairs, other system events that may be of value to Employers • Ability to sort events in multiple ways such as by event/topic, ZIP, online vs. in-person, etc. • Relevant events could be put onto calendar by Staff probably based on Employer's profile and/or location • Employers could accept or search for another date/location • Include "Add to Calendar" button so Residents can quickly add events to their calendar (Google, Apple, Outlook, etc.)	• Event calendar similar to current functionality; appointments as reminders whenever a person logs into their account in the portal.

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WFS
E10	Job Search RSS Widget	Not applicable to Employers		
E11	WorkInTexas.com icon or link	Direct link to TWC job database	• Employers use quick link to reach WorkInTexas.com database	• Ease of use to connect to WorkInTexas.com from their dashboard
E12	Social Media – Facebook	Not applicable to Employers		
E13	Social Media - LinkedIn	Widgets for LinkedIn social media service would be available to load in Employer's dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with Employers • Include "share" buttons on content and events	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services • Connects Employers to events, HR Training & Development seminars, online learnings on host of topics • Increases engagement with Employers
E14	Social Media – Twitter	Not applicable to Employers		
E15	Social Media – Instagram	Not applicable to Employers		
E16	easyvirtualjobfair.com link or icon	Direct link to online job fair platform	• Direct integration with existing virtual job fair platform to allow participation without leaving website • Seamless integration with "drag and drop" widget on dashboard	• Ability for Employers to use same login credentials for both Workforce Solutions portal & EasyVirtualJobFair.com • Better tracking of attendee and their session length • Increases session length on Workforce Solutions portal
E17	Geolocation mapping	Not applicable to Employers		
E18	Video Player	In-house created videos including marketing and seminars	• All users can view streaming content with call to action • Temporary solution for job search seminar videos and orientations until Learning Management System (LMS) is procured • Video player should provide accessibility for both mobile and desktop (like YouTube does)	• Enables Employers to view videos within portal • Marketing videos urge Employers to create account on portal • Attend virtually HR Training & Development seminars and online learning for Employers
E19	Learning Management System	Not applicable to Employers		
E20	Search	Search all types of files in the Portal	• Employers should be able to search all content and file types such as .PDF, .PPT, .DOC, .XLS, video formats, etc. on portal based on access level • Include "share" buttons on content and events that includes options such as copy link, email, etc.	• Increases usability of portal • Ability for Employers to be able to quickly and easily find information they need • Audit statistics in Search Terms report to serve up relevant content and inform content strategy, SEO, FAQs, etc.

STAFF

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WS
S1	Meeting Scheduler	Request, accept or reject meetings	• Staff can schedule appointments with Residents and Employers by selecting service needed, then preferred date/time, and/or staff member, in-person, or online options, through Appointy web app • Request office resources (desktop, tablet, printer, fax machine, TDD machine, etc.) • Send notifications via Resident and Employer's preferred communication method (automated phone message, email, or SMS) to provide reminder of upcoming appointment • Enables Staff to change or cancel appointment • Provides robust reporting on service appointments to integrate into CRM to inform personalized communications • Ability for Appointy to sync with Staff's Outlook calendar	• Improves customer service by reducing wait time for Residents • Appointments are assigned to Staff and can be re-assigned if needed • Increases staff productivity with planning and resourcing
S2	Enhanced Communication	Communicate between Staff and with Residents and Employers via internal email, chat, or video conferencing; receive SMS notifications from Staff	• Email, chat, notifications, SMS, and video conferencing • Staff should launch communication choice in simple dropdown or other method that works effectively for computer or smart phone access	• Ease of communication between Staff, and with Residents and Employers
S3	Video Conferencing	Video Conferencing communications	• In-portal video conference solution for meetings, trainings, and seminars (conferencing between Staff, and with Residents and Employers)	• Single platform for all users • Users remain within platform for ease of use and to increase session duration
S4	Online Forms	Staff can create forms in portal and receive submitted forms from both Residents and Employers	• Staff would have ability to create, change or delete forms for Residents and Employers • Forms should be templated with Workforce Solutions brand and color palette • Online forms (English and Spanish) would be available in drop-down window for users could select • Common forms include Job Search Logs, Financial Assistance Applications, etc. • Automatically submits to Staff for review and submissions are logged in Resident and Employer's profile • Site architecture or form architecture to block form spam from bots	• Reduces paperwork • Saves Staff time • Drives more virtual/electronic communications • Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions
S5	Help desk support	Help Desk Support for any service - Phone	• Assistance for both Residents and Employers for any need • Number shown on portal will be click-to-call • Calls will have Google Analytics goal for tracking purposes • Help desk submission for Residents would be automatically routed to designated counselor (or other staff member TBD) • If non-account person, it would be placed in a queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WS
			• Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password	
S6		Help Desk Support for any service - Chat	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Resident could open chat window that goes into queue and connects to help desk personnel to dialogue in chat session • Consider integration of hybrid chat tool (live and automated) to ease burden of Staff and to be available beyond Career Office/Employer Service Division's hours • If non-account person, it would be placed in a queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password • Would like for chat tool to integrate with database to track conversations	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot
S7		Help Desk Support for any service - email/Form	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Resident could open form located on their portal homepage that goes into queue for help desk personnel to respond • If non-account person, it would be placed in queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot
S8	Virtual Document Submission	Submit requested or required documentation	• Upload documents digitally to storage location for Personal Service Representatives to retrieve • Example documents could be scanned form, PDF, or JPG, i.e., photo of driver's license using cell phone	• Provides transparency to both Residents and Employers on required documentation • Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions • Provides tool to more easily manage documents • Reduces Staff time spent on collecting and managing documents
S9	Calendar	Calendar shown on dashboard that includes upcoming appointments and relevant events	• Listing of job search seminars, online learning, job fairs, HR Training & Development and other system events that may be of value to Residents and Employers (events displayed to be based on Staff's role as Resident- or Employer-facing) • Ability to sort events in multiple ways such as by event/topic, ZIP, career office location, online vs. in-person, etc. • Relevant events could be put onto calendar by Staff probably based on Resident and Employer's profile and/or location • Listing of Staff only events with ability to view these only	• Similar to current functionality on wrksolutions.com • Upcoming events and appointment reminders should appear when Staff logs into account

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WS
			• Include "Add to Calendar" button so Residents can quickly add events to their calendar (Google, Apple, Outlook, etc.)	
S10	Job Search RSS Widget	Create, edit, and delete job listings as needed	• Ability for Staff to post jobs and maintain "Hot Jobs" and "Jobs Now" listings	• Similar to current functionality on wrksolutions.com
S11	WorkInTexas.com icon or link	Not applicable to Staff		
S12	Social Media – Facebook	Widgets for Facebook social media service would be available to load in Staff's dashboard	• Automatic listing of @AdvanceMyCareer (WFS) social media posts to drive engagement with Residents and Public • Include "share" buttons on content and events	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services to both Residents and Employers • Connects Residents to jobs, Employers to job candidates, and both Residents and Employers to events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with both Residents and Employers
S13	Social Media - LinkedIn	Widgets for LinkedIn social media service would be available to load in Staff's dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with Employers, Professional Residents and Public • Include "share" buttons on content and events	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services • Connects Residents to jobs, events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with Residents
S14	Social Media – Twitter	Widgets for Twitter social media service would be available to load in Staff's dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with Public • Include "share" buttons on content and events	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services to both Residents and Employers • Connects Residents to jobs, Employers to job candidates, and both Residents and Employers to events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with both Residents and Employers
S15	Social Media – Instagram	Widgets for Instagram social media service would be available to load in Staff's dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with Residents, Young Adults and Public • Include "share" buttons on content and events	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services to both Residents and Employers • Connects Residents to jobs, Employers to job candidates, and both Residents and Employers to events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with both Residents and Employers
S16	Easyvirtualjobfair.com link or icon	Not applicable to Staff		
S17	Geolocation mapping	Helps Staff direct Residents to nearest Career Office location and other community resources	• Staff can create, edit, and delete Career Office locations and community resources such as public libraries, childcare facilities, food banks, etc. as needed • Automatically feeds to Resident's dashboard	• Better targeting of customers to nearby resources • Reduces Staff time researching resources for Residents

ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Value to WS
S18	Video Player	Staff maintain current and add new videos as needed	• All users can view streaming content with call to action • Temporary solution for job search seminar videos and orientations until Learning Management System (LMS) is procured	• Enables both Residents and Employers to view videos within portal • Marketing videos urge Residents and Employers to create account on portal • Attend virtually job search seminars and online learning (Residents) and HR Training & Development and online learning (Employers)
S19	Learning Management System	Staff maintain current and add new modules as needed	• Ability for Staff to recommend video courses for both Residents and Employers • For Residents, track completion of video content and report to Staff, i.e., job search seminars, required SNAP/TANF/UI orientations and other similar employment training content • Ability for Staff to send reminders to Residents to start or complete training within specified period via their preferred communication method (automated phone message, SMS or email)	• Platform to house, deliver and manage all training content • Tracks and reports completion of job search seminars and required orientations • Enables Residents to schedule online orientations/workshops at convenient time for them • Provides automated reminders for Residents to complete required training • Allows Staff to focus on services that deliver higher value to Residents
S20	Search	Search all types of files in the Portal	• Staff should be able to search all content and file types such as .PDF, .PPT, .DOC, .XLS, video formats, etc. on portal based on access level and role (Resident- vs. Employer-facing • Include "share" buttons on content and events that includes options such as copy link, email, etc.	• Increases usability of portal • Ability for Staff to be able to quickly and easily find information they need • Audit statistics in Search Terms report to serve up relevant content and inform content strategy, SEO, FAQs, etc.

Appendix I
Discovery Interview Transcripts

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Jennifer Bridgeford, Career Office Manager
Workforce Solutions – Texas City

Contractor

BakerRipley

Interview conducted

February 25, 2021

Speaker 1 (00:01):

Um, let's just, uh, so for the record, um, as I said in the previous email, so I'm Tammy Frazier. I work with our strategists and we were in Isabelle as well, Isabella as well, we were hired, um, by CAC to conduct, um, an assessment of the current website, um, and the services that are available on the website and seeing what we can do to, uh, bring maybe some of those in-person services onto the website, what works, what doesn't work. And so in order for us to do this, especially when you're talking about a career service office, um, we need to understand the process from a customer perspective, but also we need to understand the operational part of it as well. Like the, the jobs, uh, the services that are offered. So I know, um, this may be a little bit, you know, elementary when we start talking, you're like, okay, just, you know, w we're we're we're doing, we're doing a deep dive into to get a full understanding F yeah, exactly. So I appreciate your patience. I'm going to say that. Okay. So if you can go ahead and state your name, um, and your position for us for the recording.

Speaker 2 (01:16):

Jennifer Bridgford spelled B R I D G E F O R D. And I'm the career office manager at the Texas city workforce solutions office.

Speaker 1 (01:25):

Okay, awesome. So, um, and, and I'm going to ask you the questions as we already have them, even though I know that we've talked to one of your colleagues previously, they've kind of broken it down, but, um, I'm just gonna ask you, um, how many departments comprise the career services office?

Speaker 2 (01:41):

What do you mean by departments? So

Speaker 1 (01:43):

I know that there's different roles, I guess we could need to check the roles. Um, if you could describe the roles of each person within the career services.

Speaker 2 (01:53):

Okay. Well, and just to kind of give a caveat to that is it is very fluid right now, um, with us, you know, having staff in office and out of office, um, you know, one day we may have somebody doing what we call somebody in the hunt group, but, you know, our in every office is going to kind of do things their own way as well. So we do have a little bit of flexibility as managers, um, to work with our team and do what works best for, um, the busy-ness of our office or the demand of our customers. Um, you know, our community may be a little bit different than other communities, you know, rural versus inner city. Um, so that's something to keep in consideration as well. Um, but kind of the way that we haven't broken down at Texas city is we have, um, Oh, and we also have an integrated office here, which means we have vocational rehabilitation services that work that's already integrated into our office for two years now.

Speaker 2 (02:48):

Um, so we're one of the more well-oiled machines. There's some like, like Jackson that just got integrated a couple of weeks ago. So there's also that to keep, keep in consideration, um, for us our

vocational services, or we call VR services. Um, we have, um, a unique situation in which we have the manager and two supervisors, as well as counselors and support staff that are normally housed in our office. Currently we have, um, one counselor and one support staff that visits our office two days a week in the office, and everybody still serves those people remotely. Um, you'll have other offices that only have counselors or support staff and, um, and their offices as far as VR goes because my manager and supervisors actually manage those as well. So there's that. And then, so their role is to work with individuals with disabilities, that or individuals that need help with either, um, maintaining or finding employment.

Speaker 2 (03:52):

Um, and this could be a mental, physical, um, learning disability. It could also be somebody that's going that is recovering from addiction. That's also considered to be, um, part of their, I hate to call it a disability, but I guess it could be. Um, so they work with those individuals to find employment, keep employment, or to, um, get help, to get up emotion with what they're currently doing, to help be able to, um, climb the career ladder, um, also to, um, complete or, um, start training. So they may need accommodation technology. They may need job coaching, they may need, um, diagnoses, um, you know, whatever it is. And we, they may have to work with the employers to get all of that. So there's that part then there's also, um, what we call employment counselors and personal service representatives. Um, so you probably, as you go throughout your interviews, you'll see that those two are also being combined.

Speaker 2 (04:47):

There's more collaboration, there's some offices that kind of worked as a pilot to, um, um, combine that role already. Um, some that are in a process of cross training and then some that are in the process of starting to, um, kind of get the staff used to the fact that they're going to have to be doing both of those roles. So, um, traditionally an employment counselor is all about the, well, we're all all about the jobs, but it's starting at the job piece. Um, you need help looking for work. Um, we're going to help you and work in texas.com, which is also on our website. Um, get registered as a job seeker, um, teach you how to look for work on there. Work with the individuals who, um, may not be as technically savvy. There's a lot more hand holding and doing in that aspect.

Speaker 2 (05:39):

So the key with them is, or I guess the biggest struggle, um, for being able to provide services to individuals that are looking for work is, is working with those people that aren't as technologically savvy or that are trying to look for work on their cell phone, um, that's instead of PC, um, or a tablet. Um, so they're pro and they work with our participant population as well. So individuals that are required to work with our office to maintain some sort of public assistance, whether it be food stamps, which is snap or TANIF, um, people that are mandated by the court, such as NCP choices, non-custodial parents who, um, are having to pay child support. They don't have a job they've been mandated by the judge to work with our office, to find employment, um, to be able to pay for their child support our employment counselor population works with that as well. Um, as well as people that have filed for unemployment, um, and have been told by Texas workforce commission that they have to work with our office to learn what we can do to help them get back to work. And the goal is to do that within 10 weeks. Um, so that's employment counselor, so there's not a whole lot of case management yet that they're doing, but that's what we're moving towards. So then there's a personal service, excuse me, I talk really fast. So just tell me to slow down if I need to,

Speaker 1 ([07:01](07:01)):

I mean, you're doing great and we kind of have a, we kind of have an understanding, so it's really good that you're going deeper in like breaking it down for us. So thank you.

Speaker 2 ([07:10](07:10)):

You're welcome. Okay. So then personal service representatives are more of our case management piece. So again, that employment focus is always there, but these are people that say, I want to go to school or I want to change careers, or I want to learn a new trade. Um, so these are people that work with individuals that have that in mind, um, and help get them, um, through, you know, the eligibility or applying for the eligibility for financial aid, um, to see if they qualify for a financial aid scholarship, um, on one of the occupation trainings that we support. Um, and then they manage them through that, whether it's a six week course or a two year, you know, um, associate's degree or finishing up a bachelor's degree. Um, so they're, you know, monthly contact, um, how's training going, do you need, what do you need? Here's your vouchers for school? You know, that kind of thing, gas assistance or transportation assistance. Um,

Speaker 1 ([08:08](08:08)):

And did they have a role that they play with snap and with Tana or,

Speaker 2 ([08:12](08:12)):

Yeah, so, um, in addition to training, there's also young adults, 16 to 24, and those will typically be managed by our personal service or PSRs as well. Um, so because those are also case managed, um, and then there's TANIF that typically will be assisted by PSRs. So that's how our office is set up is that the snap and UI are for employment counselors and the TANIF are for, um, with the personal service representatives as they are, um, looking for full-time employment and they go into community service if they don't, um, find employment within a certain number of weeks during job search and that kind of thing.

Speaker 1 ([08:48](08:48)):

Okay. Okay. And then, um, so just kind of walk us through, so are those, all the roles, those are all the characters. So the vocational rehabilitation, employment counselor and the PSR, or, but we have our greeters too. Right, right.

Speaker 2 ([09:05](09:05)):

Yeah. So then there's also what we call our customer service team here. Um, we like to think of our team, um, with the greeters and the resource specialist as one team, because they should be able to ebb and flow to help each other out when we actually have customers in the office. Um, so yes, greeters would be at the front of the office, typically, um, greeting people as they come in, when we had our old school wait list where we'd put people on to see, you know, give them a pager and see people. We now have our appointee system for those appointments. Um, um, then we have our resource specialists that while they're waiting their purposes to get them ready to see staff. So instead of, um, somebody's pager going off and they sit down with an employment counselor, cause they need help looking for work and starting fresh with a brand new work in Texas application that they've already got that part completed.

Speaker 2 ([09:55](09:55)):

And they're ready to start on a higher step as far as, okay, you're done, let's tweak this, let's up your resume as much that can be possibly done before they sit down with staff. So that their time with staff is a lot more, um, fruitful, um, when it comes to them sitting down. Um, so they do many things and the resource team, um, they'll help people fax, uh, use our multipurpose business machines. They will answer basic questions about unemployment. Like what do they mean when they ask this question on, uh, an unemployment application or, um, provide resources, um, you know, just really working with them on anything. It is that they need to either prepare to meet with one of the other staff, if they're waiting to see somebody or to help them so that they don't have to wait for somebody else that they can be a self-service customer you're muted now.

Speaker 1 ():

Okay. So at no time, do they determine like if someone is career ready or not, not again,

Speaker 2 ():

Not necessarily. I mean, so, you know, there's been times as a supervisor or a manager I've gone out in the resource area and I'm like, you don't need to see anybody we're looking for work right here. You know? So, um, when you're talking to somebody, everybody is just to smell the meter's different from the other person. Everybody's situation is very different. Um, so it's when I'm talking to somebody, if they're like, well, I'm just here looking for work. I'm working in my work in Texas. Um, can you just show me how to apply for this one job and if I'm talking to them, um, and based on my assessment of my conversation and in my conversation with them, if I see, well, you know what your, your resume needs a little bit of work. Why don't you sit down with an employment counselor and let them critique your resume for, you know, your pager's going off, go ahead and do that.

Speaker 2 ():

Or, um, I can see that you're having some problems navigating through work in Texas. How about some one-on-one help, um, um, can, you know, sometimes you can tell by what they're wearing, um, you know, just so you know, you're okay now you've applied for this job. Um, I just wanna remind you to make sure you wear a button down, Jack, a button down collar shirt, and some khakis and some nice shoes. And, you know, you try to get that stuff out in that conversation to where they're like, well, this is the best thing I have right now, or, you know, I'm playing a domestic violence situation and this is all I own. So we do kind of, we can make those career readiness decisions, um, or, or assumptions based on our conversation with them and then refer them to resources. Um, um, you know, so it's, it's multilevel, you know, sometimes we're meeting somebody that just flew, you know, and they are, are at a shelter and this is their five minutes. They can get out without the kids. And they're just want to see if they can help find, you know, get help finding a job to where somebody is coming in. That's very professional ready for an interview. We have an employer on site and they're, they're going to get interviewed and, and maybe even get a job offer. So, you know, very different scenarios with every single person.

Speaker 1 ():

Okay. Okay. That that's good. That makes sense. So everybody's kind of a tune and aware to, you know, how to, how to, um, know how to assist. Okay. So is that, so that's it that you have there in the office?

Speaker 2 ():

Obviously we have our supervisors, um, you know, so there's the man, I'm the manager. And then I have two supervisors here. Uh, the way that I had been split up is there, as far as the responsibility on staff is I

have one that works with the employment counselors and the resource staff. And then I have, um, one that works with the PSRs and the greeters. Oh, okay. So the way that we're structured now, um, where we, because we have, um, two greeters and one resource staff here in the office, I have both my supervisors here with me is they collaborate on the customer service team because we consider that whole greeter, um, resource, um, and program assistance, which I'll tell you about in a second, um, as our customer service team. And so we all collaborate with that team. So program assistants are kind of like admin assistance, but they do so much more because they have, um, they're kind of the face or the voice, or they typically were the face and the voice of the office, um, for incoming calls and emails.

Speaker 2 (14:15):

And, and, and when we provide supportive services, um, they would be an approver and an issue where that kind of thing. Um, they are phone operators before we had the hunt group, what we call our customer service team now, or the ones that are getting all of those incoming calls and emails and things. Um, they were the two that were handling all of that. And now we have a group of five that are handling that. So again, those are lumped into the customer service side. Um, there is our customer service team, but they report to me. Okay, okay. Two ladies that do that. Okay. And their program

Speaker 1 (14:53):

Assistants. So they, they kind of do the general basics, like you said, answering the phones or providing maybe direction, you know, responding to emails or whatnot like that. Do you feel like any of these positions are like a lot of the work that's done under these umbrellas can be done online?

Speaker 2 (15:12):

I believe a lot of it can be done on it. It is being done online and we were kind of forced to do that. Yeah. Um, so the struggle that we have, again, you'll probably hear this as a recurring theme is our customer's ability to use technology or to have the equipment needed. Um, most of them are using their phones, um, you know, smart phones. Um, and of course, if you don't have a job, sometimes, you know, that goes away as well. So, um, there are some customers that are struggling, um, to be able to receive our services, um, just because they don't have the technology. Um, luckily, you know, we have libraries, we have community partners and things like that that are opening back up and they can get to a computer. They can get to a phone where they can talk to staff. But, um, the only thing that really keeps us from doing that with every single person that we touch is the technology piece.

Speaker 1 (16:05):

Okay. The technology piece is difficult. Okay. And as we're, we're looking at it and how to put more things available online, but what we need to really look at the customer aspect of it. Okay. So then let's talk about the customers. So walk us through what happens inside the office. So let's just say, Isabella and I are, we're coming up. What, walk us through the process. What's going to be, who's going to be the first person we encounter and what's going to happen to us when we come in and this is pre COVID. Yes. [inaudible].

Speaker 2 (16:38):

Yeah. So pre COVID you would come into the office and we would, you know, thank you for coming into workforce solutions. How can we help you today? And then just based on whatever you said, we would try to meet your immediate need. So if you're coming in saying, um, I received this letter that said I had to report to this office today. Um, it could be snap. Um, it could be a TANIF. It could, you know,

whatever it is. We'll, we'll go ahead and put you on the guest list to, to see whichever staff is appropriate for the letter of the immediate need that you came in for. Um, we'll invite you, you know, we'll give you your pager and we'll invite you to, um, jump on the, the CA one of our, well, we had 40 now we've got 19, um, cause we're socially distanced computers, um, here in the office to get registered and work in Texas. Um, we'll ask you if, you know, you're familiar with work in Texas. Are you registered? Um, if yes. Do you remember your username and your password? Would you like me to go ahead and reset you? So we'll, we'll set them up to be able to start working on something while they're waiting. Yeah. So, um, you know, then once they hit the resource area, the goal is to not have them waiting at a table or a chair, but it to be at a computer and be doing something while they're waiting. Okay.

Speaker 1 (17:51):

And then from there, what happens?

Speaker 2 (17:53):

So let's just take a snap letter as, as the scenario to move forward with, um, the, um, you know, the resource team we'll get, we'll engage with them at that point. And while they're waiting with their pager, I used, I always train my staff to be pager hunters. So you want to find those people with the pagers and say, hi, I see that you're waiting to see somebody, what are we going to help you with today and start that conversation. Um, and, and if it is somebody that's waiting to see somebody for an orientation then Oh, great. Then let's make sure that you're registered and work in Texas and get you all ready for that. Um, and, um, you know, do you have any questions about it? Do you need help? Um, you know, navigating, is there anything I can help you with while you're waiting for them?

Speaker 2 (18:35):

Um, and then their pager goes off and then they sit, sit down with a, with an employment counselor and, you know, we tell them, you know, we've reasoned why we sent you a letters, cause you're receiving benefits and you're going to work with us to find employment. And the goal is to find you a job, um, of, you know, however many hours based on what their code was or whatever. And so they look them up in the system, um, and start telling them what we do to help them look for work. Um, you know, always with that employment focus goal, um, and you know, driving the conversation and, um, you know, then tell them a little bit about their compliance as far as, you know, you need to turn in your job search logs with this many hours, and this is how you fill it out and sign this brochure. That explains everything that we talked about. Here's your copy, you know, that kind of thing.

Speaker 1 (19:21):

Okay. Um, and then when do you determine that they need to go to case management?

Speaker 2 (19:27):

Um, well, so a snap person or participant is going to be case managed somewhat, but it's a more on the, customer's kind of driving that where the customer, the customer is, um, doing it. So for instance, the first visit you're, we're doing our orientation where we're explaining all the different services and then we tell them, we'll see them again on Monday or before then reach out if you have any questions. So Monday is when they would bring in their job search log that they need to submit to be in compliant, you know, be compliant with the participation piece of it. Um, then, um, when they come back, then they may see somebody else. Um, they're submitting their job search log and we'll talk to them. Okay. I

see these are all the jobs you applied for. Let's talk about it, how'd it go? Did you get any interviews? Um, you know, this is what you wear and it kind of dives goes a little bit further into their job search kind of path way, as far as you know, now they're in the job search mode and this is what they're doing, and we're giving them the professional advice on how to apply for work, how to talk to employers, what to wear all that kind of stuff.

Speaker 1 ([20:34](#)):

It does. It's a, is that happening with the PSR? Cause that's when they are moved over to trip. No, that's happening with the counselors. Yeah,

Speaker 2 ([20:40](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. So if so, that's the way my office is set up is that the, the people coming in to bring in job search logs for we'll continue to see an employment counselor. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([20:50](#)):

Okay. And then, so when they go to PSR it's because it's for trainee, um, learning a new trade financial aid or transportation or, and young adults in TANIF. Right. That's how you have it set up.

Speaker 2 ([21:02](#)):

That's how we have it set up here. Yeah. But that's going to blend where anybody that comes in, they're just going to go to the next available person and everybody's going to be cross-trained to be able to do that. So as far as the case management question that you have on, on snap, it would be, you know, um, some, you know, putting, you're putting in the counselor notes to, you know, document that the job search logs were submitted, um, kind of the conversation that happened between the staff and the person about how their job search went, any additional referrals or assistance that was provided. Um, did they need transportation assistance to look for work the next day or the next week? Um, when their next job search log is due? Um, all of that, you know, that there's a job fair this Wednesday, and we've recommended that they talk to these employers and there's a workshop job readiness workshop that's happening on Tuesday.

Speaker 2 ([21:49](#)):

And we want them to come. We've recommended that they come to that, so that the next person that sees them, when they turn in their job search log, the next Monday, it's kind of a progression on, you know, what this person has been doing to look for work and what, what, um, so they can follow up, you know? So did you talk to this employer? Did you go to this workshop? Um, you know, what other questions do you have? Oh, well, there's a workshop that covers that next week. You know, that kind of thing. So

Speaker 1 ([22:13](#)):

What about the four week period when the four weeks ends for either snap or the TANIF benefits? So they continue to stay with the employment counselor in your office, or they go, well, bill go to the, the TANIF will go to the PSR is already working with the, so

Speaker 2 ([22:29](#)):

I'm coming. TANIF will always go to a PSR at our office. Um, and then there's two different types of snap. Um, there's, what's called, what's a bod, which is the able-bodied adults without dependents. And then there's the general pop or gen pop. Um, so gen pop, they do four weeks of job search and they're no longer required to participate with us for job search. So once they do that four weeks of job search, if they haven't found work, we tell them, okay, you're no longer required to submit your job search logs, but you're welcome to still use them because they are very useful, you know, on keeping track of what you're, what you're doing. You can continue to come here so we can help you look for work, but we're no longer going to be able to support them with a gas card every week when they come in, you know, because they're no longer, um, their snap case will be closed because they're no longer required to participate, but we can still continue to help them.

Speaker 2 ([23:25](#)):

Okay. Um, for the job search. Yeah. But then the bod, they have to find, they have to work with us to find work until they find employment. So they usually in their third week, we'll receive, what's called a next step letter. And their next step is to enter community service. Um, what we call work fair for them, but it's basically it's community service. And we have, um, volunteer, um, partner sites, um, like community partner sites that we assign them, um, a site to work out for so many hours based on the, the benefits that they receive, because there's like a calculation. Um, that's how many hours they have to do a month to basically earn their benefits going forward while they're looking for work. So for instance, somebody gets $750 a month, then that would be divided by 30 days. I'm trying to use an easy number to divide that I can't do that.

Speaker 2 ([24:20](#)):

But anyway, let's say that they have to do 25 hours for the month. You know, when you divide that, cause you take their benefits. So like $1,200 in benefits for the month divided by minimum wage. And that's how many hours they have to work for the month in volunteer services, um, to receive the money, to receive benefits yeah. To maintain their benefits. So the purpose of that though is not to make them work for free to earn their benefits. It's to have recent and new work experience that they can add to their resume so that as they continue to look for work, they have new stuff on their resume, new skills. They're working on their soft skills. They're getting accustomed again, if they've been out of work for a while of getting up at a certain time, wearing a certain thing, reporting to a supervisor, you know, making sure that their kids are taken care of at the same time while these are going to be without dependents. So it's not as much of an issue, but, you know, just getting back in that routine of having to report for employment, because they're doing it at a volunteer site now. Um, so that's the purpose of that, that, um, that community service or workfare and TANIF does that as well. So like after their third week, they also have to go into community service while they're looking, because they have to work with us until they find full-time employment where a buyer has to work with us until they find 20 hours a week, at least.

Speaker 1 ([25:33](#)):

Okay. So they both have to do that. Okay. That makes sense. Um, so let me, I want to go back to something you mentioned, um, you said I'll, I'll, I'll talk about that in a little bit, but it was, um, appointee system. So what is the employment?

Speaker 2 ([25:49](#)):

We love it. Uh, well, I, there are some quirks that we're getting used to, and there's some, and we have a great communication amongst, um, I mean, I'm sure that you guys are talking to all of the different contractors. So, um, also let me let you know that not every contractor has program assistance. Um, so they, we all have different roles within our office. You always see an AC and a PSR, a greeter and a resource, but you're not always going to see program assistants. It's just the way that Baker, Ripley offices are structured. Um, they may call them something else or use other roles. But, um, so appointee, um, we all have with each, one of the contractors has, um, kind of what we're using as the liaison to work with HJC. So that there's one voice instead of 27 voices and saying, can we fix this?

Speaker 2 ([26:34](#)):

Can we add this? Can we, but the communication has been really great, um, with Mr. Garcia on with these, you know, the managers and the supervisors through our liaison to, um, up, um, to make adjustments. And they had been pretty quick turnarounds when we've made suggestions. Um, so the system itself is really great. We think the customers really like it. Um, again, it's the technology handicap that some people have, um, either, you know, I don't think I've tried to do it on my phone. I know there is an appointee app, um, but I haven't tried to do it on my phone. So I don't know how difficult it is, but it seems as though customers don't really have a hard time making appointments with us and we have plenty that are coming in, I guess is a better way to say it. Um, it's just, you know, make sure that you have a full email address in there, make sure that your phone number is correct kind of thing.

Speaker 2 ([27:30](#)):

Um, you know, let's something that I recently suggested yesterday is having a language, a preferred language question in there because I have an employment counselor with the last name of Perez that, um, doesn't speak Spanish, but gets all the people that want to speak that need to speak Spanish when it comes to, um, an orientation. So she, um, you know, in this kind of goes back to the who does what in the office. I do have two bilingual, um, PSRs that will do all of our Spanish snap orientations or UI orientations, because I don't have an employment counselor that speaks Spanish. So they do help they're cross trained on that. So they do help with that. Um, but yeah, the appointee is, um, I don't know if you've guys have gotten a chance to see it, but it's a, you know, a site that you can go in and it's a really quick registration type thing where you go in and, you know, put your name and all that so that when you make an appointment it's preloaded, um, you choose the service that you need.

Speaker 2 ([28:28](#)):

Well, first you choose the office and then choose the service. Um, and the great thing about that, um, and would this be in, in a virtual world, is if somebody wants to make an appointment for job search assistance and they needed at a specific date and time, and they can't find that available at Texas city, they can back up and they can say, well, I can get that it Astrodome, um, because they don't have to physically go to Astrodome from Texas city or from Galveston. Um, they, you know, they, so that's the great thing about being online and virtual is that, that we have a much bigger reach. Um, the difficulty on that is, um, reminding not really difficulty, but what's something we have to be aware of is we have to make sure that we remind customers, you know, just because you live in Gallup on Galveston Island, doesn't mean that if you only need job search assistance, that somebody at sexist city has to help you because our Baytown office has availability right now, you know, they can go ahead and help you with that job search assistance. All of the people at Texas city may be tied up with pre-booked appointments. Um, but you can still get the help that you need when you need it, because of the fact that it is, it is online. It's virtual. Um, Oh,

Speaker 1 (29:42):

Go ahead.

Speaker 2 (29:42):

I was going to say, I will say that the, there is an option to do either a phone or a virtual appointment. So over the phone or on teams currently is how we use it. Um, and, um, the majority of them are done by phone because customers are still not comfortable with teams

Speaker 1 (29:58):

There. W Oh, okay. So Y so they're not comfortable with, um, um, is it Microsoft teams that you're talking about? The technology piece of it? Okay. So there, so most of them are still doing it by phone.

Speaker 2 (30:12):

Yeah. A lot of them are doing it by phone, which is kind of a handicap because when it comes to working with somebody on job search and, um, we're working@workintexas.com. It's great. If you can share your screen and kind of navigate and show people, you know, how to do things, but if they're trying to be on speaker phone and they're looking at a screen, that's this big, you know, it's kind of hard for them to see that.

Speaker 1 (30:36):

So, yeah. So what, so I think this is a central theme that we're getting, is that it's more so it's not about necessarily the services that are being provided by workforce solutions. Like they have the ability is there, but it is for the customer that the customer is not able to, they may not have the technology or access to the kind of technology that needs to be used, um, to make it efficient, more efficient for them. Yeah.

Speaker 2 (31:03):

And I would say that some of them are probably coming around because as I can probably guess that your D because you're having to, you know, wave people off on the side, you probably have kids at home that are in school. Right. And they're asking you for help. I've got two daughters myself. Um, and that's why I'm in the office. Cause I just couldn't do it. Bless you. Um, but I think a lot of our parents are learning more technology they're being forced to, and our kids are being forced to. So I really, you know, if there's any silver lining in this whole COVID thing, it's that people are being forced to learn technology and it's gonna the, the advances that we're going to have, and not only what's available, but as far as tools go, but our, our community and our, our neighbors ability to use it is going to improve.

Speaker 2 (31:48):

And I think that's going to be a huge advancement for, you know, society as a whole, as far as technology goes, because we're, we're using it. Um, so I think we'll get there. Um, I think there will always be people though that can't just can't afford a computer. Um, the, you know, not every, I'm very lucky am I at my kids' schools? Um, every single kid has a laptop. It's a school issued laptop. Um, and I'll now a lot of schools are getting there or got there because of donations and we've always had it at our school. Um, so, you know, just very lucky, but that's just something that society as a whole needs to, you know, address yeah. It needs to address and improve.

Speaker 1 (32:32):

Yeah, absolutely. Um, yeah, it's like, you're, you're being forced to, so, you know, which is, I mean, in this, it is like you said, the silver lining, um, it's a tool that everyone can use and benefit from. Um, so let's, let's talk about, so you've walked us through the experience, but I guess I want to know, like, so who, so you said anyone can kind of make it a basic determination of who's job ready. So for example, even the greeter, when the person comes in and if they're not dressed appropriately, or you can tell that they're just don't know, you know, they're, they don't know how to put themselves together in a manner to come into the office. So you're let alone to go on for a job interview so they could make that type of assessment as well. Um, but talk to me about the onboarding process and with that onboarding process, is it the same across the board for people who are either unemployed and receiving unemployment benefits or those that are, um, employed, but want to, um, job growth or those customers who are seeking skill improvements, job training is the onboarding process.

Speaker 1 (33:38):

And I know you used orientation, so are you, are you, are you all more comfortable with using orientation as support as opposed to onboarding? We think the onboarding comes with the wit like registering for wit

Speaker 2 (33:51):

Um, well, yeah, onboarding isn't really a technique or terminology that we typically will use when it comes to customers, it would be more engagement. Um, and we engage them where they are. Um, we always want to address their immediate need first. And then I keep just repeating, you know, always with that employment focus, our purpose here is to get you a job, get your job, get you a better job or help you keep a job. So you'll hear that a lot workforce solutions here to get a job, keep a job, get a better job. Um, so it just depends on where they're at. So the term orientation that you'll hear a lot, um, we really that's, that's the terminology that we use, but it's really explaining services. It's not necessarily orientating them. It's explaining the services that we provide. And then if they have compliance that they have to meet to maintain benefits or stay in a program, then we'll explain that as well.

Speaker 1 (34:48):

Okay. Thank you for breaking that down. Cause you're right. Everybody uses like a different terminology, but I wanted to make sure that we had a correct for what you guys are actually calling it. So as an orientation and that's just explaining the services and who might, who was responsible for doing that? Is it each person? Is it that you seize or is it the PSRs or,

Speaker 2 (35:09):

Yeah. So if somebody is in here in response to an outreach letter, um, or because they're applying for some sort of benefits and they're mandated to work with our office, then that would be what we consider an orientation. But if somebody just comes in and they need help with something, whether it's, I need to apply for food stamps, you know, we'll get them on a computer and show them how to do it online. Or I need to find a food. I need to find food for my family. We'll get them on the phone or on, um, you know, with two, one, one, or we'll give them a flyer for a food bank that we know of, or, you know, it just depends on what it is that we're doing.

Speaker 1 (35:40):

Okay. So there's no specific like, okay, you come into the office, no matter what your need is, and we're going to sit you down in this area and you're going to watch a video or, or, or some sort of informational piece, um, that would be considered orientation. No,

Speaker 2 (35:56):

Um, no, it's, if they get outreached and they have to learn, they have to hear about the services that we offer and they have to hear about what they have to do to work with our office. Like if they're mandated to work with our office, that's when we would consider an orientation.

Speaker 1 (36:10):

Okay. Um, so only for like maybe the mandated.

Speaker 2 (36:13):

Yeah. But I mean, we would still explain services available. So like if somebody comes in and they're looking for some food for their family and we tell them about a food pantry, Oh, by the way, did you know that we have a job fair here? Every single Wednesday at 10 o'clock, you know, we always will try to upsell or to inform them the services that we provide so that they know that they don't only come here for, you know, resources. We're also here to help you find a job.

Speaker 1 (36:40):

Right. And what about for the young adults? Is that the same process with

Speaker 2 (36:46):

Yeah. Yeah. Um, and, and I think from more so with the young adults, um, we're always doing what we can to engage our community partners and to find the young people. You gotta, you gotta find them. And at 16 to 24 too, so you're talking really about two different populations. You've got your kiddos as I call them the 16 to 18 or 16 to 17, and then you have your 18 and up. They don't want to be called youth. You know, we call them young adults and you know, when I'm 24 years old, I think I know it all. And you know, I need different services, you know? So, um, we, we like it. I just keep saying, we always meet them where they're at and, and, and go from there. Um, always talk, uh, talk to them about their possibilities instead of, you know, somebody coming in and they've been a day laborer and they just need another day labor or job, or they just want to work a turnaround or whatever and say, well, you know what? It seems like you're really good at working with your hands. Have you ever thought about going to a welding certificate, you know, earning a welding certificate or showing them the progression of where, what their possibilities are, so that they're always looking for that better job.

Speaker 1 (37:48):

Now, let me ask you this. Um, so when we talk about the services, um, what current services that have already been moved to the virtual space online, um, do you feel either it's, that needs to be removed, that would be better handled in person? Cause they're trying to assess which ones at which services are better and per you know, online and need to be moved or the, are there any services that you know, of currently being offered online that it would benefit them to be, stay in person or be in person?

Speaker 2 (38:20):

I'm just always going to go back to the people that just need the extra help. I mean, I think there always needs to be an ability to do things in person. Um, there are people that need that one-on-one help, whether it's a cognitive or, uh, um, uh, values, maybe reason, um, where they just feel like this, the help that they get one-on-one with somebody or face to face in person with somebody is more valuable and it hits home a little bit better. Um, it's got more of a human feel, probably. Um, you know, when you're talking to somebody in, you know, we're getting very used to it because we have multiple meetings a day through this kind of thing and the kiddos are getting used to it. And, um, but I think for some people it's just, you know, this is weird talking to some, you know, talking to a monitor, you know, and 20 years ago I probably would have said the same thing, but, um, and for our older population, I just don't think they're, they they're, you know, they may be as comfortable.

Speaker 1 ([39:19](#)):

Okay. And then I know that, um, previous County, previous supervisor we spoke with said that it's essential to keep, um, the youth services, um, the young adult services in person, because there are things that you can pick up on, um, by speaking to them in person that they may not get

Speaker 2 ([39:38](#)):

It is. But at the same time, a young person wants to, there's so fast, you know, you want to catch them where you can. And if it comes down to having to find a ride, to go to an office and do this at a certain time, they may not do it, you know, but if there's a, here's a link, click it, I'll see you in five minutes and, you know, you can FaceTime with somebody and because that's the technology that you're using now, if we can do a tick tock video, that's going to show you how to fill out a job application, they're going to get it. It is going to go viral. If it's, you know, we can get the right person involved in it, you know, let's get Joe that J-Lo to show you a dance and how to do the thing that they're going to like that, you know, so it just really depends on the individual.

Speaker 1 ([40:17](#)):

Okay. And what services, what service areas do you envision being accessible online that are currently in person that you like that you think can be moved online?

Speaker 2 ([40:28](#)):

Um, well, I mean, we're doing everything online now. Really the only thing that we're doing in person, if somebody needs to come and physically pick up a gas card, if somebody doesn't have the ability to sign a document, um, through what we're using doc DocuSign or some of the offices you're using Panda dockets, you know, technologies to do digital signatures on things. Um, I think the homeless population is going to continue to be underserved. So being able to connect with them, um, if they're, you know, and that's why our community partners partnerships are so key, because if there's, if we have stuff on a computer and we can get salvation army to put some computers at their shelter, and we have things that are available online because they can't get to us, then that's that many more people that we can reach. So I'm really an advocate to moving a lot of things online, um, or keeping a lot of things online because I really think that we can do so much more.

Speaker 2 ([41:29](#)):

Um, we've really realized this is as a management. Um, we have been able to become so much more consistent with meeting with our staff, um, in a consistent basis and have more productive meetings. Um, and even the leadership, like the managers meeting together with our leadership. Um, it's a lot

easier to jump on teams than it is to, you know, get the whole group to drive to one central location and sit in traffic on the way home and work-life balance is so much easier. Um, you know, I don't have to sit in traffic for two hours coming from the Astrodome office to get down to Galveston County. Um, you know, and I don't have, I'm not going to be cooking dinner at seven o'clock after meeting, you know, once a week. So it's actually, it's really helped.

Speaker 1 (42:14):

That's good. That's good. So, um, I know we're going to be wrapping this up shortly. I just have two more questions. Um, so one of them is, and you kinda mentioned it now teams, but what online portals are you used frequently by career office staff? We use teams and we use zoom. Okay.

Speaker 2 (42:32):

And that's what the customer, that's what the interaction. Yeah. Um, but I will tell you teams, um, is the one that we primarily use through workforce solutions. Zoom is something, some of our other partner agencies we'll use that we'll use as well, just like you guys. Um, and then, uh, Baker, Ripley has zoom. So like some of the trainings and meetings that we have with just the Baker, Ripley contractor side, um, we'll do zoom. Um, but it really has increased my ability to manage my team, um, because I have different chat channels that I have, you know, staff assistance, collaboration. Here's a fun channel, no work is allowed, you know, in this one, let's just talk about, you know, gifts and, you know, fun, things like that. So it helps with staff morale. It helps with communication. I just love it.

Speaker 1 (43:17):

Okay. And then are there other, um, applications that you all use internally that we can, that you're constantly on daily?

Speaker 2 (43:27):

Not that we're a constant appointee of course is the huge one. Um, one drive, we use one drive a lot Smartsheets. We use a lot. Um, I know some of my team likes, for instance, my PSR team, when we first went remote, they were using group me. I think it's a Google

Speaker 1 (43:47):

Docs. Yeah.

Speaker 2 (43:49):

Yeah. They were using that to chat back and forth with each other.

Speaker 1 (43:54):

Yeah. Okay. So that's basically, so when they're in a wit, you guys use wit Oh yeah. Course.

Speaker 2 (44:00):

Yeah. Work in Texas. All of our, all of our online systems, DocuWare, um, facts to communicate, um, financial aid communication systems. Um, no we have about 20 different systems that we use

Speaker 1 (44:13):

Twist. Um, yeah, I think we went over that. We, um, that was one that I was going to mention twist. Okay. Um, so have a customers expressed, um, things that they felt could be possibly solved only have one of their main complaints have been customers.

Speaker 2 (44:33):

Um, um, there are some that still want that face to face. There's, there's always that customer that would kind of, you know, several customers that would come into the office every single week to see the same person over and over again, and not necessarily have a productive meeting. They just, you know, you never know what's going on in somebody else's life. And that smile that they see in our office once a week might get them through to the next week kind of thing. So we have those, um, not to say that we couldn't move that to the technology side because, you know, they can meet with them on, on teams, through an appointee, um, and, and do the same thing. Um, I think a big disconnect is, is the, the, jobs versus unemployment piece, um, because unemployment is Texas workforce commission. So when somebody applies for unemployment benefits and as you go through, I don't know how many people you've talked to.

Speaker 2 (45:27):

Um, you may hear the word work source and work sources where workforce solutions was probably 20 years ago. Um, but there are generations that have used our services. It's still call us WorkSource. And the WorkSource was a place that you went and it was very, um, um, how do I say this kind of public's assistance type, more resource driven? Um, not to say. And I've only been with workforce solutions since 2010 with a little break in between. Um, it seems, we've always been very employment focused, but we, like I said, the generational, you know, grandma and mom and kids and, um, just certain populations have used this year after generation after generation. Um, and think of us a little differently and they still want to have that piece. They still want to come to us. Mm. Um, okay. And they don't really see us as, this is where I go to get a job necessarily.

Speaker 2 (46:31):

This is where I need to go to get help, but we always lead them. Like I keep saying, we always meet them where we are, where they are, and we always lead them to that. So that, um, that employment piece, um, so getting people to understand when you're applying, applying, sorry, I kind of went on a warm hole, but going from yeah. So you're coming from, um, I lost my job and I need to file for unemployment. People still think the WorkSource is where you go for that or workforce solutions where you go for that. We don't have any access to workforce. I mean, two TWCs unemployment. We can help you apply for the benefits as far as answering questions that are in the application. This is what they mean by this. Um, somewhat, we do have some training on how to assist people with unemployment.

Speaker 2 (47:17):

We also had a team when we went remote that we're, we do have TWC employees that work in all of our offices, alongside contractor employees. Okay. Um, VR is TWC, but they don't do anything with unemployment because they work with individuals with disabilities, but it's hard for customers to understand what all of those pieces are and how we fit together. So, um, when somebody loses a job and they want to apply for benefits and even you'll see it on the news, I noticed that when we wouldn't be closed and there everybody started not closed, but we stopped bringing people into the office at everybody was millions of people a month were applying for unemployment. Somebody would show up in front of them. One of our offices I'm here in front of the unemployment office. No, you're not yes. Of

workforce solutions. And so we've worked really hard through our social media campaigns and working with ABC 13 and Fox 26 news here locally.

Speaker 2 (48:12):

Um, trying to make sure that people understand where the jobs people, um, come to us to help with that. And so that's the major complaint is people get so frustrated because they can't get answers. There's, you know, the databases are overwhelmed. The phone systems are overwhelmed and they can't get through to somebody at the unemployment office, which there really isn't an unemployment office everything's virtual. Um, and, but we get that because you know, where the person in the community that they come to for that, and we do the best that we can. And like I said, we did have people on this, on the UI project that helped with that, and they are maintaining some of their permissions. Um, but it really, our hands are tied as far as doing as much as we want to, because we need to focus on getting an employee again, we don't have access to those things.

Speaker 1 (48:59):

Well, no, and I know what you're talking about because that's what our firm works on. We worked with, we worked with the external communications with the ABC 13 and Fox and making sure that, you know, the, um, that, that people understood the role, you know, branding workforce solutions individually, outside of, like you said, unemployment, unemployment office. Cause you're right. That they would constantly go to show the workforce solutions office for new stories. And it's like, no, that's not the unemployment. Yeah. So, um, so yeah. Thank you for, um, including that too. I do have two more questions just because you mentioned it. So in your office, you have the contract, you have the, um, contractors and you have the liaison for the contract.

Speaker 2 (49:46):

We have contractors. So I'm contractor staff. I work for Baker Ripley. Right, right. Yeah. So I have, um, and everybody's in every role. So every single one of my roles except for greeters are both Baker, Ripley staff, both my program assistants are Baker, Ripley staff, but I have one resource it's contracted this Baker, Ripley, and once TWC or we call employments or IES staff, employers, employment services, staff, um, which is TWC. Um, we have, um, two employment counselors that are Baker Ripley and to employ employment counselors that are, yes. Um, both of my supervisors are Baker Ripley, but every office is different. I mean, it's just, you know, there's, I'm sure there's a certain percentage that every contractor has to have a ratio. Yeah. Um, and then all the offices are okay. And they change

Speaker 1 (50:31):

From time to have any recruiters in your office.

Speaker 2 (50:34):

I do, yes. I'm sorry. So I do have a recruiter, um, Carolyn, and so she directly reports to our recruiting manager. Okay. Um, but we collaborate with her and our business consultant, um, Terry, you know, on a monthly basis to talk about the employment side, you know, the employer because employers are really our number one country or customer, if it weren't for the employers, with the jobs who wouldn't be able to help the other people. So

Speaker 1 (50:58):

Exactly. Yep. Okay. Alrighty. And we have interviews set up with the recruiters too, so we'll get that aspect from, but thank you so much for your time. Really appreciate it. Very informative. Um, you're able to break down a lot of it better. So thank you so much. Um, and if you have any questions or anything, please feel free to email me. And if I think I need to follow up on anything, then I will contact you. Okay. Sounds good. Thank you. Have a great afternoon. Thanks. Bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Jacqueline Felix, Career Office Manager

Workforce Solutions – Astrodome

Contractor

BakerRipley

Interview conducted

February 26, 2021

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

And, uh, and reference back if we need to, for any questions. So for the record, I just ask, ask you to go ahead and state your name and your position

Speaker 2 ([00:10](#)):

Jacqueline Felix office manager Workforce Solutions.

Speaker 1 ([00:16](#)):

Great. So first question is, describe the roles within the career service office. So that's

Speaker 2 ([00:26](#)):

Yeah, yeah. Then the roles in the career office, um, we have different roles, but we have one purpose and that purpose is to help customers find a job, keep a job, or get a better job. Right. Um, the girls are defined by physician, but with my office, I don't separate it by position. I only look at the overall though. So as customers come in, as we see customers virtually, then the goal for everyone, my message is we are here to put people to work. Now you do have the defined positions, the personal service representatives, the Pete program assistants, the seas. But my message has always been, no matter the role in the office, we still have the common goal. So my, maybe a little different than the other offices.

Speaker 1 ([01:21](#)):

Well, just for the purposes, like I said, I'm thinking of us. We don't know anything about this. So we do need those roles broken down, like you said, okay. So if you can break down those roles for us and what they, in the services they provide, each role provides, I know it's, you've got it a holistically, but just, we need to know based on, and what tools does each role use. So for instance, the greeters what's there, what services do they offer? And they may be cross-trained to do other things, but just technically just what do they do? Um, and what, what, uh, software or what systems do they use consistently?

Speaker 2 ([02:00](#)):

Okay, got it. Got it. Um, so the greeter role is to welcome customers and greet and route customers to different positions in the office. Um, they utilize a software scheduling software, um, that we have, whereas when you come into the office, then you're given a buzzer and your number is called to see someone. So, you know, I look at them as the face of the office. Um, so they're greeting in routing, greeting, and routing is how I look at that position.

Speaker 1 ([02:37](#)):

Uh, pointy, what system do they use? Is it a pointy?

Speaker 2 ([02:42](#)):

Yes. Today in our world today. Yes. Everyone utilizes a pointy. Okay. I was talking as if we were like in an office then of course, with different, but yeah, everyone, every world that let's mention, utilizes a point.

Speaker 1 ([02:57](#)):

Okay. Okay.

Speaker 2 (03:00):

The next role is the program assistant and, and the responsibilities or that particular role is to answer inbound calls that are coming inside of the Astrodome office, uh, and route those calls to the appropriate staff as well. Um, our next role is the employment counselors and they are here to help folks find a job, keep a job and get a better job. Uh, they are utilizing the database that we call twist, um, as well as, uh, appointee in order to service customers. Our next role is the personal service representative. And they work with customers who have barriers to employment, and that could be childcare or transportation and, uh, training. Um, but in Bay carrier, a caseload where they have to maintain contact, um, weekly, um, our monthly contact with those customers to help them meet their, their overall goal, which is employment. Um, our next role is resource room specialist.

Speaker 2 (04:11):

And the role of that, of that position is, as customers are coming inside of the office, then they're assisting them with uploading resumes. Um, they're assisting them in completing online applications. So as the role as it is today, they, they are conducting curbside services and they also utilize a pointy, okay. Curbside services is where customers need to pick up our drop off. Our customers need waste detail. So they're using, um, they mainly use the mainframe TWC to print out wage reports. Um, all the roles that are mentioned, everyone utilizes work in Texas, uh, which is the state's database of record to help, help, uh, customers find them employment. Um, our next role that I have here are my recruiters and yeah, that role is responsible in, um, helping employers find job seekers to feel postings that are placed in work, Texas.

Speaker 2 (05:19):

Um, our next role is business consultant and with the business consultant, um, they are, are the face for the employers. So they are the ones who are soliciting the employers to enter their postings or their positions in work in Texas. So they're working hand in hand with the recruiters as well. And again, everyone is utilizing work in Texas ahead. I'm sorry. Go ahead. Um, I also had, um, a regional navigator and the regional navigator's role is to conduct, uh, different sessions workshops, uh, for job seekers. So resume workshops, interviewing workshops, how to land a job, uh, things of that nature.

Speaker 1 (06:11):

Do they use any particular software as well as it wit as well, or,

Speaker 2 (06:15):

Uh, work in Texas? Um, they do not use a pointy, but they do utilize work in Texas, uh, as well. And they may have their own software that they use, uh, where they can duct. I'm not to sure. Um, um, they create their training materials. Um, I would have to find that out cause they create a lot of training materials for the system.

Speaker 1 (06:41):

Okay. And just one other, I just want to go, go back to the personal, um, the resource, uh, specialists. I believe that snow shoes I've got that one. Now the personal service reps. Do they also use twists?

Speaker 2 (06:56):

Yes, yes, yes, yes. Employment counselors and resource from specialists and the greeters because they utilize and looking customers up and twist as well.

Speaker 1 (07:06):

Okay. So that's pretty basic that wit and twist in a poaching. Okay. Okay. Got it. So I heard you mentioned, um, it's a D you don't have vocational rehabilitation at your office, right? No, ma'am okay. All right. And then I heard you mentioned curbside, uh, the curbside service. So your office, are you receiving customers, but not inside, just at the curb, correct? Correct. Okay. Okay. Um, I know there was a question Abby had about the wifi usage in the parking lot. I believe Abby, you had that. Yeah. I was just curious about, um, if customers, you find that they're using the wifi service, um, if they have their own devices or are you finding a curbside service that customers might need to borrow any devices?

Speaker 2 (07:56):

Right. I have noticed, um, after we closed, uh, daily, that customers stand in front of the office to utilize the wifi services. Now in all of the offices, the footprint was expanded, um, like with my office up until where the street meets the parking lot. Um, so I have noticed, you know, walk ups that stand in front of the office, but not really paying attention to those who are utilizing it inside their cars. Um, we never had a request to utilize our laptop or a particular service, but that is available if needed.

Speaker 1 (08:37):

Do you think that customers know that it's available?

Speaker 2 (08:41):

Probably not. Probably not, but if a customer tells us that they are having challenges, then the staff know that this is a service that we can provide.

Speaker 1 (08:52):

Okay. Okay. Um, and excuse me, if I go on meet from time to time, I have someone there's one working next door yard. Um, so, um, pre COVID I want to, I want to ask you about if you could walk us through the customer experience pre COVID.

Speaker 2 (09:15):

Okay. So pre COVID customers, of course, we're coming inside of the office. So customer arrives and they of course are greeted by our greeters and asked, you know, welcome to workforce solutions. What services do you need today? And that's when the customer would say, Hey, I'm going to go to training or I need childcare assistance, or just the basics. I'm looking for a job. Uh, so that customer is placed on our wait list. And there are seeing first in, first out. Um, so as the counselors are of course looking at the wait list and they're going down the wait list and pulling those customers as they come in, they would bring the customer back to their desk and that's where they would provide the service or customers will come in and they're self-sufficient and they just need to utilize the resource room. I need to complete an application. I need to pronounce some resumes. So the resource from specialist is there to assist in those areas. And then, you know, with the offices, we have a lot of, um, uh, material of other resources of agencies that can assist with a lot of different things. So you have those customers that will come in and say, Hey, I need to get, you know, a couple of, uh, periodicals that you have, uh, cause I'm looking for work and they will do that as well.

Speaker 1 (10:38):

Okay. So at, so who determines, who is, um, who isn't or is job ready?

Speaker 2 (10:46):

Um, that's the employment counselor or the personal service representative? Uh, just having a conversation with that customer. So if you came in and you sit down and you don't have a resume, um, you're kinda in disarray on what you want to do at that point, then that's the counselors and, you know, responsibility to kind of guide that conversation, uh, to, okay. We may need to do, you know, some, um, you know, some, uh, soft interview questions we may need to revamp your resume. So right then and there, you know, I will be doing you a disservice if I give you a posting to apply to when I know in fact that you're not ready yet. So maybe that we need to update your resume because your resume and this did happen five pages long, and it has your picture on the resume. So things of that nature, if we see, and you can tell, honestly, you can tell by someone's conversation if they're job ready or not, but it's definitely the counselor's responsibility.

Speaker 1 (11:47):

Okay. And then what about those? So that would be an experience for those who are, um, seeking either unemployed and seeking employment, those who are walk-ups. Um, and even those who are employed, but looking for, uh, a better paying job. Yes. So what about the, what are the mandatories, do you have mandatory, mandatory customers who it's mandatory that they check in with workforce solutions office?

Speaker 2 (12:16):

Yes. The state assistant customers, the tenant can SAP customers that are mandated to work, uh, with workforce solutions. Um, but still is the same goal that you have to help them bond employment.

Speaker 1 (12:30):

Okay. And with the snap and TANF employees, do they employers, customers, I'm sorry. Do they, uh, are they seen by the, uh, customer by the counselors or do they go with case management

Speaker 2 (12:45):

And see that's why, uh, what, what I was stating earlier, my office is a little different. So normally in, in, in an office they would be directed to a personal service representative, but because my office, we do so much cross-training, you can see an employment counselor for those same services, although the roles are different. We've, cross-trained so much, it doesn't matter who you see able to provide that service.

Speaker 1 (13:14):

That's good. That's good. And the services that are currently offered online, uh, well, that are not offered online. Can you tell us what you feel should be online at this point, or it could be online and what you'd like to see from the day to day encounters that you have with the customers and the employer from the, um, employer employee perspective as well.

Speaker 2 (13:37):

Right. Um, I think we've really done a good job. Uh, when we transitioned over to a pointy where we are providing all of the services, I'm trying to think of the requests that we have, that we get from

customers. And honestly, the only request that we do get is I need to use your computer because I need to print out. I want to do it myself. I don't want to give you my documents, but I suppose, as opposed to job search, uh, our rapid reemployment, uh, orientations that we do, um, we actually transitioned very well. My opinion in providing those services, uh, virtually if that's what you're asking. Yes. Okay. Okay.

Speaker 1 (14:24):

Well, it's, it's been successful. There's no complaint in that, in that area or nothing you that you all add from the work perspective also would like to see

Speaker 2 (14:35):

None at all, because I'm sitting here thinking and, um, you know, just looking at the services that are in appointee and because I was on that group that developed that, um, not really cause we covered everything honestly, uh, from a customer's perspective that if you want to look for job, you know, we can do that for you. If you need to do an orientation, we can do that for you. If you need work support, we can do that for you. Those are the three main requests that we get all the time. And so far, honestly, um, this office, we have not seen any complaints.

Speaker 1 (15:12):

Okay. Um, so, but I think that we are getting an overall understanding that it is the customers, um, not having access to technology on their person, just that they may not have a computer. They may only be working from their smartphone. So are you getting, do you get feedback like that from the customers?

Speaker 2 (15:33):

Yes. Yes. Not a lot, but we have heard that before, where I only have a phone and I need to fill out this online financial application and I'm unable to upload documents. So that's when, why can I come into your office? Cause I need to do the application on a computer, but again, we have the tablets. So a choice is customer. I do understand if you're able to come up, I can give you the surface tablet and you can, you can complete, you know, the action that you're trying to do at that time. So it's all about giving options, you know, when you come to those challenges because you do hear because a majority of, especially our young adult population, everything is on the phone, every single thing on the phone. Um, so, and you have some that can work it, you know, like a Wiz, then you have others, you know, that say, you know, I need that assistance. And that's when we have, uh, four tablets here. And that's when that option is given in. Uh, if you can come up here, you know, you have some folks that just can't get to an office, then it's up to my counselors to do a teams, meeting a zoom meeting and walk them through step by step. And we understand that it may take a little longer, but again, we are trying to assist this customer to complete this task.

Speaker 1 (16:55):

Gotcha. Okay. So how often are they utilizing teams and zooms in your, in your office? Daily. Daily. Okay. And I'm sorry.

Speaker 2 (17:08):

Um, this office is a pilot office for zoom, right offices in the system. So appointee from my office is tied to zoom. So any customers that request a virtual orientation then with my office, with a pointy, a link, a zoom link is automatically sent out. So that customer has a choice to either conduct by zoom or conduct

by phone. But still even with that, I would say at least 80 to 85% of the customer still, rather than conduct any service by phone,

Speaker 1 (17:42):

They're still wanting to connect it by phone. I mean, they're just used to having that personal. Absolutely. So does that present challenges when the employment counselor is trying to understand what they're seeing on her screen and what stuff that they're in in the process and having to describe it by phone, rather than being able to see firsthand,

Speaker 2 (18:06):

It is a challenge because you are, depending on someone describing the situation to you and it all, and you know, all the ways somebody missed something and you still get error message after error message at the error message. And then, you know, we have to start, you know, having some options now, you know, because we can't complete this then are you able to come up here or can you have a friend join us? And then we would go from there and that can help you out.

Speaker 1 (18:38):

Do you think that the reticence with the zoom links is because they don't feel comfortable in using it? Or do you think it's like a technology thing where they don't know how to use it?

Speaker 2 (18:51):

I think technology, you know, what I, what I hear, um, we don't want to move into this age of only using technology. Right. Um, when we transitioned to teleworking, um, the system, you know, I had never heard of Microsoft teams. Right. I've heard of zoom because the school districts use zoom, zoom is more popular, but I'm like, okay, what is this teams? And what is it all about? But again, the knowledge and learning about it, you know, I use it every day. So I think just not knowing we have a segment of the population and I just use an example, my mom, she is not going to get on zoom. She is not going to get on herself teams and do anything virtual. So you do still have that segment of the population. Still not call it old school. They just like talking to you. They like seeing you in person. They like the sticky notes and all of that good stuff. So yes, I do see it. It's just the challenge of people just really accepting it. And just rather pick up the phone and just call,

Speaker 1 (19:59):

Are you finding that from young people, the young adults are, they what's the percentage,

Speaker 2 (20:07):

Our young adults, you know, I would say out of 20 appointments that we have, it may be 15 out of 20, maybe virtual young adults are more comfortable with virtual, as opposed to like our young adult age is 16 to 24, right. Um, gen X is comfortable with the phone, you know, so, but as we go up in our ages, then we find that no, I would rather you call me, you know, I would rather you pick up the phone for generations. You know, I did a training on generations. You would find the different generations, how accustomed they are and using a cell phone and responding to things virtually and technology.

Speaker 1 (20:54):

I do want to go back to the appointee system. What has been the feedback from, uh, your service agents at, uh, the, in the office about appointee? Any feedback?

Speaker 2 (21:07):

Yes, absolutely. So when we transitioned to a pointy, because I'm on that team, I'm the liaison for the contractor. Um, I solicited feedback from all the offices of back in December. So the, the number one response was, I know what I'm doing for the day. It makes my time more manageable, as opposed to when we were in the office. You don't know, you know, you knew what you were getting, but you had to get prepared for it. As, as appointee. I know I have three snap orientations to, uh, rapid employment orientations and one job search, right? And the appointments are filled up. Like with my office, we fill up quick, I already have appointments for next week. So at the end of your day, I'm already looking at the next day and getting mentally prepare of what I need to do. It makes you more organized. It makes honestly less conversation that that's off topic with appointee. Whereas if customers were coming in, they sit at the counselor's desk, they may be talking about the rockets. They may be talking about the Texans. So when I know I have another appointment coming up in the next hour, Hey, I'm going to keep it about the business. I'm here to help you find a job. I don't have time to talk about the Texas James harden leaving and all of that,

Speaker 2 (22:39):

Right. I am here to help you find the job. I'm here to do the snap orientation, so on and so forth. So it manages the staff time more effectively, where they're able to provide that service. That was the biggest response that I received back, um, that they like it upon. She still has some kinks and because it's new and it's more on the, on the backend side, the tech side, but as opposed to knowing what you do for the day, looking at future appointments, planning your days ahead and allowing follow-up is the feedback that I received from staff.

Speaker 1 (23:18):
So overall it's been a positive.

Speaker 2 (23:20):
Absolutely, absolutely.

Speaker 1 (23:22):
So we haven't seen a pointy. We've just heard that it had been implemented, but you had mentioned earlier that people could go in obviously select a time, but then they could select from some services. W is there like a dropdown and if so, what's in the dropdown,

Speaker 2 (23:38):
Um, it is, do you want me to share my screen and I can show it to you?

Speaker 1 (23:41):
That would be awesome because we're, we're really trying to get an understanding of. And so, um, you know, and I'm also curious if like a customer is choosing to come in for one thing, and then the conversation kind of evolves to, um, something completely different than the customer even thought that they might be coming in for.

Speaker 2 (23:59):

Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Uh, one second, let me bring it up. We'll see it on the screen. It says workforce solutions in the different offices.

Speaker 1 (24:19):

Yes. Well, how does a customer get to this page here?

Speaker 2 (24:23):

So from, and they just revamped. They meaning, uh, HJC just revamped our, uh, webpage Wurk solutions.com and I'll show that to you. And actually it was just done yesterday. So let me hat off the press. Okay. So let me stop sharing and then I'll show you this.

Speaker 3 (24:57):

Can you all see the screen? Yes.

Speaker 2 (25:00):

So this is brand new, this little section right here. This happened yesterday. So you click on scheduling appointment and then you click on the office that you are wanting to, uh, to schedule the appointment with. So if I choose Astrodome, there's a little button now that says, make an appointment. So now when I choose make an appointment, it goes to the, uh, screen that we were looking at before. Are you seeing the second screen that popped up? Oh, I need to unshare and share. Yeah,

Speaker 1 (25:38):

No, no. We can see this. We can see this job. Yeah.

Speaker 2 (25:41):

Okay. So now as a job seeker, now this is for employers. And if an employer chooses this, it goes to the business consultant, the employer division of workforce solutions. Right. But if I'm interested in looking for work, I need a job. Then of course, these are the two options we thought it was a, a great idea to, um, isolate the young adults because we have performance measures for young adults specifically, right? Or if I'm interested in an educational opportunity or financial aid, these are the options under this particular category. Uh, orientations, we have to our unemployment orientation along with our snap, the only one that's missing is TANIF. And it's because the state has not opened up TANIF and made it mandatory for them to start participating with an office, uh, with job search. And then on the other is wage claim, which we get a ton of requests for this.

Speaker 2 (26:47):

And that means that, uh, the job seeker has applied for some state assistance with a state agency. And they need to see if they have income, uh, within a certain time period. So say for instance, I was interested in job search. Then now as the customer, I am completing the information for the appointment. So with a pointy in orange is the available dates that the staff person has. And it has the name right here. Um, my staff person Adriana. So if I click on March 1st, it gives the available times. So it's up to the customer to choose whatever time. And then now as the customer, I'm gonna go all the way through. I just won't say that I'm filling out my information that will appear in a pointy. And then I'm going to show you that

Speaker 4 (27:44):

It's supposed to be really nice also on my phone. I'm looking at my phone while you're talking too. And it was translated quite well.

Speaker 2 (27:51):

Yes, yes, absolutely. And we wanted to make sure, because again, a majority of the customers conduct a lot of business on their cell phone. So this is where the customer chooses virtual or phone. So with the other workforce solutions offices, other than Astrodome, it would say Microsoft teams here, but with mine, of course, zoom is already set in place. So I'll choose phone. I'll put my number in, um, this is a few more details. It's not required that a customer can tell us about themselves. Uh, characteristics are there, but it's not mandatory. Um, click next. This is the appointment with Tiffany it change. Remember we started out with Adriana, but I kid you not upon to work so quick. While more than likely I was setting this appointment, an appointment was already set for Adriana. So that's why the name changed. So now March 1st, eight o'clock Tiffany's Zachary. So I'm a hear confirm. So what happens with appointee? The customer receives, we call it a booking confirmation email with this information in the email. Also this information goes to the staff outlook calendar. So now no one should miss this appointment, customer or staff. So remember this is March 1st at eight o'clock. So now I'm going to go to a pointy itself.

Speaker 4 (29:28):

Okay.

Speaker 2 (29:30):

Do you guys see, okay, so this is this always say, this is my life and color represents a service, right? Um, so with pointy, we have a mosque space area for those of us who remember my space. And it just gives you a summary of all your appointments for today. Right? But I, I did a majority of the training. So what I informed staff go to the calendar view, change it to staff. And then that's where the, of course my screen is the entire office, but that's where the staff would see all of their appointments for today. So that's where I spoke about it makes your day, you know what you're doing. So if I look at Adriana, she has green, she has three jobs search, and then she has two, uh, unemployment orientations for today. So that's when the staff, they know what they're doing. So I can even go, remember that appointment I made on March 1st, I can go to March 1st. And that appointment was made with Tiffany's Zachary, I'm going in. And I'm gonna go in and counsel it real quick. So back to my calendar, cause it didn't refresh back to staff. Let's change it to March 1st again.

Speaker 2 (31:01):

All right. So Tiffany, Zachary let's scroll over and it wouldn't say eight o'clock. This is me. This is the appointment I just made. So when you click on the appointment, remember that those details I entered in, that's where it appears here. And you see the zoom link. Other offices don't have that. So when the customer receives the booking confirmation, they see this link. So they just click on the link, enter the pen. And we're both on the screen now, and it's a lot more to it, but I'll stop there. That's where this is how the staff view upon tea every single day.

Speaker 1 (31:43):

Okay. And what happens if a customer needs to either change their appointment or they miss their appointment?

Speaker 2 ([31:51](#)):

So what happens with the customer if they need to, in the booking confirmation, there is a council and a reschedule button. So the customer has the option of doing either or, or if they need to, if they miss their appointment, because what we're going to do, if you say that you wanted to conduct the appointment by phone, I'm calling you, I'm calling you and you're not answering. Then we're going to put that you were a no show. The customer is able to go back in and schedule a new appointment.

Speaker 1 ([32:24](#)):

Okay,

Speaker 2 ([32:30](#)):

Run the reports side up warranty. You can do a lot with appointee, but from a staff perspective, this is what, this is the gist of what they see every single day. Is it a pointy

Speaker 1 ([32:40](#)):

Offer? Like any sort of like help, meaning like when you're on it, is there like a, you know, an automate or any sort of like chat kind of thing. If somebody has a question of how to use it or are they kind of just figuring out themselves the customer, how to do what you just said, cancel, remain, you know, that kind of thing.

Speaker 2 ([32:55](#)):

Yes. It's the latter. Just figuring it out instead of that is because it's steadily improving and new enhancements are being done. That's actually a good idea, uh, to have that mechanism inside appointee for staff to utilize or even customers to utilize. If they had questions.

Speaker 1 ([33:15](#)):

That was one of the, uh, things that one of the comments that's been coming up if possible, like a chat, a live chat, um, would be good. Um, I do have a few more questions since we're running. We're at 10 Oh five right now. So I do have a few more questions. Um, and I may need to follow back up with you, um, following this. Cause like I said, we're running short on our time, but, um, you did mention orientation. So from my end, you can tell me if your office does it differently. What does your orientation look like? Because, and it may be different for the various different, various different customers, but, um, just a basic overview of your orientation.

Speaker 2 ([34:00](#)):

So with, uh, the snap and the, uh, we call them our EFCA orientations, the unemployment orientations, those customers are send communication that they're mandated to conduct an orientation. So the customers are scheduling their appointments through the booking website that I showed you. And then the staff then ducks the orientation either by phone number virtual. And we're just going over the services. You know, again, remember, you know, with us, we're just talking about looking for work. We try to stay away and not talk so much of the compliance piece. Cause you know, when both, you know, with the snap customers, we are informing them. You do have to turn in the job search law. You do have to look for a work 30 hours a week, uh, turned the log in on Monday. And then, you know what happens if you don't do that, you can lose your benefits if you don't turn into log every single Monday.

Speaker 2 (34:52):

So that's the conversation. Then the staff goes into work in Texas, and that's when we're looking at your profile, looking at your resume and providing, uh, services and job referrals with our [inaudible] customers unemployment, then we strictly are talking about services. These are more your six figure incomes that have been laid off. So they have a different perspective with everything. And they're not trying to stay on the phone with you either. Right? I can do my own job search. I'm just with you because you made me come basically. And we just talk about services and we talk about the training opportunities because of course we have training opportunities as well and almost all the time I got it. Let me sign it and then I'm good. And then of course we do a follow-up every 30 days with the snap customers. We follow up once a week with the unemployment customers. We follow up once a month.

Speaker 1 (35:51):

Okay. And they're filing this with TWC,

Speaker 2 (35:54):

Correct? Texas workforce commission. Yes ma'am.

Speaker 1 (35:58):

Okay. And what about the customer who's seeking financial aid?

Speaker 2 (36:02):

So for scholarship assistance, of course there is an initial assessment that's conducted by staff, you know, and probably the other officers that will be conducted by a PSR, but for us, any of my staff can do that ECR PSR. So we're just seeing suitability, honestly, you know, everyone can't be a nurse, everyone can't be a teacher, right? So it's just the way you answer the questions based off of suitability is where my conversation, I'm a guide you to, you know, you may be good with your hands. You know, I may guide you say, Hey, you thought about being a welder. So it's not about a suitability conversation. And then of course we have an online financial aid application. This is the compliance part of the conversation that has to be submitted along with six months of income, along with your I nine documents. But our initial assessments, which has to happen first, we are kind of guiding that conversation because we do get customers. They don't know what they want to do, but I want to go back to school and that's when we can redirect them to WIRK solutions. Look at our, you know, our training resources and kind of dive into our high skill, high growth occupations. We only work with certain training providers and we just guide them to look at different areas, to make a decision

Speaker 1 (37:22):

That online app it goes through where, what system,

Speaker 2 (37:27):

The online it's it's, um, it's a URL, it's a web address that we've been using since January. Um, so it goes it's I can pull it up. I don't know the web address, but it goes directly to the support office. Once the, uh, financial aid application is completed, you can actually actually connect to it from workforce solutions, WIRK solutions website,

Speaker 1 (37:52):

Tammy. I can give you lots of information on that. We actually designed and produced it. Oh, okay. That's fine. I was kind of asking that for, for you guys. Okay. Directly into DocuWare. Oh, undocumented. Okay. Um, and then just to wrap up the questions, um, are there, what, are there any other services, anything that you can think of that we've missed? Is there anything else you'd like to add about the online experience?

Speaker 2 ([38:19](#)):

One thing I would like to add, and I saw this just recently with another board area, uh, with Southeast Texas, if we were able, if I had a wishlist, if we were able to, to isolate youth services, instead of having it so convoluted, but all of our other information. So because when you're dealing with young adults and trying to grab their attention and try to provide information, when you go to Wurk solutions, everything is just mixed up together, right? So with this other board area, they have their youth information, you jobs, youth, everything, youth is actually a separate website, still connected to WIRK solutions, but I can give you that website address and you can go directly to these services instead of going to our main website and you got to dig and find everything. And I just told my staff, I was like, man, if we had something like this to market, to young adults, to make it more interesting then, okay, we're doing something because if you're trying to search and find information and trying to research, then I've lost a young adult. Cause they're not going to spend that much time trying to look for things. So if I really had a wishlist, I would just separate our new services market that totally different from the overall website.

Speaker 1 ([39:47](#)):

Okay. All right. I think, do you have any other questions, Abby? Well, I got it. Just as you mentioned about new services and trying to understand like your audience segments, um, are the services different for youth, um, in the 16 to 24, do they just need different things?

Speaker 2 ([40:12](#)):

Um, they just have to meet a challenge to employment. Um, they still receive the same services, which are a paid internship program. Um, we have the scholarship assistance affords, which is available to everyone. Um, they have OJT, which again, that's available to everyone. The only difference is you have as a young adult, you have to meet a challenge to employment. So some examples are, do you, are you homeless? Uh, do you have a criminal background? Uh, do you need workforce solutions assistance in order to gain employment or training? So as we are talking to the young adults, then they must meet that challenge. And the only difference honestly, is where the money comes from. We tend to have more young adult funds than adult. Why? Because we need more young adults to use our services in which, you know, you talk to young adults today, what's workforce solutions.

Speaker 2 ([41:08](#)):

I'd never heard of workforce solutions, you know? So we gotta do a better job in the marketing, our services. Because again, when you talk to those who are older than some still think we are the old unemployment office where we're TC, Texas employment commission and that's way back in the day. Right? So I think honestly, we need to do a better job in because you don't see us on commercials. You don't see us on billboards. So how, as a system I'm talking about how can we improve our marketing to get more people aware of our services? I think that's the overall takeaway, you know, that I always talk about, about the system itself.

Speaker 1 ([41:57](#)):

I think that some of it's generational too. Um, because if you've been here long enough, then you kinda know that, you know, it was like you said, previously, people always wanna associate it with the, um, Texas work. Th did you have a TWC? Sorry. Oh, I'm going to get my unemployment benefits their hair. No,

Speaker 2 (42:17):

Yes. We get so many calls. And honestly, I wish that, you know, TWC really had a different number for, you know, those who are filing claims to, to talk to someone. And that's just a whole nother rant and, and, you know, wish, um, that I don't know, we'll get ever get taken care of. We are here to help people go to work. That's just it. Now we may have different ways of getting there, but if you came in as a snap, a Tanner for [inaudible] scholarship support or childcare, my goal, my staff goal is to help you find a job. And that's the message we preach here.

Speaker 1 (42:58):

Well, our time is up. Um, Jackie, thank you so much. I really appreciate your time. If we have any up questions or if you have any questions for us, please feel free to communicate, um, email myself. Um, I think Isabella is on the email as well, Abby as well. So, um, if we have any up questions, I'll make sure that we get in contact with you. Thank you so much. Have a great day. Thanks. Bye-bye bye-bye thanks, bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Tasheem Woods, Career Office Supervisor
Workforce Solutions – Pearland

Contractor

Equus

Interview conducted

February 26, 2021

Speaker 1:	00:00	It just helps us to be able to go back and in case we miss something or we just want to go back to like, Oh, I remember Tasheem said this, so, all right. So, um, for the record, can you state your name and your position
Speaker 2:	00:16	Supervisor for the Pearland office.
Speaker 1:	00:19	Okay. And who are you contracted through?
Speaker 2:	00:20	Um, Equus Works.
Speaker 1:	00:27	Okay. And just go ahead and describe for us the roles within the career service office. So kind of like what I prefaced earlier the greeter.
Speaker 2:	00:36	Okay. So I'll start from my boss on down. So we have the career office manager. She handles more of the very top administrative problems, talks to the board, talks to our directors and everything like that. Then you have me, I handle more of the administrative stuff within the office. I approve financial aid, and submit financial aid approval. I approve a scholarship funds , transportation funds, those types of things. And, I handle the staff's time and their day-to-day issues that they might have. Then we have the counselors. We have two types of counselors. The Personal Service Representatives and the Employment Counselors. So the Personal Service Representatives, they kind of deal with customers that need scholarship assistance, any type of training assistance. They might need just a certification or something. They'll do the assessment with those customers, and see if they're ready to go and submit their application based on their needs.
Speaker 2:	01:53	The Personal Service Representatives also deal with The Texas Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) customers. We haven't been dealing with too many TANF of customers during COVID, but when we do deal with those customers they'll handle those customers. And then we have the Employment Counselors. So they do a lot of the orientations for snap and unemployment. So currently they don't really answer phones like that. They just deal with the appointment setting software. So they have an appointment they'll call the customer, conduct that orientation and explain all the processes and document their notes. That's all they're doing. We have two, three other positions that are kind of doing the same thing right now. So we have the greeter who within the office, she will be the first person everyone sees when they come in right now, kind of

functioning as an operator. She's answering the calls and everything like that. And we have the resource specialist, she deals with people on the floor helps them with the computers, you reset their passwords. Show them quick job leads those type of things, she's also functioning as an operator right now. And she does help customers with their Work in Texas profile, reset their passwords and stuff like that. So she kind of still does her job virtually.

Speaker 2:	03:17	And then we have a Program Specialist. He is basically, my backbone, he does everything, he does it all.
Speaker 1:	03:37	Can he do the job of an Employment Counselor, or the Personal Service Rep as well?
Speaker 2:	03:48	On paper No. He might tell you that he's not confident in doing that, but I believe that he could, if he had a little extra training, but basically he answers most of the phone calls, they are usually coming through him, especially when we're in the office, he's handling purchase orders or supplies, whatever we need, he's going to get it for us. Anything really, he handles that. We have one more person, she's a Resource Specialist as well. We have her doing out Social Media Outreach and any other type of outreach we might need to do. I think that's, yeah, that's it.
Speaker 1:	04:29	Okay. Um, let me, I just want to go back on a couple of things then. So do you have vocational rehabilitation in your office?
Speaker 2:	04:40	So they just came into the office at the beginning of the COVID and they have one person coming into the office, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. So we send referrals to them via email or telephone where they have about five or six staff here in the office.
Speaker 1:	05:00	Okay. To help those with disabilities.
New Speaker:	05:02	Speaker 2. Correct.
New Speaker:	05:03	Speaker 1. And their just basically arriving in your shop.
New Speaker:	05:06	Speaker 2. Yeah.
New Speaker:	05:07	Speaker 1. Okay. What about any Veteran services?
Speaker 2:	05:10	We don't have veteran service within our office, but we do partner with the Astrodome office who has veteran services.

Speaker 1:	05:18	Yeah, we did meet with her. So let me ask you, so with the Program Specialist, he answers most calls, and he does purchase ordering and supplies. What system is he using for that?
Speaker 2:	05:32	He goes to staples.
Speaker 1:	05:36	So it's not, it's not a, is that that's not a universe. It's not just a system through workforce solutions?
Speaker 2:	05:42	No. Goes to staples.
New Speaker:	05:45	Speaker 1. The next question is who determines if someone is job ready, but I believe that I know that the Greeter is the first person that meets the person, the customer that comes in. Now, do you lead that solely up to the Greeter?
Speaker 2:	06:35	Yeah. So she'll know if a person is in search of a job, that the customer needs to go to the Employment Counselor because they're more job ready than the person that's in search of a credential to then search for a job. So she'll kind of know, okay, this person wants a scholarship. Let me pair them up with a PSRs, the Personal Service Representative, this person knows what kind of job they want. If the customer just want job search help, send them to the Employment Counselor.
Speaker 1:	07:02	So you're kind of doing what the Employment Counselor would do, right. Also with the financial aid assistance, transportation, verifying.
Speaker 2:	07:19	A little bit of everything. I've tried to back off as much as possible, but you know, we are a small office, so, you know, we all have certain things.
Speaker 1:	07:27	Yes. And I realizing that in our, in our conversations that some offices are larger than others, because we did speak with the Kirby office, at the Astrodome location with Jackie, we talked to her this morning.
Speaker 2:	07:42	I will say that office by the Westheimer office, they have separate Supervisors for each position. Whereas the Pearland office, we have one Supervisor for all the positions. So typically like I would just deal with Employment Counselors. And that sounds like fun because you're dealing with one thing all the time. But with the Pearland office, you have to know each different role, and the policies.

Speaker 1:	08:10	Are you all still receiving customers directly in your office or is it all curbside?
Speaker 2:	08:22	It's all curbside. They just show up sometimes, but you know, we talk to them through the door. Hey, I need you to take this (COVID)screening first before I open this door and they'll do that. Now we've put up a sign outside to let them know, Hey, we are strictly curbside right now. So we don't have too much coming to the door anymore.
Speaker 1:	08:43	At curbside where you handing them the, the pads, iPads, or source pads to complete that?
Speaker 2:	08:52	I have that available for people that might need it, but we're just, we have a QR code and they'll just use their phone.
Speaker 1:	08:59	They can scan it. Okay. Okay. That's good to know. So with that QR code, that's going to bring me to another part of this. Are customers using the wifi services that are available in your parking lot, at the office?
Speaker 2:	09:16	I really don't know. I've seen a few people sitting out there. They could be using the wifi, but, I believe there's a sign out there that says to just log on or just sign on, but I really couldn't verify if they were using it or not.
Speaker 1:	09:35	Okay. So you don't know if y'all have expanded its, its, its reach. I know some offices have expanded the surface area so that people can sit in their cars and utilize?
Speaker 2:	09:47	We have a separate wifi for outside of our office wifi and there's a separate box that IT set up, and he tells us the traffic every once in a while, he'd say, Hey, this many people logged on last week. I haven't had a report on that in a few weeks, so I don't even know if anyone's really using it.
Speaker 1:	10:07	Okay. So you don't necessarily know if the customers that are coming to you are using the wifi available in the parking lot, but when they do come up for those drive up curb service, what services are they receiving?
Speaker 2:	10:21	Typically when someone comes to the office unannounced, it's because of the unemployment letter they received saying that they need to do that orientation and they thought that it was an in-person orientation. So I'll just explain to them, no, this is actually the virtual orientation or we'll get someone from unemployment because they'd been trying to contact on

unemployment. And when you Google unemployment, we pop up. So they come here first.

Speaker 3:	10:52	Are you using the curbside for giving out a bus pass or a gas card or for other services or is that being mailed post mail?
Speaker 2:	11:07	So what I like to do is use the Global Card so they can reload. It they'll have to come up here at one time, so the customer won't have to come back up here ever again. So all of our transportation is going through the Global, since Pearland doesn't have a bus line, we don't use any, Metro cards, but we do have them, if someone needs it,it. Very rarely we'll do the Chevron gas card because it's just seems kind of pointless to the customer to have them keep coming up here to get a new gas card. So I just use the reloadable card. They come up one time and then they just ask where we load each week.
Speaker 1:	11:46	So most of the people that are coming up and just walking through think it's the unemployment office. That's been a central theme that we've gotten with conducting the interviews. But as far as your traffic, do you find that a lot of the customers that you're servicing, are using your technology and equipment or are they basically comfortable doing it on their phone? Because I know that there's a level of comfort with them coming into the office, using the desktop computers or laptops. So what are you finding?
Speaker 2:	12:23	So I haven't had anyone that needed to use our devices. Typically, anyone that's ever come up here, they just use their phone. I had one customer, she was having an issue with the financial aid application. And I was walking through the steps with her on her phone, but some reason I just wasn't working. So I called her as I was standing next to her, then I went inside and I went ahead and did it from a computer because it seemed like a mobile device just wouldn't work. So other than that, I don't really have any customers wanting to, or needing to use our devices. Not yet.
Speaker 1:	13:06	Cause you're you're in Pearland. Are you an East or West Pealand or kind of central?
Speaker 2:	13:10	I couldn't tell you.
Speaker 1:	13:14	Okay, so you're not familiar. Okay. So, so the older side of Pearland and the younger side.
Speaker 2:	13:21	This is in the middle of that.

Speaker 1:	13:24	In the middle of it. That's an interesting thing to note. So for you, it's not a problem with technology in that area. How much foot traffic do you usually get? Like if it was pre-COVID, how much foot traffic would you get over there?
Speaker 2:	13:37	The funny thing is I actually started the same month as COVID really hits. So I don't really know what the foot traffic's like here. When I did my interview, there wasn't too many people in here. The geographical location, it kind of prevents foot traffic because there's no sidewalks, you know, Broadway. So not too many people are just walking up there. We have a few, you know, they'll probably stop by at a store next door and say, let me pop in here and see that it's closed. So yeah.
Speaker 1:	14:12	Yeah. I'm trying, I was trying to picture that in that area and on Broadway, like you said. Yeah. That's
Speaker 2:	14:18	Yeah. It's not, not good for foot traffic.
Speaker 1:	14:22	Are there any services that you feel that aren't currently online that could have could occur online or is everything pretty much taking place online? All those services.
Speaker 2:	14:51	Virtual before we even left the office because I'm a big, I'm not wasting paper type of person because I just don't like wasting paper. So I kind of had the staff transitioning to virtual before we even left office. So we can do just about anything virtually, even fax, you know, we could do it all virtually.
Speaker 1:	15:13	So you think the website actually really does support that? The Work Solutions website supports that and the apps that you use, the systems that you software systems that you use as well?
Speaker 2:	15:28	Yeah. Everything we use, I believe supports it. We use RingCentral heavily in our office.
New Speaker:	15:35	Speaker 1. What is it called?
New Speaker:	15:36	Speaker 2. RingCentral essentially. It's like a mixture between zoom and teams. You can chat with different groups, you can video call.
Speaker 1:	15:47	And you use that with customers as well.
New Speaker:	15:49	Speaker 2. No, that's internal.

Speaker 2:	15:51	We can call, we do call the customers like just phone calls with RingCentral. But if we want to do virtual, we strictly use Teams because with teams, we can send the calendar invite. With RingCentral. I really don't know what the customer sees on their side. So I didn't want to test that. I know Teams is reliable for people that don't have the actual program. They can just use the browser.
Speaker 1:	16:18	Right. Okay. So let's talk about the software systems that employees use in the career office. We know you use Appointee and WIT. So if you can kind of just break down, go through them that, you know, are you used by your personnel in your office daily?
Speaker 2:	16:46	We use Work in Texas. WIT was an amazing tool until they updated it. And I don't think there's been new training on the new update. So it might not be a lot that's changed, but it looks different and you know, people are afraid to change. And so technically looks like whole different website. Overall I think Work in Texas still doing what it needs to do. You have Appointee. Amazing. The only issues we have with Appointee is customers can book their own appointment which sounds good, but they can book the wrong appointment. And by the time, let's say, an Employment Counselor gets the appointment, but it's really for a PSR or the EC has the tools but they don't have the know-how to actually serve as that customer and do a timely, so then we end up having to find another office or reschedule that customer.
Speaker 2:	17:57	So that can set the customer back, especially if it's like at the end of the day appointment, you know, we might not be able to find them at the office for you at four o'clock. So it's an issue. But what I try to do is just each day go through each appointment and see if it makes sense. So if someone books a job search, but at the bottom in the comments, they put unemployment. This is probably an unemployment customer. Let me have an EC call instead of the PSR. So we monitor it.
Speaker 1:	18:35	I'm glad that you said that because the feedback I've been getting about Appointee is that for the most overall the employees like it, but I wasn't really aware. And one of the career office managers did show, share her screen and showed us how it worked. My understanding was I thought that you all were in charge of scheduling the customer and who, where they go, but you're saying that the customer actually sets the appointment.
New Speaker:	19:13	Speaker 2. It's both.

Speaker 1:	19:16	When you're saying that they sometimes are, they need to be with an employment counselor, but they may book themselves with a personal service rep, you know, and they need to actually be with the employment counselor. So that does require that oversight by you to go in and check the appointments every day. So what do you feel could be changed in that system on Appointee so that this doesn't happen because I can suspect the best time consuming and what happen on the day that you can't necessarily monitor it.
Speaker 2:	19:52	A clear description in Apppointee when they're setting those appointments. Even a second level after they select the appointment. Are you sure this is the appointment that you need? This is the service that you require. Another thing with appointing that I'm not too fond of is if I need an orientation and I want job search and I want a resumes just then I want all of this stuff, I have to pick like five different appointments and Appointee will book the first available person for that service. And if you need a different service, that that person doesn't do it. I have to book you with someone else. And then you're bouncing all over the place.
Speaker 1:	20:52	The scheduling isn't collaborating a couple of things together. Isn't happening basically.
Speaker 2:	21:00	It does what it's supposed to do, but what if a customer really wants to shop around and do a lot of things at once, it might get overwhelmed and we might get overwhelmed. That hasn't happened. It's only been where they'll pick one service and another service and they don't count it as one appointment that counts as two separate appointments.
Speaker 1:	21:22	You have a smaller office, it hasn't been that bad, but I I'm glad you're sharing this because I would think with a larger office, that might be a problem
Speaker 2:	21:34	Some offices have separate supervisors that separate roles right now in the office, like ours, our staff, they can do multiple things, but starting offices you're dedicated to that role. So if someone books an appointment on top of your appointment and you don't do that service, you have to pass it off to another staff. And if they book multiple services...
Speaker 1:	22:02	I think that explains why when talking with some of the managers, one of the things that they preface with is that all of my, all of my employees here in this office can do multiple. They can all do each other's job. And I think that may be why.

Speaker 2:	22:24	You have to, I can only assume the big offices don't really do that because they don't need to do that. At least when we were in the office, but the smaller offices, they have to cross-train because if two of your employment counselors call out, you don't have any, so somebody has to do it, right.
Speaker 1:	22:42	So if you want to go ahead and continue. So we stopped with the software with the appointee and then you had, what's the other one?
New Speaker:	22:57	We use RingCentral. We use Teams. We really only use Teams if we need to do a virtual meeting with the customer, or we're virtually meeting with people outside of this office. We do our huddles with Teams as well. So anything that is video is going through Teams. We use Outlook of course.
Speaker 1:	23:32	What about that financial aid application, isn't that separate you once they apply, it goes to a different site or...
Speaker 2:	23:43	So nothing changes for the career offices, with the financial, with the applications. They only changes for the customer. So it just puts it strictly online. They fill it out online and once they're done, they'll get a notification saying, "Hey, you need to conduct an assessment within" I think, 10 to 14 business days or else the application is voided. So they give them the closest office by the zip code. So they come to us over the phone and then we do the assessment and then we can look up the application in our system called DocuWare, that's one system we use.
Speaker 1:	24:19	DocuWare
Speaker 2:	24:22	That's basically just our filing system, and everyone in Workforce Solutions has access to that. So that makes us pretty good. If you do your appointment at Acres homes office, we can still see the paperwork here at Pearland.
Speaker 1:	24:37	Okay. So it's shareable throughout the whole.
Speaker 2:	24:40	Yes, now they have different parts of that program. So if I put something in what they call the "tray," then only Pearland can see that or whoever has access to Pearland, but once I save it, then everyone in Workforce should be able to see that.
Speaker 1:	24:59	So that's the DocuWare system. Okay.

Speaker 2:	25:04	Yeah. So this a virtual filing cabinet. Then we have Pandadoc,, I love Pandadoc. Nobody else likes Pandadoc. They don't seem to want to use it. Everyone says it's not really user-friendly, I do not see that , it's pretty easy.
Speaker 1:	25:34	What is Pandadoc?
Speaker 2:	25:37	So it's a way to get people to sign things electronically. What I like about it is you get a confirmation receipt saying that this is valid and it wasn't signed by me, because I can put something in Adobe and you don't know if I signed it or if somebody else signed it. You just type the name and it makes it a signature. But with Pandadoc, it's a certificate saying that this is legit because the person logged in on their account, opened it with their computer and they signed it. What I really like about it is you don't have to wait for someone to bring you back paperwork. As soon as they sign it, it comes right back. And that's it. When you get your certificate, you upload it. And no one can question, is this a legit document or not.
Speaker 1:	26:30	Wow. So is that within every Workforce solutions office?
Speaker 2:	26:38	Yeah. And they have a bunch of templates in there, so you don't really need to your own documents. You just go in there and pull it out and everything's already ready to sign this, send it to the customer. I don't just use it for customers. I use it for staff. Hey, I need you to sign this time sheet. I'm not going to wait for you to send it back, send it through Pandadoc. So that's a great tool. I like that a lot.
Speaker 1:	27:02	So you're saying universally, all of the offices have it, but not everybody utilizes it.
Speaker 2:	27:09	Yeah. like I said, people don't likechange and they don't think it's very user-friendly, and I don't understand how it's not user-friendly because it's not like you're creating documents. You can just go to a template list. You see the one that you want, you open it up and then you put the person's name in there and it emails it to them, they don't need an account. They can do it from their phone. The easiest thing ever.
Speaker 1:	27:37	This is good because I think that what I'm seeing from your office is there isn't a large need for the technology piece, as far as providing that technology, because the most people coming already have it, you yourself are assumed to be very savvy in that area and aware of the latest and greatest software.

Speaker 2:	28:00	I'm going to use everything that we have to our advantage because our office, our contractor has had RingCentral since I started here and I used RingCentral before COVID just to communicate with people. And like I said, I hate wasting papers. So I'm sending faxes through RingCentral, all of that before COVID just to stop wasting paper.
Speaker 1:	28:28	Has their been feedback from your employees regarding the online system, has there been any?
Speaker 2:	28:42	L'll say 50% like Pandadoc. Everyone's pretty savvy with DocuWare because they have used it prior to being virtual. The only people that like Appointee are those who have manager access. They have control of everything. The ones that are actually doing the appointments, I don't think they really like Appointee. I don't know why.
Speaker 1:	29:20	Do you feel it's because they lack control over their own schedule when, when the, when the customers are able to kind of dictate their day?
Speaker 2:	29:28	Oh, they still have a hundred percent control of their appointment. Um, if you have an appointment at 8:00 AM and you said, Oh man, I have to take the child to the bus stop at 7:55. Am I going to make him back by 8:00 AM? You can actually take that appointment and drag it down to 8:05. You know, if you want to. So they have a hundred percent control of their calendar. They can't touch anyone else outside of their calendar. I've shown them that they can control a lot of that.
Speaker 3:	30:03	So if there is a change in the schedyle does the customer get a notice that says that?
Speaker 2:	30:15	Yes. But I'm not letting that happen because on the off chance that the email is wrong or anything, then they might never get a notification. So you got to call. I don't think anyone uses that function, but if they needed to, they can do that.
Speaker 1:	30:31	Okay. So they do have the availability that if it's something that's not conducive to their scheduling. They can move a scheduled appointment.
New Speaker:	30:43	Speaker 2. Yeah.
New Speaker:	30:44	Speaker 1. And then the notification you're requiring is that they also call and follow up because sometimes they may be using someone else's...

Speaker 2:	30:50	Yeah. And the thing with Appointee, it links with your outlook calendar. So whatever you put on the calendar, it's not going to book you an appointment for that same time, because it's already blocked off. So I have them put their lunch schedules on Outlook, whenever they request time off, I don't use the email like, Hey, can I have time off on such and such? I tell them, send me a calendar invite. And in the invite, you just put the time you want off, Hey, I'm requesting time off such and such. And I can either approve it or deny it. And once it's approved, it goes onto your Appointee as well. And you won't be booked for that appointment. So Appointee works pretty well.
Speaker 3:	31:33	So you haven't found any challenges with setting up appointments and things like that, or the customer seems to like the process as well. Or have you heard anything about it?
Speaker 2:	31:43	Have I heard any issues?
Speaker 3:	31:44	For how Appointee has been going?
Speaker 2:	31:48	Yeah, we recently got Appointee, most of the issues are not from the customers, but the staff is telling me what the customers are doing., They can book any office they want to, they can live in Galveston or Huntsville and booked for Pearland, which is fine. Everything's virtual. But if they don't know the service that they need, they can book the wrong one. And you know, it really shouldn't be to where like, Oh, you booked the wrong one. I gotta send you somewhere else, but we can't just teach you how to be a PSR in that moment.
Speaker 1:	32:35	So the customer feedback on the online system has been positive, or?
Speaker 2:	32:41	I haven't really gotten any feedback from the customers. I've sent a few customers, the Appointee link to book themsleves an appointment for the future. And I haven't heard anything negative, but we try not to give them the code if they want an appointment tomorrow, I'm not going to give you the code I'm just going to book, you an appointment. But if I'm talking to you and say, yo, I'm really interested in job search, but now I'll do it at a later time. I'll say okay, well here's the appointment link. You know, when you're ready, you go ahead and book you an appointment. And I got a generated email of how to book that appointment. So they'll know how to do it. But if they find this link on their own, it's not telling how to book that appointment.

Speaker 1:	33:23	So maybe a little bit more comprehensive, um, on the usage of appointee, as far as the descriptors for what you're coming in for?
Speaker 2:	33:34	I'm pretty sure there's an Appointee link in the unemployment letter that tells them how to get to Appointee. And I haven't read it myself.
Speaker 1:	33:44	Is that from TWC or is that coming from Workforce?
Speaker 2:	33:49	I think that's coming from Workforce. I know we complained about the letter because read as if it was in-person. If you read it too fast, you might think it was in person. And I know I asked about that and they said we couldn't change it. So I believe that's to WC letter, but we sent it.
Speaker 1:	34:10	Yeah, we'll see. That's why people get confused with the whole thing with like, okay, are you going, they don't provide unemployment benefits. I think there's, that's one of the things we're hearing too. Walk us through what happens in your office when a new customer, when they come into your office, what's gonna happen?
Speaker 2:	34:36	Are we talking virtual or...
Speaker 1:	34:38	No? Um, actually pre-COVID.
Speaker 2:	34:42	So you come into the office. "Oh, what is this place?" Melissa will then greet you. "Hi, welcome to Workforce Solutions. I'm gonna help you" And then you tell her, "Hey, I've been looking for a job," and Melissa will say "Okay, do you have an account with us?" And you say, yes, she'll look you up. You say, no, she'll say, okay, let me go ahead and start your profile (WIT) and she'll create it. And then she'll pair you with the Resource Specialist and help you. They'll help you to finish the profile. Once you finish the profile, she will pair you with an Employment Counselor. She'll pair you with employment counselor at the same time. So while you're waiting, you're creating a profile and then once you're ready, they'll help you finish it at their desk.
Speaker 1:	35:28	Wil Melissa make the determination whether you go to the employment counselor or if you go to the Personal Service Rep that deals with TANIF and SNAP based on what she said with the customer?

Speaker 2:	35:51	Yeah. So if it's just job search, they can go to either, or if it's scholarship, they can only let me go to their PSR. And she knows who can do what.
Speaker 1:	36:10	But more extensive than a job search is going to go to PSR.
Speaker 2:	36:14	Typically, yeah, if both PSRs are busy, I'm not going to let them build a line, go ahead and hand them to Employment Councelor and they can do the best they can. They can at least explain the financial aid process, help them with the application. And we can also wait while they're doing that. "Okay. Here's a PSR. You can do an initial assessment now."
New Speaker:	36:38	Speaker 1. So you have able-bod, for the SNAP, the able-bod and regular in general, as far as Snap benefits?
Speaker 2:	36:47	We able-bod and general population.
Speaker 1:	36:54	Okay. But they have different requirements. I know that we have the ones with the four week time limit. And then also, if they're not, then they have to go to work fair. And that's what the able-bod if they haven't found a job within that timeframe. TANIF, it may, they may stay with you guys for like a year or two. And then with gen pop within that same four week time, you're going to check back in with them, or is it not mandatory to keep track of them any further on the gen-pop side?
Speaker 2:	37:34	No, it's not mandatory to a follow up with the gen-pop. Once they complete their four weeks, they're a hundred percent in compliance with Health and Human services. So, typically I tell people (staff) keep a list of people that you know, no matter what service you provided, because you never know when you come across a job, "he said, Oh, I remember Ms. Johnson said she wanted this, let me go ahead and send it out jobs." So we'll keep a list of people, but not necessarily having to follow up with those general general population.
Speaker 1:	38:06	Walk us through the engagement orientation. I know the orientation is probably the same process for anyone who's receiving unemployment benefits or seeking skill improvement, job training, or even financial aid. What about the young adults?
Speaker 2:	38:21	Young adults as handled a little bit more delicately, because they are younger people and they may not care about any of this. They don't want to hear this. They just want to work. Right? So just talk to them. We're not, "Hey, here's what you need to do, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." They don't want to

hear all this. We have a conversation. And once we find out what they really want to do, that's when we decide, where are they going to go. Are they going to go to work based learning and get some work experience? Are we going to try to put them in the work? We're going to send them to school? One of those three things they'll end up doing. If they don't qualify, then you know, we'll try to send them to work or send them to school on the adult side.

Speaker 1:	39:06	Do you think it would be beneficial to have a separate website or a separate person that would service youth.
Speaker 2:	39:17	We do have we have that. She's a PSR, but she deals not strictly with youth, she's the only one that deals with the youth. So any, let's say we get a youth customer on Appointee, it'll be for her only, no one else handles those needs. That way she knows the whole process, like the back of her hand. And it'll be a consistent person that they're with all the time. At the same time, the other PSR, she knows how to do it, but she doesn't do it. Only if we really needed her to do it, she will.
Speaker 1:	39:53	So is it easy for the young adults to find their tab or their area on the website? Do you feel, has it been easy for them?
Speaker 2:	40:07	There hasn't been issues because she's getting appointements left and right. There tab now. It's quite obvious. It just says youth. For 16 to 24 on, they have two tabs, so they find their tab pretty easily.
Speaker 1:	40:20	Okay. So are you finding that the age groups that are easily utilizing the online services, is there any distinction, have you noticed for instance, is it the young adults that are utilizing the website, the online services very well, or is it, you know, gen X or is it, you know, do you see any distinctions?
Speaker 2:	40:40	I honestly don't know. I wouldn't know.
Speaker 1:	40:47	Is there any group of people that seem to prefer the person to person engagement over online? Like, they'll tell you they'll come up. "They're like, look, I just need to talk to somebody." I don't, I don't want to go online. I want to use a phone.
Speaker 2:	40:59	I would say 30, 35 and up prefer the in-person or at least over the phone at the very least. Anyone 25 and under don't call me. Don't do none of that. Just text me. That's what they respond to most of the time.

Speaker 1:	41:15	Are there text messages that workforce solution has right now for appointments?
Speaker 2:	41:26	No, but we do text through RingCentral, but no, we don't use like Appointee for a text feature. But if we lose contact or anything, the first thing I tell them, just try to text them. Especially if they're youth, they usually answer because if your phone's cut off and you have iPhone, you might have internet at home. So you can get that text.
Speaker 1:	41:49	The twenty-five and under prefer the technology aspect of it, right? Yeah. Okay. They're fine. They don't need to come in person. Okay. Um, and then you are able to text them, like appointments, like appointment reminder of some sort.
New Speaker:	42:09	Speaker 2. Yeah.
Speaker 2:	42:13	That's hard to do anything beyond texts for like the 21 range and that little age range, they lose contact really easily. I don't know they got bored of the program or they just don't want to talk, but if you text them, they'll respond.
Speaker 1:	42:34	Do they fill out the applications online? Are they doing everything they need to do online?
Speaker 2:	42:44	I haven't heard any issues on that one. When it was the paper application we used, it took them a long time to finish that application because they would probably take it home and throw it down and fill out a little bit and then hurry up, finished it, bring it back, drop it off. It's incorrect. Now we're going to go find, you know, it's just a whole bunch of mess, but online, I think one shot, they get it done.
Speaker 1:	43:10	Are there any services that you can think of that could be better done better online? You know, either accessibility or clearer or it's people can find locate the information they need. What can be done better? What's currently online can be improved?
Speaker 2:	43:33	At least for a virtual having like a virtual lobby. You know, I just need you to answer this question real quick. I don't need an appointment. I don't need any of that. I just need you to answer this question.
Speaker 1:	43:53	Do you mean like in a search bar, like, it would say like a place where they could just answer any kind of question?
New Speaker:	43:57	Speaker 2. It'll be like a live person, a live chat person.

Speaker 2:	44:02	You can just hop in the chat real quick. "Hey, where do I go to get this form?" Oh, you can get this form right here. Let me send you like, instead of spending 20, 30 minutes on the phone to book an appointment, then you booked the appointment and the appointment last five minutes.
Speaker 1:	44:21	Right? That's time consuming. So live chat. What about, I think there's already an sheet, but you still saying that that FAQ is not really addressing some of the true issues that someone may have?
Speaker 2:	44:41	I think most, I don't know about the other officers, but I know we don't have the phone feature where it'll say something like, "Hey, did you know? And instead of waiting on this phone, you can just go here to do this," something like that. Because you know, some of those, some of those businesses, they have that function. And while you're waiting, it's like, Oh, well, that's all I had to do.
Speaker 1:	45:06	With the callback feature too? Would it be beneficial to you as well. So, you know, like sometimes when you call your bank and if it's extensively long line they'll say Hey, push one, to have a rep call you back. Or do you think it's not needed, you don't do that much traffic or that much business?
Speaker 2:	45:30	I don't see how it would benefit us because we still get a bunch of voicemails that we have to call back. So bringing those voicemails and those callbacks, I don't see how that would really work for us. I think that live person talking to people would lower the call volume and then lower the voicemail box. So that might increase. But if we have more than one person doing it, ask those questions real quick, you can even do one to where it is. One room, just a virtual lobby. And you'll say, all right, guys, welcome to the lobby. If you're calling for childcare, I'm going to send you to this breakout room here from calling for financial. They don't see this breakout here. That way you have more than one person to ask them questions.
Speaker 1:	46:22	I like that. I like that. Is there anything else you like to add that maybe we didn't discuss or anything? I mean, I know I hear what you're saying about having the live chat, but is there anything else that you can think of that we haven't discussed or that you would think would be beneficial?
Speaker 2:	46:49	Can I email you?

Speaker 1:	46:52	Yeah, if you think of anything else or you have any other questions or concerns, you have my email address, please feel free to, to email me with that. And I hope that I can do the same, if I have any follow-ups for you. There's some consistent themes that we're hearing. One of them is the live chat. So I definitely think that that's something that maybe we'll need your input on for later. Like, you know, how would it work? You know how you'd mentioned about the lobby set up and everything. I think that would be very good.
Speaker 2:	47:30	And I brought it up to Brenda Williams. She knows a little about it now.
New Speaker:	47:41	Speaker 1. That's good. Do you ever talk to Dorian Cockrell?
New Speaker:	47:46	Speaker 2. No, I know who he is, but I haven't talked to him.
Speaker 1:	47:49	All right. Well thank you so much. I hope you enjoy the rest of your weekend, thank you so much. We appreciate you.
Speaker 2:	47:58	Yeah. Thank you all for your time. Take care.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Andre Azard, Career Office Manager
Workforce Solutions – Southwest

Contractor

BakerRipley

Interview conducted
February 26, 2021

Speaker 1 (00:29):

[inaudible]

Speaker 2 (00:29):

Isabella. [inaudible]

Speaker 1 (01:17):

Okay. Good afternoon.

Speaker 3 (01:20):

Hey, how are you? I think there's two of me on there. I'm trying to figure it out.

Speaker 2 (01:23):

Yeah. There's two Isabella's are the three. I think you're muted.

Speaker 3 (01:29):

Sorry about that. All right. Can you hear me now? Can I hear you? Great. All right. How are y'all doing today?

Speaker 2 (01:36):

We're doing, we're doing good. How are you doing this afternoon?

Speaker 3 (01:39):

I'm doing well. I'm doing well. Okay. To catch up, huh? I know, right. I'm just glad it's warm. It's warm right now. Probably have electric and I'm one 80, but yeah.

Speaker 2 (01:56):

Well, I'm calling Gary. I work with outreach strategists. This is my colleague Isabella Harkrider. Um, and we are, we were hired by HPAC, um, to evaluate the, uh, workforce solutions website, the career, uh, services operations, as well as the, uh, customer experience. Okay. Um, so we're going to ask you a couple of questions. Um, they're going to be open-ended so feel free to expand on these questions as much as usual, as much as you would like, and we'll just go through them one by one. Uh, if there's anything you want to keep talking about in more detail, feel free to do that. Okay. Sounds good. All right. So the first question is probably the easiest. Um, so we'd like to know, um, who are you contracted through? Um, Baker. Ripley. Okay, perfect. Okay. That's one down. All right. Second question will be for you. Um, describe the roles within the career services.

Speaker 4 (03:00):

Um, so we have our greeter, so our greeter is what we'd like to call the face of our office. Um, they're the first point of contact when the customer comes into our office for services, um, they determine what services they need and they route them to the appropriate staff. Um, we have resource specialists. Um, they assist customers in our research from area or recess room area consists of computers where customers are able to fill out applications online. If they need a type of a resume, or if they don't have

access to, you know, a computer at home, they can do other things as well. Um, we have a copy machine, a fax machines, or if they're able to make copies, fax documents as well as resources. So different information from our community partners, as well as job search related information. So the research from the specialist assist those customers in that area.

Speaker 4 ([03:49](#)):

Then we have our employment counselors with their main focus is, is trying to help our customers find employment. So they do assessments. Um, they should determine the best route for the customer and try to refer them to jobs in our system, work in texas.com or to other job search engines. Um, we have our personal service representatives. They work with our customers that we, they have challenges to employment or barriers to employment. So if you are not able to find a job because you need additional training skills, they're there to do an assessment, determine if you're eligible for the funding and try to help you navigate to get that certificate or diploma, but then you can find the job that you're looking for. Um, and then we have, um, our facilitators, they assist, um, they do our workshops. So we have, um, workshops that our office for resume interviewing, uh, rebranding your skills.

Speaker 4 ([04:40](#)):

So they assist with that. And then we have obviously our program assistants, they're the ones that answer the phone for our office and route the customer through that, and then the supervisor and manager. So those are primarily the main roles that are in the crew offices. We do have veteran staff, um, that are, um, from Texas workforce commission they're are also housed with us at the office. So they're able to assist our veteran customers that come into the office or different resources services. And then, uh, we have recruiters that are housed in office as well, and they, um, work with the employers that post jobs in our system and try to help them find a qualified candidate. And then our, uh, business consultant is also housed in our office and they work with the employers in the community, right to, um, market our services, to have them be able to post jobs and, um, provide, um, their openings for our customers.

Speaker 2 ([05:32](#)):

Wonderful. Um, so you pretty much touched on this in the previous question, but, um, the second question is what are the services offered by each employee? Um, so I know you mentioned that in most of your roles, but if there's any role that you'd like to expand on,

Speaker 4 ([05:51](#)):

Um, well, number one, like all of our positions are the main goals for our customers to find a job. So if you come into the office and you need to use our resources to do both, you know, the computer to do an application is to help you find a job. If we're going to pay for a training and support that with our dollars, it's for you to get the skills, you can get the training to get a job. So that's primarily what all the roles are working to do. Um, I mean, I've pretty much touched on everything. Um, the greeter, um, their services is mainly just providing general information to customers. So that's murky to come into the office and they have just got laid off from their job. So the reader greeter would provide them information about, um, unemployment, how to apply for unemployment.

Speaker 4 ([06:36](#)):

We have that material for the customers. Um, they provide a lot of the other resources as well. Um, community partners. We, um, we get a lot of customers that come through our offices that are needing

assistance outside of what we do. And so we have a general lot of general information for them. And that's the same thing with the resource from the green and resource room specialists are a little similar because they helped our customers in that area. Um, with the employment counselors, um, they do a lot of different stuff in not only helping customers find a job, they would help them with their work in Texas application, making sure it's up to, up to par. So when employers go into the system, um, they're able to determine if they're qualified for the positions. They have a good resume. Um, they conduct orientations for customers.

Speaker 4 (07:23):

So we have program customers that are required to participate with us. Um, example, we have a rapid reemployment, um, orientation. Those are customers that are profiled by unemployment, and they're required to come do an orientation with us. We have our snap supplemental nutrition assistance program where we, those, because we do orientations for those customers. Those customers are also required to participate with us, um, from health and human services. So they come to our office, they do an orientation, we help them find a job. Um, we do have, can have customers. We do orientations for those customers are also customers that aren't on temporary assistance for needy family. And, um, we do orientations for them and all of those three orientations, the main goals for them to find a job. Um, so then plumbing contractors, primarily that's what basis with, um, they also do assist with customers that need short-term assistance.

Speaker 4 (08:13):

So if a customer comes into the office and they say, Hey, I just found a job. I, but I need steel-toed boots, or I need transportation. So then employment counselors would do an assessment of those customers, um, determine if they're eligible for those funding and then provide that service to the customer. So generally that's pretty much what the employment counselors to do at the cross office. Um, the personal service representatives, there's this there's a little bit more detail. It's a lot more case managers. So they case manage the program customers that we have in our office. So if a customer wants to go to school for training, the employment counselor would do the, um, probably the PSR, the personal service representative with do the assessment, um, uh, determine if they're suitable for the training. Once they determined that, um, they will send information to get the customer eligible for the funding, and then they work with them through the whole training program. So, um, they have to turn it into attendance to us each, um, each week, every two weeks. And then they do a monthly recap, um, each week, each month on the customers as well. Um, so that's primarily what the PSRs do. They do, um, work with a can of customers as well. Um, they case manage those customers, um, also, but primarily it's working with the training. Um, so, and it just, that's pretty much what everyone in the office does. Okay, great.

Speaker 2 (09:36):

Wonderful. Um, so we want to know, um, are you still receiving customers in the office?

Speaker 4 (09:44):

Um, no, not at this time. Um, primarily what we do is, um, if a customer needs some service, we do a curbside appointment with them. So, um, basically example customer needs to fax document and, but they can't come into the building to do that. So we will coordinate a time for them to come do curbside pickup to do that. If they need to make copies, we help with that. Um, if they, if they don't have access to a computer and they need a computer, um, our offices do have surfaced tablets that we can, the

customer use, um, and B all of our core offices, they extended the wifi into the parking lot. So then customers are able to come if they don't have access at home and maybe they have a laptop or a phone that assist assistant do what they need to do.

Speaker 2 (10:33):

Okay. So this leads into our next question, which was, um, are the customers using the wifi services that are available? Um, and do they know that it's available?

Speaker 4 (10:45):

Yes. So, um, they are using it. Um, you, you will find customers sitting in a parking lot in front of the building, um, when, before I even get there, I'm using it. So we do have customers that use it and they are aware of that. We're able to use the wifi into the parking lot.

Speaker 5 (11:02):

Hi, Colin. I just wanted to ask real quick. Um, cause you mentioned, you mentioned a little bit earlier, Andrew, about the, um, how sometimes, you know, they might need a gas card or they might need the steel toe boots. There's just assistance in that way. Are you guys, I wasn't sure if that was on the list of questions for, how are you serving that right now? Is it being mailed in the postal mail? Is it still curbside pickup for that gas card? Or what does that look like?

Speaker 4 (11:26):

Um, we recently, um, change how we do supportive services, where we procured, um, a vendor with Amazon business. And so how it looks like now is that if a customer comes to us and they need steel toe boots, our staff member would do this assessment virtually. And then once they're determined, eligible, they would work in partnership with the customer. That's determined on Amazon with what, you know, the size shoe they need. And then it was set up to address and it's meld to the customer, um, in terms of the, uh, interpretation and the gas card, our bus pass, we would schedule a curbside pickup for them to come to the office. Now we do have available for customers. For example, let's say, you're going to start work this evening and you can't wait for Amazon because it's going to take a couple of days. Um, we do have, um, um, Walmart cards are, um, Walmart cards. Well, our office has one more cards, um, but some offices have target cards. And so we can do a curbside pickup to say, okay, here's a $50 Walmart card. You can go get what you need. The only thing is, um, we need the receipt within five business days to approve. That's main reason why we changed to the Amazon is so we can have that fracking proof of purchasing. But, um,

Speaker 2 (12:43):

Right. Yeah. It's been working out, sorry, I'm just wondering back to the customer and that's been working out pretty well so far, right?

Speaker 4 (12:49):

Yeah. Um, I think it was a change at first for the customers, but, um, I think the convenience of it, it's a lot easier. And then, you know, everybody's familiar with Amazon, um, and the good thing is we're able to send it to lockers. So, you know, if they have concerns that, you know, packages are stolen up their house, um, we can send it to a locker. Um, so yeah, I haven't heard too many complaints from the customers about the news.

Speaker 2 ([13:14](#)):

Okay. Um, so are there any services you feel, uh, can't occur online? So are there any services that, uh,

Speaker 4 ([13:27](#)):

I don't think so. I mean, I think the only one that the only service, I think that's a challenge is if a customer needs to use the computer, that's probably the one that's part of the challenge, but everything else we've through this whole year of working virtually in transitioning how we do business it, we, you know, we realized like we can pretty much do everything for the customer, virtually even if it's printing out documents, they can send it to us and we can print it out for them and schedule curbside for them to pick it up. Those are the ones that we, I thought it was going to be a little challenging, but it seems to work out, um, and then faxing documents. We get a lot of requests for that. Um, but no, I think, I mean, I think pretty much all the services we provide, we were able to do virtually.

Speaker 2 ([14:14](#)):

Okay. Um, so can you please, uh, name the software systems that you use and the career office?

Speaker 4 ([14:23](#)):

So obviously we have work in texas.com. That's our, um, jobs, Virginia, and that we use for customers. Um, we have twists, um, I, I can't think of what's was the acronym what it means, but that's pretty much our, our managing system that communicates, um, statewide. So this is how we track our program customers. So the customers are determined, determined, eligible for WIA funding, adult dislocated worker. Um, they're tracked in that system. Our snap customers are attracting that system. Our tan of customers are attracting that system. So we utilize that system. Um, we have new appointee, appointee is our, um, appointment scheduling on software. So we utilize that, um, and to schedule appointments for our customers. We have DocuWare, DocuWare is our, um, electronic filing system. So that's where we would, um, scan all the documents up to customer stent. So it's filed. So when anyone needs to review the case, all the documents are there.

Speaker 4 ([15:23](#)):

We have fax, our faxes are in communication system throughout the system. So for example, if we work with the customer, we filed their documents in DocuWare. Um, we have a tracking unit team that reviews the documents, um, to make sure everything is there and then they'll follow it away in the, in DocuWare. But there may be a case that there's an error, maybe the stop and, you know, miss the document or signature is not signed. So they would submit a fax issue to communicate with the Curry office that, Hey, this customer needs, uh, information corrected. Um, our other, um, partners in the system utilizes the stuff as well as the support center, as well as the financial aid payment office. But we have thoughts. Um, let's see, we have gazelle because that was our system where, um, how we, um, track and provide the funding to the customer. So we would create a gazelle account for a customer that's needing if we're going to issue with them transportation or, um, clothing, or we would, um, create a gazelle account to issue a customer, a voucher, so they can go to school. We use that. Um,

Speaker 4 ([16:39](#)):

I'm trying to go through my list of all my password, my little, but that's just from my login, cause there's a lot of systems. Um,

Speaker 3 ([16:51](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 4 (16:52):

Pretty much have them all talk you were twists with.

Speaker 3 (16:58):

So, uh, do you use working, uh, do you use work in Texas? Yes. Okay. It sounds like you guys have just been able to transition quite well.

Speaker 4 (17:16):

I think, yeah. I think that's pretty much all of them. I don't think, Oh, we have our global caste system, so that's, so we're able to issue cash cards to customers where we're able to load funds to them. So we utilize that, for example, our training customers, because, um, every two weeks we're able to give them transportation for them to go to school. Um, instead of them having to come to the office for a, like every two weeks to get a gas card, we're able to load money onto a card that we issued to them. Um, we also use that card, um, in the event that we're not able to get a voucher in time for the customer or whatnot. We can use a global cash card to load funds onto that. So we have that system where we're able to issue that to the customers, but I think that's pretty much it. Yeah, I think so.

Speaker 2 (18:05):

Great. Well, um, we wanted to ask more specifically about one of the systems, the appointee system. Um, so wanted to know what is your, uh, employee and customer feedback regarding using appointee, um, employees being your coach, your fellow coworkers?

Speaker 4 (18:25):

Um, I think it was just getting the staff used to it, um, and, um, utilizing it, navigating through it, making sure they knew how to schedule appointments. They knew how to end the appointment, take care of it and track it. Now, I think they've all accustomed to it and I think they liked it. Yeah. I can tell now I don't hear too many. I don't get too many emails or calls from the staff about how to do this, how to go here. So I'm thinking they're getting, um, definitely used to it. Um, the customers, I haven't heard too much from the customers about it. I think the only challenge may be is, um, making sure that they get to their appointment on time, because we have noticed recently we've had a lot of customers were they're they're not getting to the appointment all the time, so maybe they didn't miss the email or they can't get logged in or call or whatnot, but not too many complaints where the customers don't like it

Speaker 5 (19:26):

Or the overall, like how it was signing up was seemed pretty smooth for them. And their, has anybody said anything about like an extra element that might help the whole setting up getting, you know, clicking the right thing? Um, would it have helped me if there was like a chat function or any other comments you've heard or nothing? Really?

Speaker 4 (19:42):

I think a chat function would be really good. I think that would be easier where if a customer had, um, questions are when they're trying to register it and make it a little bit easier. Um, but not any, not anything out of the norm with it. I just think it's this pretty much with all the systems we have. It's just

about the staff and the customers getting used to it. And once they get used to it, um, they seem to enjoy it.

Speaker 2 ([20:09](#)):

Okay. Uh, well, we'll move on, um, from appointee to, um, if you could just walk us through the new customer experience, um, uh, for example, what services they're provided.

Speaker 4 ([20:26](#)):

Um, I would say, so when you say customer experience, you're saying like, what's their, what's their overall how's their experience when they come through our services.

Speaker 2 ([20:38](#)):

Right. So when they come in, uh, for example, the greeter has settled.

Speaker 4 ([20:44](#)):

Yeah. So, um, when a customer comes into the office, our main, our main objective is that they are greeted they're welcomed into the office. Um, we, we really strive to make sure that the experience of the customer, no matter what they're doing is it's, it goes really well. And so when, you know, I always look at it as if how you're greeted is how it's going to determine your whole experience, but you're not greeted by the greeter. You're not welcomed. Um, it probably your overall experience would not be that well. So, um, you know, greeting the customer, walking them, welcoming them, you know, once you signed in and if you're, this is when we're open to the public, when you're signed in, you're waiting to see a counselor, you know, you're engaged by the research staff while you're waiting, you know, to sit down, you know, I, you know, I expect my teams to, you know, go check on customers.

Speaker 4 ([21:35](#)):

Hey, you know, how's it going? You know, do you need anything while you're waiting? Um, show them the resources that we have. Okay. Well, while you're waiting, um, we have this resource area over here. We have these community partners. We may have a hiring event. Hey, you might want to check out the hiring then, while you're waiting for, you're always engaging the customers, making sure they feel, they know what's going on, um, your knowledge, their wait time. And then you're helping them through the services. When they sit down with a staff member, it's about making the customer feel at ease. You know, a lot of times our customers come to the office and they, they were required to come here. So again, a letter and they say, you got to come here. So they don't know what workforce solution is. Um, and so when they sit down with you, you know, they may be a little apprehensive and you just want to make them feel at ease, let them know that you're here to help them. And, you know, even if they think they weren't going to get what they needed, you know, by the end of this visit, you're going to get a lot of information and you're going to be happy that you came. So it was all about just, you know, engaging the customers and making them feel comfortable and trying to give them that high level of customer service. So I believe that's at all, all of our offices, that's what we strive to do for our customers.

Speaker 2 ([22:47](#)):

Okay. Wonderful. Um, so who in the office, um, decides who is, or isn't job ready? Um,

Speaker 4 ([22:59](#)):

If we were to say job ready, most of the time, our job ready once that are not job ready would probably be maybe one of our program customers like our tan of customers. I would say some of them might not be, um, job ready. Um, it's all, it's really just all about the assessment. I mean, when you talk to the customer, you know, in their opinion, they may not feel they're job ready, but it's just really trying to make sure that they, if they, you know, need the resume updated or they need a, let's just do a little mock interview. You know, you say you have challenges during interviews, let's go over some questions. So I I've noticed with the customers that we serve, a lot of them just need encouragement. You know, they know that you're there and you're there to help them. Um, you know, you can really see them what, they're the goals that their students ability to do, want to add anything. Okay. So I hear you,

Speaker 5 ([23:57](#)):

Um, you know, it was just interesting when you mentioned how, like, you know, somebody, somebody might be sitting in that sitting and waiting, or maybe they're in the resource room, um, or they're learning about like a different, about more pro more programs or maybe a job fair coming up. Do you feel that, um, that has been like an asset to some of the customers that are coming in, who maybe wouldn't have found out about it in other way, or you feel like there's, um, there's enough of that communication on the website where they probably would have found about it anyway or something I just wanted to see if you had any comment on that.

Speaker 4 ([24:27](#)):

Yeah. I think, I think that I'm not sure if they would have found it any other way. I think we do a good job of marketing our services and, you know, a lot of people know of us in the community just by word of mouth. You know, we get a lot of customers that come to our office or call our office, asking for everything outside of what we do. And so, because that's what the community says, Oh, well you need something go to workforce solutions. So it could be, Hey, I need food or I need help with my, my life bill or I need rental assistance. So it's this we'll call workforce solution. So the community need to knows that we're here to help. I think, um, it's just working to try to engage more people, you know, could we provide a lot of really good services for the, um, the community and it's just making sure everybody's aware of it. So making sure that, you know, we have promotions, our marketing information, that it can get out to the people that need it.

Speaker 5 ([25:25](#)):

Yeah. And that kind of leads to like, the last thing I just wanted to ask is that if you look at the website now and, um, not so much social media, but just the website itself, is there a sort of like a wishlist item or is there something, if you could think that you would like to see, um, enhanced or navigating through it, or

Speaker 4 ([25:44](#)):

I think a chat function would, would be really great because I think it's a lot of information on our website and I think a lot of it can, um, can be, you know, some customers could be a little confusing. And so if there's a chat function, it's like somebody there, so they're on the website and they're trying to find, how did they get in contact with somebody for training? Well, if they could just chat with somebody, you know, they can give them the number and you don't have to search through the website to say, okay, what's my Claire's office gonna be, you know, it's, it's all of that stuff that can minimize that. I think a chat function would be really, really, really good on the site. Okay.

Speaker 5 ([26:24](#)):

Thank you. Um, those are all the questions that I have besides what Khan has, but if anything else comes to mind in that regard, you can always reach out to me or Tammy, um, via email.

Speaker 4 ([26:35](#)):

Okay. Anything else? But yeah. Um, no, I think that's pretty much so. Yeah, but thank you. Thank you. All right. We still have a couple

Speaker 2 ([26:44](#)):

Of questions. Yeah. These are the ones that we wanted to ask as well. Um, so there's just a few more, um, shouldn't take much longer. Um, we've touched on a lot of stuff. Um, and one we wanted to, if you could walk us through the engagement orientation, um, I know you did that a little bit earlier, but this one would be in a specifically in regards to if someone's receiving unemployment or, uh, seeking skills improvement, final financial aid, or for example, as a young adult. Okay. So anything you'd like to add in regards to that?

Speaker 4 ([27:21](#)):

So the unemployment orientation. So, um, with those courses, whether it's a rapid re employment, our EFCA, um, orientation, because how those customers are profiled. A lot of those customers, when they come to the office, they probably have not heard of work solutions. That's just my general observation, um, of those customers. Um, but I think one of the things that we do well is once they're done with the orientation, they really realize, wow, y'all offer a lot of services that they were not aware of. And so with the orientation, it's pretty much just letting the customer know that, Hey, we're a resource here for you. Um, we're going to help you get registered and work in Texas. We're going to help you, um, make sure your, um, resume and work in sexist is good, your application. Um, we're going to tell you about our services. So during that orientation, in all of our orientation, we go over all the services we provide.

Speaker 4 ([28:16](#)):

Um, we're going to give some information about our workshops, um, that we have available. Um, maybe, you know, um, the field that you're in, um, you're, it may not be a lot of jobs down the road, so let's try to help you rebrand your skills. So one of the things we do during the REOC orientations is we pull up, um, we try to give them labor market information. So, um, Hey, you know, you're in your esteem, stress, you were laid off. Well, this is what it seems choice is going to look like in 20 years here in the Houston area. So, you know, it's not going to be as in high demand as it, um, it is now. So you might want to try to rebrand your skill and then let's talk to you about training, you know, because you, we have training for you.

Speaker 4 ([29:00](#)):

So if you are interested in maybe becoming a welder or an electrician or a nurse, we can help you with that. So, um, during that orientation, we provide all of that service and then we do, uh, an employment plan with the customer as well. Um, kind of giving them some information about, Hey, this is kind of our goals. See, this is how we're going to work in partnership to help you find your job. And so that's pretty much the gist of our USDA orientations for the UI, um, with the young adults. Um, it's really just trying to meet them where they're at, um, because, um, we have a lot of services for young adults and it's really just trying to help them get enrolled with our, so they can either find a job or go to school. So it's pretty much the same process that we would do with our adult customers.

Speaker 4 ([29:48](#)):

But, you know, with young adults, you have to take a different approach to get them, um, you know, excited about, we know this is what, you know, this is what you can happen. You know, you've just graduated school and you don't really know what to do. Well, let's tell you about some services. You don't have to go to college. You know, we can get you a trade, you can be an electrician, you know, they make good money, welder, a nurse. So just getting them encouraged about that. And then, you know, obviously helping them with the resume, um, get an, a register and then helping them find a job. So that's pretty much how we work with the young adults. Um, there was another one, there was a third one. Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([30:26](#)):

Um, uh, financial aid or any additional, uh, you just mentioned traits or

Speaker 4 ([30:32](#)):

Yeah. So financial aid, um, basically a customer comes to us and they say they want to go to school. Well, if they don't know where they want to go to school, you know, we provide our personal service, representatives, provide some information and resources for them. Um, kind of let them know, just like, okay, these are the jobs in the area that we pay for that are in high demand. Um, these are some of the schools that are vendors that you might want to check out, go to the school, try to get enrolled. Um, we can give them a, they really don't know what to do. We have interest profile or tests, so we can give them as to say, okay, take this test, give us the ideal kind of what you're interested in based on, you know, your skills and your previous, um, employment. And so once that is done, we would do this assessment, determine them for suitability. And then once we done we've conducted the assessment and we would submit their documents to our support center, um, and they will determine them eligible based on eligibility and South pole begins. Right.

Speaker 2 ([31:31](#)):

Okay, great. Um, so the next few questions will be more, a little bit more rapid fire. Um, so don't have to go into too much on these. Um, we wanted to know, uh, what a troops are easily utilizing the online services.

Speaker 4 ([31:51](#)):

Um, I would say 18 to say like 39 40. Yeah. Okay. Um, just from feedback that I know of customers that say they find it from online.

Speaker 2 ([32:09](#)):

Um, and is there any age group that prefers, uh, person to person?

Speaker 4 ([32:15](#)):

Um, I would say probably built older, um, population maybe in, um, late forties to late forties to a, I S E I C because they're the customers to ask when, um, when we're open and those are the ones that have, maybe have the challenges of getting onto the teams, the meeting or zoom meetings do the one-on-one visit. Um, and so, yeah, I think they would, that would be the age.

Speaker 2 ([32:45](#)):

Okay. Um, next question would be, um, you touched on it a little bit earlier with Isabella's questions, but, um, are there any issues that customers are frequently encountering on the website? Um, for example, issues with the form or, um,

Speaker 4 (33:03):

Um, yeah, um, we, they used to have challenges trying to get the application, the financial aid application when they're trying to apply for the childcare or our funds, but now that we've went saved, we'd gone to the online application. I don't believe we have too many challenges with that. Um, I just think if just making the website a little bit, a little bit more organized to find things easier, I think that's, that's, I think that would be the best route.

Speaker 2 (33:30):

Okay, great. Um, just a couple more. Um, so these are just, these last two are just to make sure that we've covered everything. Um, uh, just wanted to make sure, are there any online services that are offered by the career office, um, that we haven't discussed or that you think should be discussed?

Speaker 4 (33:55):

No, I think I've pretty much discussed pretty much all the online services that we provide.

Speaker 2 (34:01):

Okay, great. Um, and the final one is just, is there anything else that you'd like to add?

Speaker 4 (34:09):

Um, no, I think I've pretty much covered everything. Um, I do think, um, trying to work on the website would be good and the marketing too, as well, to get the word out about what we do and just make it simple. It doesn't have to be too much. I think if it's simple, it is, I think, to kind of get people interested about it and then they want to come and see what we're about. So, um, I think those would probably be the two updates that I wouldn't want them to provide.

Speaker 2 (34:38):

All right. Well, Isabella, do you have anything to add? Thank you. All right. Thank you. Thank you, Andrew. Well, don't want to take any more of your lunchtime here.

Speaker 4 (34:49):

Oh yeah. Well, this is my Friday off. So I here just for you guys.

Speaker 2 (34:56):

Well, thank you for the privilege. Appreciate your time.

Speaker 4 (35:01):

Y'all have a wonderful weekend. Bye. Bye

Speaker 1 (35:33):

[inaudible]. [inaudible].

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Brenda Woods, Career Office Manager

Workforce Solutions – Acres Homes

Contractor

Equus

Interview conducted

March 2, 2021

Speaker 1 ([00:00:29](#)):

How are you

Speaker 2 ([00:00:35](#)):

You and you're on mute. You're on mute. We can't hear you. You have to unmute your mic, or if you have headphones plugged in, um, you might need to unplug them.

Speaker 1 ([00:01:09](#)):

Okay. Good morning. How are you? Wonderful. How are you ladies?

Speaker 2 ([00:01:16](#)):

So, well, thank you so much for, uh, today. I'm Tammy Frazier. Um, and this is Isabella Harkrider. We're both with outreach strategist. And, um, thank you for taking time out to do this, this, uh, uh, information interview that is JC. Oh yes. Thank you. Um, it's JC has hired our firm to work on, um, uh, the next RFI and RFP regarding workforce solutions website. So the conversation that we needed to have with you today, and we have, and to just let you know that we have spoken, there was eight, there were eight people on the list that Mike temple, that Bates sent over to us that he and Brenda had worked on, um, to get us to the right information information, we need it. So you were on that list. Um, and basically we just need to understand the services, the operation, the tools that are used within the workforce solutions offices to help the customers, um, from the career office side, in order to make sure that, um, the services are transferable transferring onto online services, which I know many of them are, but we also want to get your feedback on what works, what can be done better, you know, do you have any suggestions that you think could possibly make the system smoother, um, for not only for employees, but for, you know, for customers as well, that's where the line of questioning will come from.

Speaker 2 ([00:02:58](#)):

Um, and may also be very basic. So you may say, I know you'd probably be doing this for a while and you know, you, you know, it like the back of your hand. So when we're asking, like, I guess to, you know, explain something to us, if you can take it to the basic, most basic form from the beginning, then we'll, we'll understand. Um, as if we, you know, as if we don't know now, like I said, I have been conducting these interviews since last week, so I do have information and we'll kind of probe you a little bit, you know, um, or more. Okay. So, um, so who are you contracted through in your office? Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Before we start, can you please say, I just want you to know we are recording this. So please state your name and your position for the record.

Speaker 3 ([00:03:43](#)):

My name is Brenda Woods. I'm the manager at the acres homes, workforce solutions office. Um, I am, uh, I work with Equis risk care. Who's a contractor.

Speaker 2 ([00:03:57](#)):

Okay. And describe the roles within the career service office

Speaker 3 ([00:04:06](#)):

And all of you in the roles of the career service office is actually, it's a one stop for the community for people who, um, are looking to get into workforce or are looking to, um, get a, a better job. And those who may need assistance with keeping a job, uh, is, um, a one-stop shop, uh, because added to that would also be the, uh, training and education patient piece. We assist, um, our customers with, uh, obtaining, uh, certain types of grease high degrees in high-skill, um, occupations, as well as certifications, uh, that are trending, uh, in, in, in the labor market, in order for them to attain these certifications or degrees and, and go be able to become employed quickly. We also, um, work with youth who, um, may be displaced in a sense that they just don't know what their next steps or, uh, we have counselors who are trained to sit and talk with them and give them some guidance on, uh, what, uh, what's out there in the labor market.

Speaker 3 ([00:05:41](#)):

And, uh, what kind of jobs are available and trying to probe them to see what kind of interests they may have and, um, probe them to, uh, understand that they have to go to work and they, they have two choices. They can just get a job and work for minimum wage for the rest of their lives, or they can prepare themselves to get a career. Cause there, there is a difference in the two. We also have funding not only to, to assist with scholarships for attending school or the attain trainings. We, um, we have funding to assist people with those, with the work gear that they may need to become employed, uh, in certain occupations and also transportation assistance to get back and forth, uh, from work. We, uh, we have counselors that are or experienced with, uh, just holding hands and listening to the story because most times you're not going to pass, go and test until you listen to the story. So we have counselors that are, are, are trained to do that in order to be

Speaker 2 ([00:07:08](#)):

Okay, just one second, excuse me. Um, so these are, this is what you do. Yes. So you're saying these are the services within the office that are provided. Right. Okay. So then let's talk about, and I think you're getting into it, but let's talk about, I'm going to, I'm going to swing back to the services. Um, but before we do that, let's, let's go to the personnel within the office and what they do. So you have your greeters, your PSRs are, you know, so we want to kind of go through through that.

Speaker 3 ([00:07:43](#)):

Okay. You want to go through each position? Yes. Okay.

Speaker 3 ([00:07:49](#)):

Okay. Um, we have our greeter who is the first personnel that customers meet when they come through the door. The greeter is the person that, um, asked the questions. Um, how can we help you today? And, and whatever that answer is, the greeter is prepared to direct the customer to the appropriate staff that they may need in order to assist them. It could be something just as simple as they just want to make a copier. Well, the greeter will let them know where the copier is, but, um, if they're, if the customer nieces speak to a counselor, then the greeter decides what type of counselor that is and would put the customer on, on, uh, on what used to be a wait list. Now we're gonna come forward to the 21st century. Now they, they, they, uh, put them on pointy.

Speaker 2 ([00:08:50](#)):

Um, Apointy, is it, is it the pointy? Pointy. Okay. They scheduled them to see the appropriate

Speaker 3 ([00:08:56](#)):

Staff.

Speaker 4 ([00:08:57](#)):

Okay, got it. Yes. Okay. Got that one. So after the greeter, it is

Speaker 3 ([00:09:04](#)):

After the greeter, it is the, well, I would say the resource specialist now we're speaking in terms of current, or

Speaker 4 ([00:09:13](#)):

Let's say pre Tobin.

Speaker 3 ([00:09:15](#)):

Okay. Then. Okay. Pre COVID. Um, the resource specialist is someone who assists those customers who need to use the computer in order to apply for positions, uh, just to job search period. And they may need some additional systems with, uh, they may not be computer literate, right? So they, they, uh, guide them through how to get to certain, uh, websites in order to, uh, apply for jobs. And also, you know, get through some type of the front. Some of the frames that they are unable to maneuver through greeter, um, resource specialists are also, uh, trained to provide job search assistance, uh, to, uh, to the customers in the resource room to let them know what, what, uh, what the hiring events that we have upcoming and, and, uh, also to, uh, give them a list of positions that may be the companies that may be hiring them and guide them to get into the websites to apply.

Speaker 4 ([00:10:22](#)):

Okay. And what system? Oh, go ahead. I'm sorry.

Speaker 3 ([00:10:27](#)):

Um, you're probably gonna ask me the question I was going to answer.

Speaker 4 ([00:10:32](#)):

Okay. It's um, the system that they use is there a particular system?

Speaker 3 ([00:10:39](#)):

Uh, they, they initially, they, all of our customers, we encourage them to register into, in our work in Texas, uh, system, in order to job search for information that's fed into their system. Um, the more likely they're able to find a position that they're suitable for.

Speaker 4 ([00:11:00](#)):

Okay. Okay. So from there, so, um, so that's, while they're waiting, um, to see who would come next, so it's going to be what an employment counselor, or

Speaker 3 ([00:11:14](#)):

You're here for, for job search. They, uh, will, and they need more intensive, uh, job search assistance, or they've asked for it. Um, then they're put on a wait list. And as soon as the council becomes available, uh, the customer is, is called and they sit with, uh, an employment counselor in order to get the assistance with job search.

Speaker 4 ([00:11:40](#)):

Okay. So that's that the employment counselor is strictly is the job search. Um, what about the train training? Do they do training as well?

Speaker 3 ([00:11:49](#)):

They, they are versed in the training. They, they, they can talk the customer regarding

Speaker 5 ([00:11:54](#)):

The training because, uh, uh, most about staff are cross trained, but, um,

Speaker 4 ([00:12:03](#)):

We try not to just,

Speaker 5 ([00:12:06](#)):

You know, hand the customer off, but something else, if they say, if they initially, they said job search assistance and they sat there and then they said, well, I'm interested in, in training. Well, the, the, uh, to a certain extent that employment counselor is going to be able to provide them with the information they need to. Now, if you, if you back up, if it, if they initially said that they're interested in training, then automatically they would have been scheduled to talk to a PSR.

Speaker 4 ([00:12:34](#)):

Okay. Okay. Okay. So the PSR is for a training, any customer that needs training, what about financial aid also? Do they help with actual aid? And that can be snap as well, like snap and Tana?

Speaker 5 ([00:12:56](#)):

Well, uh, generally the, the, the, the, the snap customer would go to the employment counselor and the panel customer would, would be, uh, referred over to the PSR tennis and PSR because they need more intensive, uh, counseling.

Speaker 4 ([00:13:17](#)):

Okay. So is that just, is that typical? Is that just in your office, that the employment counselor can also help with snap? Okay.

Speaker 5 ([00:13:28](#)):

I have, I have a small office with why, you know, my, my staff or prostrate, generally the snap customer goes to employment counselor and can have customer goes to the PSR.

Speaker 4 ([00:13:41](#)):

Okay. And do you, are you, do you have vocational services in your rehabilitation, you do in your office, but that is strictly through, uh, workforce. I mean, I'm sorry. Work in Texas, is that correct? And I work in Texas. I mean, TWC that's their TWC.

Speaker 5 (00:14:00):

Yes. But we do, we do do assessing our customers. If we feel that they need that additional assistance that, uh, uh, VR offers, we will refer them to them.

Speaker 4 (00:14:12):

You refer them to RPA,

Speaker 5 (00:14:15):

To vocational rehabilitation. Yes.

Speaker 4 (00:14:19):

So they can't, you can refer them even though it's run through. Okay. TWC. Okay. So is there a computer, is there a system or application that you all use to connect them from the, uh, Texas workforce to, um, TWC? Um,

Speaker 5 (00:14:49):

Well, we refer staff to, uh, one of our partners. Uh, we generally would, uh, journal notes in, into our twist system. Okay. And make the referrals through twist. Okay.

Speaker 4 (00:15:07):

Okay. And then, um, so I'm kind of going back a little bit to, do you have, uh, veteran services in your office? No. Okay. And then, so then you've got, I know you'd have recruiters in your office as well, or one recruiter, one or two, or do you have any,

Speaker 5 (00:15:23):

We have one that's assigned to office.

Speaker 4 (00:15:25):

Okay. And they work with the employers, right. What function? I mean, so in a D so at no time will cuss, when will accustomed to a customer ever interact with your recruiter?

Speaker 5 (00:15:42):

Um, the recruiter on some, on some instances, if they have an employer that's looking for a, certain has a certain type of position that they need to feel within the recruiter. We'll, we'll, we'll work to, you know, uh, scour through work in Texas to find those, uh, employer, employer, to find out customers that qualify for the position and make a call and, and, and, uh, and, and refer that person to the, directly, to the employer of saying that, you know, um, uh, a viable applicant to fill this position that you're trying to feel.

Speaker 4 (00:16:20):

Okay. So they're not really, they're not really interchanging and exchanging with employer account, anybody really in the office, excuse me. Um, and then as far as your position as the manager, so what, what's your role?

Speaker 5 ([00:16:37](#)):

My role is, um, my role is to make sure that all of these pieces are working correctly. And to the most important role that I have is to make sure that everybody meshes with the other person that F that we all work in this work at this together. Uh, first of all, we get along, uh, we make sure that, um, all the processes are, or up to the staff are up to date on the processes, which can change weekly. Sometime we make sure that we're, we're, we're huddling to, to get that feed that information to the staff in order for them to feed the correct information to the customer.

Speaker 4 ([00:17:29](#)):

All right. And so when you say processes can change every week, um, what do you mean is within the system, or what do you mean by that?

Speaker 5 ([00:17:39](#)):

I mean, within, within the, within the system, um, and when I say processes, meaning, um, the way certain certain services are provided, there may be something that needs something documentation made may, uh, may change, um, or, uh, measures may change that, that you need to capture. And that means that process would have to change in order for you to capture the measurement, just, just, and just whenever the, whenever the rules change.

Speaker 4 ([00:18:16](#)):

Okay. Okay. Um, let me ask you, so you, everyone submits timecards, or is it a time system input for checking in, checking out?

Speaker 5 ([00:18:27](#)):

Uh, the, the staff, um, we have a phone system it's done by phone. They can, they can, uh, check in, uh, you mean as far as attached to the payroll

Speaker 4 ([00:18:39](#)):

For employers

Speaker 5 ([00:18:41](#)):

In Florida, they, they can, they can, uh, either check in on there right now, they're checking in on their cell phones.

Speaker 4 ([00:18:48](#)):

And what system do they use to check in for, for time Greenfield

Speaker 5 ([00:18:53](#)):

Works? The system is RingCentral,

Speaker 4 ([00:18:56](#)):

Uh, RingCentral. Okay. All right. And then, um, when, as far as documentation, so any type of documentation that you all have to have, um, like you say, any type of updates or anything like that, what system is that coming through? Like your messages, like you just said, you know, it may change. You need to make sure that you're doing this. Um, what's what messaging system are. Y'all receiving that through.

Speaker 5 (00:19:27):

Um, we, we, well, we receive any type of, um, it comes through an email. Okay. Certainly a certain system is changed.

Speaker 4 (00:19:38):

Okay. And then you said documentation, like any signing of documents or anything like that. Where do you, what system are you using for that Panda docs? PandaDoc's okay. Okay. Is, uh, okay. So let me go back through this really quick, just to recap on a couple of areas. I don't want to miss anything. Um, so when they first come in, so the services let's talk about the services, that's what, I'm a backtrack to you. Okay. So, um, like you said, a customer comes in to get a job. So from getting a job, they have to be signed up with wet, right? Correct. Is there any other software program that they have to use?

Speaker 5 (00:20:25):

Uh, we can, they, we, we prefer that our customers registering wit, but besides these, we can use any other job search links or what have you, in addition to, uh, way.

Speaker 4 (00:20:43):

And when you say job search link links, you mean like maybe like, uh, indeed or anything,

Speaker 5 (00:20:49):

Andy, in any, in any of those are jobs, search leads that are out there on the market right now. It's okay. That we use them. It's just that we, we, we keep, uh, we're is, is a system that we use in order to, uh, capture the, how many people we're serving.

Speaker 4 (00:21:08):

Okay. Capture how many coming? Yes. Yeah. Okay. And then if they need assistance, getting a job again, it's just, it's wet. Right. It's still wet. Cause I'm just going through which go ahead.

Speaker 5 (00:21:33):

I guess the way that I can answer this is we use wit as a tool to, uh, it's a twofold tool and I'm quite sure he has already noticed. I know I'm probably being redundant. It's two it's it's it's. One is the employer has entrusted us to find people to feel positions that they have available. The second part is customers have come in and said that they need positions and we try to match the customer with what the type of a personnel that the employee is searching for. But it's okay. If, if we're not, we're unable to find something that's suitable, who has to use other job search engines along with that.

Speaker 4 (00:22:24):

Okay. Copy that. All right. Now what about for training and education? What system do you all use for training and education? What training

Speaker 5 ([00:22:32](#)):

Education? We, we, uh, uh, work, work, work, work solutions back com.

Speaker 4 ([00:22:42](#)):

Okay. That'd be our K solutions.

Speaker 5 ([00:22:45](#)):

Yeah. WIRK solutions.com. We have a list of those, uh, training, uh, um, institutions that, that accept our, uh, scholarships and, and, and with approved, uh, uh, courses and classes.

Speaker 4 ([00:23:05](#)):

Okay. And the young adult do they use the same systems they use with Mork solutions? Same system. The exact same system. Okay. And what about, so let's talk about with the whole financial part of it, the financial aid, whether it's a scholarship work, gear, a gas card or anything, what are those different systems that they use to you used to apply for those different things,

Speaker 5 ([00:23:34](#)):

Um, and to apply for, for, uh, for the, the assistance, uh, depending on what the amount is, if it's, if it's just, uh, some work gear or what have you generally, if it's just a $20 gas card or something like that, um, we're, we're just going to ask a couple of questions and they provide certain documentation. We fill out a form and we would provide that gas card to the customer. Uh, if the gear is over a certain amount, then the customer would have to complete a financial aid application.

Speaker 4 ([00:24:21](#)):

Okay. So on that pork here. Oh, I'm sorry. Okay.

Speaker 5 ([00:24:25](#)):

Uh, the financial aid application is, is, uh, it's an online document. It's in Wurk solutions website.

Speaker 4 ([00:24:37](#)):

So on the lower end, though, when you say like it's a $20 gas card, or maybe 10, $15 worth of work gear, how are y'all putting that in? Is this paper documentation, or as, or how are you

Speaker 5 ([00:24:49](#)):

Inspect? There there's some documentation that the customer would have to complete, um, orientation complaint, letting them know that if they felt fear that they'd been discriminated against in any workforce solutions office, they have the right to do a formal complaint. And the, the documentation actually tells them what steps they need to take in what timeframe that that is in. They also fill out of work, agenda the work, and then them actually ask specific questions on, uh, what their, what their status is. You know, how long they haven't been working, if they're registered in selected service, if, if they're a veteran or a veteran spouse, um, those, those type of questions. And, um, then they will sign off on it saying that all of the statements are correct. And, um, also listing the reason why they are asking for our assistance.

Speaker 4 ([00:25:47](#)):

So where do you, how do you submit that?

Speaker 5 ([00:25:50](#)):

That's all that when the, once it has been deemed that the customer is eligible for the services and, and we fill out the documentation that we need to go along with the packet, that documentation is, uh, sent and it's, uh, scanned into document and tagged so that we would have a permanent record of the issuance.

Speaker 4 ([00:26:13](#)):

Okay. So all that goes into DocuWare, right? The work gear requests for $20 or gas card for $20, that's all scan and got onto DocuWare. Yes. Um, then the financial aid doc is work solutions and is that's a separate site, the processes of financial aid. So once you go into work solutions, and from my understanding, the way I understand, and you can correct me if I'm wrong is that you can apply for the financial aid on the work solutions, but it actually takes you a different website.

Speaker 2 ([00:26:45](#)):

Is that correct?

Speaker 5 ([00:26:47](#)):

Well, they, the financial aid application is going to be our case solutions, but once that, once that financial aid, uh, well, let's back up because the customer can, can complete the financial aid application online, but the customer will still need to talk to a counselor. And the counselor would do the assessment. One is in the, in, in, in pre COVID because we'll talk to the counselor first and the concert would give them an application. Okay. COVID then they've changed, changed the process where the customer can actually go online and fill out a financial aid application indicated what type of services that they need. And then, uh, uh, by zip code, uh, uh, uh, the, on that, on the end of people who are pulling those, um, uh, financial aid application, they will let the designated office know that the customer has completed the application and we should be contacting them and assessing them on their needs.

Speaker 2 ([00:27:58](#)):

Okay. So, yeah, let's talk about it then. I'll go with post COVID. Um, so who is the who's who's contacting you saying, okay. Financial AIDS. Okay. Who does who's contracting?

Speaker 5 ([00:28:11](#)):

And can you ask that again?

Speaker 2 ([00:28:13](#)):

Who's contacting, let's say employment, uh, counselor or a PSR saying, okay. The financial aid application has been approved for this person.

Speaker 5 ([00:28:24](#)):

Um, the once, if the, if it has been approved, an, uh, financial aid department would put an, uh, a note in twist. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:28:35](#)):

Okay. Okay. So yes. There's a financial aid department that you work with. Yes. That's through workforce solutions. Right. And you all use twists to communicate? Yes. Okay. In facts, twit, twisting back F O F a C S S what's bass.

Speaker 5 ([00:29:00](#)):

The fax system is, um, say there's an issue with, uh, with the application. Well, we would, we would, we would put something let's okay. I can use this as an example, say, the customer has completed an application to go to school. Yes. And the financial aid department is deemed that they, the customer is eligible for the scholarship. So with this, we've already assessed the customer. We already know when the customer is going to need this, this, uh, payment to the school. So we will put in a fact issue, letting the financial aid department know that, uh, classes are going to begin April the first and the customer is going to need their voucher. So we will request the voucher. Once the voucher has been processed, then, uh, then the, uh, will be fax back or returned fax stating that voucher is, is, uh, has been proven process. And also there will be communication and in twists indicating that also voucher approved voucher has been generated.

Speaker 2 ([00:30:23](#)):

Okay. So in twist and, and backs, right? Correct. Okay. So that's, I guess that's what I was trying to get to. Um, so from that online application, um, in that form is an internal form that goes to the financial aid office and they give you the response, that's going to come through fax and twist.

Speaker 5 ([00:30:48](#)):

Um, all of those, all of those things will be, be used. Yes. In certain, certain, certain, certain circumstances. It's just, uh, it depends on what, uh, the financial aid requested was.

Speaker 2 ([00:31:03](#)):

Okay. Yeah. Okay. Because at sometimes you can just give them a gas card right. In the office, right.

Speaker 5 ([00:31:10](#)):

Uh, yes. With, uh, with a, we're giving them a gas card and it's just a one-time deal, then they don't have to fill out a financial aid application. Okay. Financial aid, financial aid application is going to be, um, uh, what we call a substantial many. It's going to be something that's going to be long-term because we're actually going to have to case manage the customer average before and after they received, uh, the assistance.

Speaker 2 ([00:31:42](#)):

Okay. Okay. Um, let's see. All right. That's, that's good. I mean, got a lot of information with that. So, um, that was a good breakdown as far as, um, excuse me, one second. Um, that was a good breakdown as far as giving us, you know, the BA what each department does and the systems there that are used. Um, I want to go into, so for staff, uh, training y'all, do you do in-house training within your own office within your offices?

Speaker 5 ([00:32:20](#)):

Um, if, if there's a, uh, an, a new process or, uh, uh, that has to, it has to be, uh, instituted, uh, we, we would, we would be generally trained the staff on the new. Okay. Yeah.

Speaker 2 ():

And this would, so let's talk let's. Um, and so, uh, so what right now, are there, are there any train staff trainings that are occurring on the line, on the system online, or are, y'all not really doing any staff training

Speaker 5 ():

Right now? Um, we have, we actually have a department that trains staff staff, uh, in, uh, learning design. Okay. And the staff for scheduled to attend the applicable training, um, some mandatory, some, uh, being deemed necessary because the supervisor manager feel that the customer needs additional assistance in some areas.

Speaker 2 ():

Okay. And that's all being done online. Yes. And what are you doing? You're doing teams. Are they using teams or zoom or, okay. All right. So you've told me kind of pre COVID, so, um, let's kind of talk post COVID now. So what's the process for a, a, a customer now. So I know you took us through the, the greeter. So now, so first of all, are you receiving any, are you receiving customers at your office in person

Speaker 5 ():

We're not inside of the office, we're providing curbside, uh, assistance, uh, for customers.

Speaker 2 ():

Okay. So what's the greeters role now post COVID with curbside?

Speaker 5 ():

Well, um, actually everything is still done remotely, the customer calls and, and, uh, indicates what type of service they need. And that customer is put on a pointy

Speaker 2 ():

Pointy.

Speaker 5 ():

And, uh, if, if there's, if followup is necessary, then whoever the customer has been, whoever's who's ever scheduled, a customer has been added to the staff, is going to call and talk to the staff and, um, to the customer, getting an assessment on exactly what it is that they need. If the customer States that I have a job and, and I need, you know, um, gas, I need transportation assistance to get there. I started work on tomorrow. Um, if we feel that, uh, we should always be the last option. So if, if the customer would say today that I have a job and I, and I'll start working next Monday, then, uh, we would search to see if any of our partners are able to receive the customer, to provide the customer with assistance, uh, with transportation. And one of those, uh, we were close closer with ma'ams. If mammas Manz is able to provide them with, uh, assistance to get gasoline or a bus pass or anything who referred them to

males, man is, is an organization that, uh, it's a nonprofit that they do some of the same things that we do as far as assisting people with, uh, getting and keeping a job.

Speaker 2 ([00:36:13](#)):

Okay. So do you communicate with them just as at the phone call or an email, or is it a system?

Speaker 5 ([00:36:20](#)):

What we would call maps to see if they are able to provide the, uh, the assistance, if they're not, then we were searching in other, uh, entities too, to make sure that it's something convenient for the customer, because, you know, you're not brushing them off. You just, you want to send them directly someone, another entity that would be able to assist them. Like I said, we are, we're supposed to be the last result, but are we are there to help them? If, if, if that doesn't, uh, if, if we're able to find that, then, uh, we would, uh, assess the customer in all the information that we, we need to enter into twist. And, um, the customer would come by on the curb and, uh, we would have them to, to two ways we could have them to fill out the information that they, they needed to fill out online and get it back back to us. Or we would have them to come by and sign the documentation when they get here. And then we would provide them with the gas card.

Speaker 2 ([00:37:29](#)):

Okay. So there is still a point where there's still a service where they have to sign the documents in person, or can all documents be signed online.

Speaker 5 ([00:37:40](#)):

All documents can be signed online, but we're going to, to give them the car. We don't, we certainly don't want them to, we don't want them to sign for something that they haven't received. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:37:52](#)):

So if they're receiving a gas card or a gear money for gear.

Speaker 5 ([00:37:58](#)):

Yeah. Well now at, at, at this point, if that, if, if they need something that, um, we can order for them from, from Amazon. Oh, yeah. We'll order from Amazon and we would have it, but they never to the, to their home in that case, they could do PandaDoc's.

Speaker 2 ([00:38:18](#)):

Okay. Okay. So signing documents in person are only necessary if they are in receipt of a, a card, a gas card. Right. Do you get some people that come up and they say, well, I don't have, I don't know how to use the, like the technology piece to DocuSign and then therefore they'll come up there and sign a document there. Yeah.

Speaker 5 ([00:38:44](#)):

Yes. You have to be flexible on their part.

Speaker 2 ([00:38:47](#)):

Okay. And are y'all printing those out or are you just giving them the pad in the office and the, in the parking lot and saying, this is how you sign the document?

Speaker 5 ([00:38:59](#)):

Well, we would give them the actual document. Yeah. And then they would sign the original, they would have the original document and they that's what they would sign.

Speaker 2 ([00:39:12](#)):

Okay. And so that's really for people that just, just really just can't work technology very well. Yeah. And I, and I, I understand. Yeah, definitely. And I think it, it, um, you know, either it's accessibility or it just maybe different factors,

Speaker 5 ([00:39:27](#)):

It doesn't, it doesn't happen every day. It doesn't happen every week, but it does happen.

Speaker 2 ([00:39:33](#)):

Okay. Okay. So that's, so when somebody comes curbside and I'm just trying to get an understanding of curbside service, that means that you're answering questions during and curbside, you are filling out information, helping them fill out information online with a tablet, if in some cases, um, and then you're also getting them to sign documents, signed docs if they are going to receive and receipt of a physical card, a monetary,

Speaker 5 ([00:40:07](#)):

And, um, a bulk of what we do curbside is to assist people with, uh, faxing and, and, uh, copying because of a lot of our curves, uh, side is for people who are in this climate, they're, they're applying for assistance.

Speaker 6 ([00:40:30](#)):

Is your curbside. I'm just wondering real quick after they sign that doc in person, then do you have to scan it, put it on paying doc or twist, like, do you have to then basically take that piece of paper and then it's in your hands now and you basically would scan it or you would get it in into a system, right? Yeah.

Speaker 5 ([00:40:47](#)):

Wait, we put, put it in the system. Inappropriate systems.

Speaker 2 ([00:40:51](#)):

Okay. So the sign, the docs for the gas card that goes into DocuWare, and then the, uh, the, uh, as far as the, the papers they have to sign for, um, doc, where like, as far as the job with the job search, what, so what, what paperwork do they have to sign with that? So when we talked about that, those who are not technology inclined, so what type of documents are those?

Speaker 5 ([00:41:23](#)):

Yeah. Asking about what, what other types of documents we have to handle? Yes. Okay. Uh, Johnson flocks, the customers who

Speaker 3 (00:41:34):

Are, are, are, um, mandated to participate for their snap and, and, uh, and or tannic benefits. They have, it's mandatory for them to, to report, uh, a certain amount of job search hours weekly. So they do come by and drop those, that documentation off. And it's scanned into, uh, it's notated in twists that we received and how many hours are indicated on it. And then it's scanned into DocuWare and store.

Speaker 4 (00:42:06):

So the hours are notated in twist and they, and you submit it that way. Right? Correct. Okay. And it, so that, so that is one thing they can't do online.

Speaker 3 (00:42:23):

No, they get, they can scan the, the doctor's blocks in the end online, so they can do that. They can actually, they can, they can, uh, use the,

Speaker 4 (00:42:34):

I

Speaker 3 (00:42:36):

Take a picture of it and send it to us.

Speaker 4 (00:42:39):

Okay. So they can't, so they can take a picture and upload it to, to, uh, email and who's responsible for putting in the hours then. So if somebody sends you, somebody takes a picture of their job search log and they email it. So who are they emailing it to?

Speaker 3 (00:43:05):

We have, um, someone who is, uh, designated to handle emails all day. So it would be that person's duty to, uh, recognize that it is a job search log and to go into and, and, and document, uh, uh, that the customer provided the law. How many hours vary or indicated on there. And then they would, uh, upload the information into DocuWare.

Speaker 4 (00:43:35):

So could the customer also do this? She said they could take a picture with their phone and then what happens? They would go,

Speaker 3 (00:43:41):

They send a picture like with the iPhone, with the picture, you know, you can email from the iPhone,

Speaker 4 (00:43:48):

But they don't go into a system they're basically right now emailing your team. No, they can do it online. They can do it themselves. Okay. And that's been working well. Yeah. Okay. So they can do it the, so let me just make sure. Okay. So, so that person that you said that's designated to handle those emails is that your customer service rep

Speaker 3 (00:44:15):

It's actually the greeter now because we don't have a greeter. So I talk to my staff or just, you know, they're just cross train. So the greeter is, it's just the person that we chose to, um, be responsible all of the emails

Speaker 5 (00:44:32):

And to read them and to respond to them.

Speaker 2 (00:44:35):

Okay. Okay. Cause I think that, um, I was just hearing something yesterday that was, uh, or maybe the person just wasn't familiar with the fact that, you know, you could actually, you know, the documents can be already submitted online themselves. It's not a situation. Cause I think they were under the impression that a person had to dip. Each person had to come and submit these in person. But that is just not the case that this is what you're offering at this time, for those who are technology, um, deficient in that area, they just kinda, they will, they want that extra support. Right. Right. Okay.

Speaker 5 (00:45:14):

Yeah. Sometimes they don't trust. They don't trust. They don't trust technology. There are some here myself. So yeah.

Speaker 2 (00:45:25):

There's some people that won't pay their bills online. I know they don't, they don't trust it.

Speaker 5 (00:45:30):

I know this is, I'm going to tell us a quick story. It's going to make your day. My husband's like he still uses a stamp. He's eating mails to deals. That's how he feels some telling him, you know, come on, you need to set your stuff up. You won't have to do all of this here. So I set this stuff up and, and I set up, set up his discover account, wanted to pay $500 on his account. And I said, okay, sure, no problem. So I paid the bill twice. He back he's right back to the stamps. That was a thousand dollars. Right. I clicked it. So he's still using, he does not pay it and pay the bill. None of his bills.

Speaker 2 (00:46:24):

Yeah. My, my mother is like that too. And I keep trying to tell her, she's like, I gotta go to the post office. I'm like,

Speaker 5 (00:46:31):

He goes to the post office. He does. He does

Speaker 2 (00:46:36):

No, I, at this point it's a losing battle. I mean, Hey, that's her trip out. She likes to go to the bus stop. So I just leave it alone. Yeah.

Speaker 5 (00:46:43):

Well she's actually helping them to keep their jobs. Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([00:46:47](00:46:47)):

So I leave it alone. But then, But you know what, I'm not going to lie. I still utilize the post office team.

Speaker 5 ([00:47:04](00:47:04)):

Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([00:47:04](00:47:04)):

But no, this, this works well. Cause I guess, you know, we have to look at how things are going post COVID, you know, and as a P as a, and compare it to the previous services. So,

Speaker 5 ([00:47:16](00:47:16)):

Well, in, in, in, in some instances, if people are able to adapt to technology, there are some things we probably won't

Speaker 3 ([00:47:30](00:47:30)):

Have to return to.

Speaker 2 ([00:47:32](00:47:32)):

Oh, good. That's that's that's good. I want you to hold that thought. Cause that's going to be like the, the moving into phase. Like what would you like to see? Or what do you think is successful? But I just want to go back to some things really quick. Um, and this was referencing with appointee because I know with appointee and correct me if I'm wrong, that when the person calls the customer calls, um, they are actually setting up the appointment themselves as opposed to where the greeter used to determine like, Oh, you need to go see an employment counselor. No, no, no, no. You need to go see a PSR. I mean, so the act, the person, the customer is now kinda

Speaker 3 ([00:48:16](00:48:16)):

Scheduled themselves.

Speaker 2 ([00:48:19](00:48:19)):

Okay. Um, and, and so are you finding that the customers are not seeing the right person because there's not enough of a definition as far as who they need to see, are you having to go in and monitor appointee and see that the customer is seeing the right person based on their need

Speaker 3 ([00:48:45](00:48:45)):

Every now and then you finding that they, they probably should have, uh, chosen, uh, they didn't, they didn't indicate what service, the, the correct service that they wanted. But as I told you before, my staff are cross train. So when they come across a customer, no matter what they've requested, they are able to provide that for them. But I haven't gotten a lot of feedback from, from the staff, uh, indicating that there's an issue, a huge issue with customers choosing the wrong, uh, service that they want.

Speaker 2 ([00:49:26](00:49:26)):

And I think, I think that's why most offices have gone to the cross training was across training more so done postcode, I mean, post COVID or Fort because of COVID

Speaker 3 ([00:49:38](00:49:38)):

Well, more intensively. Yes. Yes. Because my, my, my resource specialist now facilitates orientation.

Speaker 2 ([00:49:48](00:49:48)):

Hmm. Okay. So she, and that's not something she,

Speaker 3 ([00:49:52](00:49:52)):

No, that's not something that she, she would have done if that she didn't even ask to do it, but it's how, you know, you know, you presented to them, look, we need to survive.

Speaker 2 ([00:50:02](00:50:02)):

Right. Well, we've got to survive or not. So, so appointee customers are doing the appointment for appointments. Um, how has the staff, uh, I mean, so we've gotten different feedback from staff that some, they like it, or they don't like it because either because, um, it's allowing the customer to kind of dictate their day and then the others are like, Hey, I love knowing exactly who I'm going to see why I'm going to see them. And the time that I'm going to see them.

Speaker 3 ([00:50:31](00:50:31)):

Yes. Because the is, unless you block off the staff's time where they, you know, you can block off a certain part of the day when no one can schedule that time. I mean, because as we have to block off time for them to go back and actually do the case management piece for the customers that they've provided orientations or whatever to you, um, it was Rocky at first because we didn't, this was the first time that we've ever had ever tried this. But now we're at that point, if it works for us, I mean, the customers are the staff have they adapted to it. So it, and, and I have to, I know I saw redundant with this cross train thing, but if you're cross trained to, when no matter what customer customer you'd click on, you're able to provide that service. It makes it a whole lot simpler and it makes it a whole lot simpler for the customer to the last thing.

Speaker 3 ([00:51:28](00:51:28)):

Good customer service is not passing somebody off. Right. Exactly. Okay. I see what you need and, and I'm going to be able to provide it to you now, does it, does it occur sometime where it's something that the staff is just simply not trained to do for the customer? Yes. They're actually to actually reschedule them. Right. Then let them know that I'm an, you did, I'm unable to provide that service for you. We'll have someone designated for that. And they're available at two o'clock tomorrow. Is that suitable for you? And they say yes. And then, you know, then they get a link. You have to back it up, you know, so tomorrow, you know, this is what's going to happen.

Speaker 2 ([00:52:13](00:52:13)):

Okay. And so when they have those meetings, because it's done through either teams or zoom, are they from the appointee, the meetings that they're going to have with them? It's not just a phone call. It's is an actual link for a call such as this, right? Like this with their face to face.

Speaker 3 ([00:52:28](00:52:28)):

Uh, um, if a customer, uh, request a team meeting, they have to request a teams meeting where if they're scheduling themselves,

Speaker 2 ([00:52:47](#)):

Oh, it doesn't automatically.

Speaker 3 ([00:52:49](#)):

And that's that, I guess I'm getting to one of those points. So what could be a little bit smoother if, if they could scan, if they could schedule a time that they wanted to, to, uh, have the teams meeting and the system could send them the link and send the staff, the link to that would be better if they could, if they could just make that happy

Speaker 2 ([00:53:17](#)):

A phone call when they go through a pointy, unless they request this teams.

Speaker 3 ([00:53:21](#)):

Yes. Okay. Thank you.

Speaker 4 ([00:53:26](#)):

So for your, for your wishlist, if customers could automatically set up a team meeting,

Speaker 3 ([00:53:35](#)):

Well, I, if, if the, if the system was set, would set up a teams meeting for the, for the customer and send a link to both the customer and the staff.

Speaker 4 ([00:53:49](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 3 ([00:53:53](#)):

So if the staff now scheduled a team meeting for, uh, for the customer, then the staff is able to send the customer the cheese.

Speaker 4 ([00:54:07](#)):

Yeah.

Speaker 3 ([00:54:08](#)):

If the customers sets up a team meeting, team orientation, the staff don't get the link.

Speaker 4 ([00:54:15](#)):

They don't. So how they just go into what appointee and they see that it is right there.

Speaker 3 ([00:54:21](#)):

Yes. They customer recent requested, uh, teams.

Speaker 4 ([00:54:28](#)):

Oh, okay. Okay. That's interesting. Okay.

Speaker 3 ([00:54:43](00:54:43)):

I can't hear you.

Speaker 4 ([00:54:46](00:54:46)):

Um, before we go back to another part of the wishlist, um, let me, so anything else that happens between when the customer talks or meets with, uh, uh, employment AC or PSR? Is there anything else within that realm that can move a little bit smoother?

Speaker 3 ([00:55:15](00:55:15)):

Um,

Speaker 3 ([00:55:20](00:55:20)):

I, I, that's not a question that I asked the staff that they may have something to add to that, but I can only go on, uh, when we're meeting with the staff to ask them, is everything okay? Are there any issues or whatever they haven't mentioned anything. I mean, for, to be honest with you, this, the whole appointee and, and orientation online, um, um, the board really did their research to make sure that we had the appropriate software to use. So there were a few kinks in the beginning, but everything pretty much smoothed up pretty quickly. It did. Um,

Speaker 4 ([00:56:07](00:56:07)):

No, the orientation. So what SIS software is being used for the orientation, the orientation,

Speaker 3 ([00:56:16](00:56:16)):

The cut, like I said, uh, the customers generally, uh, schedule themselves or they, they, they call and, and the, um, who's ever answering the phones. They scheduled them most, the, the book of the orientations are done over the phone. The higher percentage is on the phone then than through teams

Speaker 6 ([00:56:42](00:56:42)):

Verbally explained in the world orientation on the phone to some,

Speaker 2 ([00:56:48](00:56:48)):

So there's no video or anything that's used anymore. Correct. There's not a video presentation that orientation.

Speaker 3 ([00:56:57](00:56:57)):

Um, I'm not sure. I, because if I, if I gave you the answer, I, I, I just couldn't, I have to verify that.

Speaker 2 ([00:57:10](00:57:10)):

Okay. But you're just saying most of it is occurring phone, so that would have to be verbally because, you know, I'm just thinking it would be verbally. And then even if it's done through a zoom link or a team link, I guess it would still be that one-on-one interaction.

Speaker 3 ([00:57:28](00:57:28)):

And, and, you know, the, the, the staff will, uh, ask the customer, is it, they will suggest it to the, what we, you know, we can, I can schedule this on soon for you. So it'll be a whole lot easier for me to show you some things, especially if we can back up to, I know we're talking about orientations now, but the staff prefer to work with the customer, uh, zoom to, uh, assist them with work in Texas and to generate a resume because, and, and to even talk to them about the employment plan so that they can see this, this document, you know, it's easier to explain somebody that you're generating them employment plan, if you showing them what it actually looks like.

Speaker 2 ([00:58:14](#)):

Okay. So the employment plan, who do you submit the, is it, where is that submitted through? Is it it's in twist? Okay. So you're just saying that they like to be able to share screen and show them, you know, this is what,

Speaker 3 ([00:58:29](#)):

Yeah. The employment plan is the ask afternoon. The next steps that the customer is, uh, is, uh, agreeing that they're going to take.

Speaker 6 ([00:58:41](#)):

How do you want, when you're talking about, um, how they're calling in and they're discussing this with someone, maybe you're not tech savvy. I was just wondering, has it, has it come up that maybe online, like an automated thing, like the voice telling you all of this orientation information or on your phone, press one, to hear it again, or do you feel like when you're talking to somebody that's really been key, whereas if it was just automated, hi, today, we're going to talk about this map and then you could hear it again and press two to repeat. Do you feel like something like that might be beneficial or on the website for those that aren't tech savvy,

Speaker 3 ([00:59:18](#)):

Those were for those I think would be better for those who are tech savvy, because those who are not, uh, would possibly be those people that need to ask that they need to ask a question regarding this. They, they, they heard it, you asked him to repeat it and they still don't understand it. So you need that person there to discuss it with them. Um, and I say that because I have issues, I'm, I'm visual. I can hear it, but I have to see it to retain it. Uh, even even talking to you, I have to, if I don't write it down, it's not there. I mean, people have the old learning capabilities or whatever, but this press two and press one. And, you know, and it's, for me, it's, especially with something. So as important as my benefits, I need to ask a question, right. That one-on-one has been key for right now, for those who have, have, have been on, have had the benefit received the benefit benefits before the rules and guidelines are pretty much the same as they've been for the last couple of years, that should be an option for them because they, they could pretty much do the boss recording for you. What does, what the steps are. So if they, if they, if they had a choice, that would be a good choice for people to have.

Speaker 2 ([01:00:46](#)):

So as of right now, so let's, let's look at, cause I know we're getting, uh, started at 10. I think we're getting close to your time, so we need to wrap up. So, um, you're so let's continue with the wishlist, so to speak. What other, what else would you have on that?

Speaker 3 ([01:01:07](#)):

Um, that, I mean, just to, to, to kind of, uh, my, my wishlist is all know there's a vaccine. Um, nobody's really going to be able to predict, uh, how many people are going to be protected or for how long. Um, so we've been pushed into this technology thing, which is probably something that wouldn't have happened unless we were pushed into it. We were going to still be stagnant. Um, so I, I, I, I, I think, well, I know that we're on the right road and we are at the point too, to where, uh, we basically just, just need to have, um, a place for people to come, who don't have technology, who don't have a computer at home in order for them to come out into, to job, searching and take care of, uh, uh, some things that they need to take care of with the computer.

Speaker 3 ([01:02:23](#)):

Um, now the, you know, the library charges you to use computer limited time. It's not really very many places that people can go and take care of, of, of their professional or personal business, unless they have that have the opportunity. And then, like I said, people have a certain, some people need to sit down and talk with somebody, even if it's with the credit glass between them, they need that. I mean, cause they have these questions that may seem not intelligible to you, but to me, I just don't know. And I need somebody to take the time to, to answer those questions for me. Look at me. My life is in, when it's upside down, I was on this job for 20 years, then all of a sudden COVID came in and, and now they've made the job remote. So I need to change my profession, hold my hand and tell me it's going to be all right. You know, just, just, can you, can you just walk me through this? So, and I told you before people can't, they can't go to the next step until they tell you the story. They don't have to tell somebody about I had COVID my wife had it almost didn't make it, you know, and, and sad to say a loss of your family room, family members, but, uh, I need a job

Speaker 2 ([01:03:47](#)):

And you know, what, that's that human touch? Um, that you're saying it's kind of like taking away from it because even if we did, there's been some discussion about an online chat, but that still removes the human, the human touch from it. I mean, and then with the, with the online chat, you have to be able to type in your question, you know, and again, that goes back to your piece about when you're saying it.

Speaker 3 ([01:04:12](#)):

Yeah. You have to know where the, where to, where to type in your car,

Speaker 2 ([01:04:17](#)):

Right. Where to type it in. Um, you have to have the technology to type in, um, which means a computer or your a smartphone, which some people still are not operating, um, with a smartphone. What's another part of the wishlist that you would just based off of the everyday in and outs that you're seeing on the employee side, as well as the customer side

Speaker 3 ([01:04:44](#)):

On the, on the employee side, I got, I said, were they, they would, they were adjusted very well. And I know it's because of, uh, generationally, they were born. This is their, this is not me. They were born doing exactly what zooming. I mean, tic talking, I mean, they, this is, this is their element. They're not much, my staff are not, they don't have any issues with what we're doing right now. The only thing we can do for them is bring the technology on, bring it on.

Speaker 2 ([01:05:20](#)):

Is there something, is there, are they asking for something that they're seeing like, Hey,

Speaker 3 (01:05:24):

Sorry, I didn't know that this was going to be the conversation I would have dept. I definitely would have done my homework to provide you with that. If I could, if I, if you allow me to, to, uh, question them and give me a site to send you something later this afternoon in the morning, I'd be more than happy to do that. I mean, I'm, I'm, uh, I have a huddle with them in the morning. You can actually, you know, just, you know, do a, do a, uh, put a platform for them to, you know, tell me what they needed and I can get it to you.

Speaker 2 (01:05:57):

Perfect. That actually would just be perfect

Speaker 3 (01:06:00):

To be honest. Um, I'm, I'm the manager, so I'm not, I I'm, I made sure things are done. I'm not really out there, you know, doing it myself. I mean, I'm not going to pretend that I am, but you know, I'm just making, I make sure that it gets done and it's my job to make sure if they need something, uh, need something to do their job better. Give me the information and I'll get it to the place that it needs to go.

Speaker 2 (01:06:25):

No, I think I perfectly understand that. And, and actually, I think your name came up yesterday in a conversation because you've been at that, at that office for awhile, right?

Speaker 3 (01:06:34):

Nope. I've only been here. This office opened in 2019. I've been around

Speaker 2 (01:06:42):

For a while. Okay. Yes. Cause they are, they're like, Oh, you're going to talk to Brenda with, Oh, she knows. She knows everything that goes on within workforce solutions. So I said, that's a great, that's great. So, you know, have a conversation with her tomorrow. So, so that would be perfect if you could just, uh, kind of tip your, set your staff and just say, Hey, let me know, share out. And then if you can just email me, uh, that information back to the same, you know, link, email that I sent to you. Um, that would be great because really we want to see how pushing forward, because honestly speaking kind of like what you said. I mean, we don't know when we're coming out of the COVID situation. Um, I think that there will, there is a need still, like you said, for the in-person services. And now the next step would be to think about how can we equip the workforce solutions offices to receive customers in limited, you know, limited quantity and with the proper, um, precautionary measures that way. Would that be a part of the wishlist? Like you said, a place where they can still come in, um, maybe even with, like you said, with the glass panel can like they do the, where people still have to go to the grocery store, you know, just taking the proper precautions.

Speaker 3 (01:08:01):

Yeah. I mean, um, uh, I think, uh, people end in initially in denial, but a lot of people know that COVID is real. This is something

Speaker 5 ([01:08:16](#)):

That's real in who knows. I, I, I hope that, you know, by the end of the year, you know, that it's, it's kind of eradicated or, or at Bay, but for the next couple of months, we just need to still continue to be as safe as we possibly can. And nobody wants to be working under the premise that, you know, I'm afraid to breathe whenever that week, whatever we can do, um, virtually we need to make sure that we take care of things like that. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([01:08:50](#)):

And what about, so you, so you're going to ask your employer from the employee side. So from the customer side, um, what's been the feedback. Do they talk, do they comment about the website or do they, they say it's easy or is it too busy or is it too much wording or not easily accessible to find the, the link that they need, like when they're submitting their, uh, time card or whatnot, their work, their worksheet. I mean, how does that mean?

Speaker 5 ([01:09:19](#)):

I did, uh, asked him about the, my Texas career. Uh, what kind of comments did the, have they gotten from the customers regarding it? And the customers do find that somewhat easier to maneuvering? My Texas career is easier. Yes. They somewhat easier to cook. They've asked the, uh, the, the customers that they, they it's been simplified a little bit for them.

Speaker 2 ([01:09:46](#)):

And so my Texas career though, is that, is that that's part of wit or is that okay?

Speaker 5 ([01:09:52](#)):

Yes, sir. It was designed to be an easier platform for the job seekers to register and to, to maneuver in it. Okay. What was shortcut application? Okay.

Speaker 2 ([01:10:06](#)):

Um, I, I get you some good information from you. Um, the training videos, has there been any, you've heard anything, any feedback on the training videos from, from customers that have had to watch them?

Speaker 5 ([01:10:21](#)):

I know that the, what, uh, what we're doing here is, um, we are the customers that attend the orientations. We are, uh, actually, um, referring them to, uh, LinkedIn has LinkedIn is, is, is, is not, I mean, it's not pushed enough. They have some, some trainees on LinkedIn that off anonymous, phenomenal. I attended one yesterday and why was 11 ways to do your job or something like that. And, and it touched on some points that, you know, I've been around for a while and, you know, to teach me something new is, you know, it's, it's, and it taught me something about myself and about, you know, uh, being empathetic people and,

Speaker 3 ([01:11:14](#)):

And, and why shooting and how not to take grudges that you have against people at work and learn how to, you know, talk it through and, and get along and, and, you know, just, it was just, it was wonderful. It really, really was. So we try to, to, uh, steer out our customers that way, these are they're

free. That's number one and B we, we put it on their next steps, so they could still attend certain types of training or trainings or whatever to get them prepared for the next steps that they're going to go into along with referring them to the, uh, the, uh, orientations that workforce solutions has, uh, Wurk solutions.

Speaker 6 ([01:12:01](#)):

You had to list all the, all the links from LinkedIn that have all these trainings that you love. So you have, like, you have like some links or something, like, have you been sharing the, the LinkedIn videos, like you have them or something, or

Speaker 3 ([01:12:19](#)):

We share the, the LinkedIn site for them to give them the link to that they can go in and actually registered for LinkedIn trainings.

Speaker 4 ([01:12:29](#)):

So the trainings for workforce solutions on work solutions, just let me, um, get a clarity on that. So is there, are there trainings that are offered on work solutions? Yes.

Speaker 3 ([01:12:39](#)):

They have a calendar interview skills closing the deal, and a job written is to kit. There's a calendar and it lets, you know, when, uh, when, uh, they're going to, uh, to be facilitated and, uh, the time, the date and time.

Speaker 4 ([01:12:58](#)):

Okay. And so on those types of, on those who's conducting those interviews, is it just,

Speaker 3 ([01:13:06](#)):

We are facilitators workforce solutions and facilitators that, that do them online.

Speaker 4 ([01:13:11](#)):

Okay. Okay. And that's the workforce. And so is that a part of their employment plan that's going to be on their employment plan that y'all create

Speaker 3 ([01:13:24](#)):

In some cases? Yes.

Speaker 4 ([01:13:27](#)):

Okay. And what about the, uh, do you also encourage them to go to the virtual events as far as the virtual job fairs or they, are you okay. And that's also on WIRK solutions as well? Yeah. Okay. Um, I think we're pretty good. Are there any online services that are offered by your career opposite the career office that we haven't discussed or that we should discuss? Is there anything that you can think of? No. Okay. Right now. Okay. Um, and then I'll just we'll then I'll just look for as far as the online experience from your, your office staff, um, I'll look for that for tomorrow, but thank you very much. Appreciate your time. You've

Speaker 2 (01:14:12):

Been very informative.

Speaker 5 (01:14:14):

Um, this, this wasn't bad at all.

Speaker 2 (01:14:18):

You not, it was gonna be bad now. Um, we appreciate it. Like I said, very informative. You've really broken down quite a bit. Um, if I have any additional questions I'll I would like to be able to just send them to you and just say, Hey, is this correct? But I think that we have everything. I think this is really good.

Speaker 5 (01:14:40):

Okay. Thank you so much. You have a good rest of your day. Be safe. Okay. Thanks. Bye-bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Thelisa LaVergne, Manager
Workforce Solutions – Regional Navigator Team

Contractor

Interfaith of the Woodlands

Interview conducted

March 3, 2021

Speaker 1 ([00:00:29](00:00:29)):

Lisa

Speaker 1 ([00:00:33](00:00:33)):

Morning, Lisa, how are you? I'm doing fine. How are you? I'm doing well. Thanks so much for asking and thank you. I know your schedule was busy. You had a lot going on, so I really appreciate you being here with us. Good, good. Um, so I have I'll let me go ahead and introduce myself and my colleague. So, um, I'm Tammy Frazier and the media director with outreach strategist, and we have been brought on with H H HAC, um, to basically evaluate the operation systems, the website, um, at this point, you know, we're in the middle of COVID and I know that all of the operations had to move basically online. Um, you may still be seeing some people in the, um, and the career office, but we are seeing, evaluating whether we need to, um, whether they need to be there needs to be updates or any type of changes, adjustments, um, to the website that will make it easier and more accessible for either the, for both the customer, as well as, um, the career office employee. So you're in your, uh, knowledge and your feedback will be very helpful in this. Um, we interviewed, uh, we had it listed eight career office managers that were given to us, um, from Mike [inaudible], um, through faith. And so you are on that list. So we helped to learn a lot from you today.

Speaker 1 ([00:02:13](00:02:13)):

I was a little surprised to be on the list because I actually do not work in the career office. Oh, okay. Where are you? And I'm not a career manager. I'm actually the manager for the regional team. And the regional team is right now, we're 20 is, um, consists of 20 members that we provide our job search, as well as all of our curriculum out into the community. We're all a fine to an office, but we're, we're only in the office, maybe 5% of the time, because most of our time is out of facilitating events. And what's the official name for your, your group? Is that a local team or what is your official?

Speaker 2 ([00:03:01](00:03:01)):

It's like, it's a regional thing. It's workforce solutions. Regional team. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:03:08](00:03:08)):

And okay, well, I'm glad you told me that, but so I may have to make some modifications, but let's, I want to introduce you, um, to Isabella Harkrider, she's also a team member. And are you, are you at the, are you, I'm sorry. Excuse me. Are you at the office in Missouri city right now,

Speaker 2 ([00:03:34](00:03:34)):

Or you're not home base? My home assigned office. Yes. Oh, okay. Okay. And I haven't seen it. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:03:44](00:03:44)):

It's a newer office, right? It's the new, I know. Cause we were doing also some, some work with them for the opening of the office. And I have my other colleague on the line as well, who is working on that. So, um, well, let's just see. So w w you were in the career office at one time or

Speaker 2 ([00:04:04](00:04:04)):

Never,

Speaker 1 ([00:04:04](#)):

You've never been in a career office when you started?

Speaker 2 ([00:04:07](#)):

No. Yeah. I started with, uh, workforce solutions in 2014 started, uh, I started as young adult. Um, Oh God, I can't believe, uh, I was working for the summer program, helping to recruit young adults and find what works for them and works for young adults during the summer. I did that for two years. Now. All of the members of the regional teams have, are assigned to an office, but you don't necessarily from a to five, we're not in the office.

Speaker 1 ([00:04:49](#)):

Okay. Let me tell you, uh, Alisa, you may need to log out and come back in, um, because your internet connection, we are you're in slo-mo. Excuse me. So sorry about that.

Speaker 2 ([00:05:04](#)):

So, excuse me. What did you say? 80 and T has been working in the area for the last two days. And whenever I see an 80 and T truck, I know there's bound to be bubble, so that's, but I tell you what, let me sign out. I'm going to move closer to my modem and maybe that will help. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:05:31](#)):

Okay. Thank you. No worries. Okay. Thanks. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:05:35](#)):

Well actually I don't have to sign it now. I can just move your items over and just move. And maybe this, I don't know if this will help, but I'm changing roles. I could see my house seat changing and me blow my nose.

Speaker 1 ([00:05:58](#)):

Excuse me. So, one second,

Speaker 2 ([00:06:01](#)):

Give me a second. I'm going to the modem.

Speaker 1 ([00:06:06](#)):

Okay. Um, Tim, I know you're on the line. Um, and I know you're not talking about this yesterday, so, um, feel free if you have questions, Tim, now that you know her role, I know you're driving, but I'm not sure if he can talk.

Speaker 3 ([00:06:34](#)):

Okay,

Speaker 1 ([00:06:35](#)):

Great. Great. So did you hear what she says? She is a regional team member, so she, so maybe you can structure. I mean, I have some questions that I'm thinking I can ask her as well, but maybe there's some

that you can come up with since you are. Um, so she's still, she's doing a lot of those workshops and remember how we were talking yesterday about the events that are online and possibly even types of trainings. So maybe she can help.

Speaker 3 (00:07:02):

Uh, I believe so. Um, I think we've exchanged emails before on, uh, uh, maybe over a little over a year ago on some things, um, uh, under our previous contract. I don't remember now, I just remember your name when,

Speaker 1 (00:07:18):

Oh, she's out, she's changing, she's moving around because the closer to the modem. So she can't, but, um, but yeah, if we can, you know, kind of go from there, I guess you can give a description of what she does and okay. Is that better? Oh my goodness. Yes. Now I feel like,

Speaker 2 (00:07:41):

Sorry about that. I am so sorry. Um, no worries.

Speaker 1 (00:07:46):

This is COVID

Speaker 2 (00:07:49):

Whenever they're in the area, I have that problem. So I don't know if they'd be working, you know, in the wiring lines or what, but whenever I see a truck I'm like, okay, it's going to be one of them days.

Speaker 1 (00:08:01):

Oh, goodness. I understand. Cause when they come over here, they mess up all kinds of stuff and the, and the break and the boxes in my yard, in the backyard. So, so it's for connects the whole neighborhood one side of a grid. So it's horrible. I understand.

Speaker 2 (00:08:20):

So let me give you kind of a little as quick as I can an overview. I think it was okay.

Speaker 1 (00:08:26):

Hold on. Just one second, Lisa. Um, I just wanna let you know, we're recording this. So if you go ahead and, um, just, and it's just for our own internal purposes, it's not anything going external. Um, um, just in case we have to review and add, you know, like something you said and say, Oh yeah, we need to focus on that. So does it, if you can officially just introduce yourself and your title and then that would be great if you could give us an overview. Okay.

Speaker 2 (00:08:51):

Uh, my name is Elisa Laverne and I, um, my, um,

Speaker 4 (00:08:56):

The manager for the regional team. And I've been with workforce solutions probably about since 2014. And, uh, I've had many roles. Uh, I've been a disability navigator or a college navigator, young adult, uh, manager and a regional team supervisor now region to team manager. And so, uh, let me tell you what the regional team who we are. I think it was back in 2014, the board, um, issued an issuance that, uh, workforce solutions would form a select number of individuals that would facilitate all of our job search curriculum. Uh, our, when I grow up curriculum out into the community, we are a mobile unit. So to speak a mobile arm of the career office, where all each member is assigned to a different office based on the contractor that they work for. So we're not actually in the office from eight to five, we're really mobile.

Speaker 4 ([00:10:09](#)):

Uh, we provide jobs or seminars, um, out in the community, of course, before the virus, uh, we were face-to-face. We go into the prisons, school districts, uh, non-profit organizations, churches, um, you name it. And so that's pretty much our role. My role is pretty much to manage the team, uh, our events that we schedule and provide oversight to the team. So the team 20 right now, so I have two what's called disability navigators. Their role is to provide, uh, training for our career office staff on issues pertaining to assisting customers with a disability. They also work individually with customers on a case by case basis phase will provide, uh, training out into the community, but their specialization for one of a better word is more assisting individuals with disability to college navigators. And their role is more person to working with individuals that are in adult education literacy.

Speaker 4 ([00:11:22](#)):

And then there are six facilitators, none of facilitators facilitate the jobs or seminars we have, what's called jobs or seminar curriculum. And so they facilitate that curriculum out into the community. Right now we're doing everything virtually. And most recently I, uh, have a new project that's called opportunity and that has six, uh, career navigators that work exclusively with adult education providers and our career office. So there might be more than you want to know, but that's kind of, that's kind of the regional team and what we look like. No, that's, that's good. That's good. Um, I do have a question. So just the disability navigators, do they work with VR? Yes, absolutely. They are not the VR, no representative, but they do work with them. Do they work with the ECS or the, um, PSRs at all? Yes. Um, the disability navigator does all of the EO training for not only all staff, but also new staff that comes on board.

Speaker 4 ([00:12:36](#)):

They do the equal opportunity training alongside with, uh, Sabrina, who is the EO officer at the board level. Uh, they do all have good training in the career offices with all of the staff, not just the, uh, uh, uh, ECS, but also PSRs, uh, the supervisors and managers. They do all the training for accessibility technology. Uh, we do that several times a year. Uh, we go into the offices, uh, when is October for disability, national disability awareness month. So they work with all of the career office staff and training for all of the career office staff throughout our region. Okay. Um, Tim, do you have questions?

Speaker 5 ([00:13:24](#)):

Yeah, I believe the, my name is Tim Lang front. I've worked with outreach strategy system, I think at one point in the past couple of years, you and I have exchanged emails on, uh, on some items, but I don't remember when or why. And it was, I just recognized your name. Um, uh, so how, at what point is, uh, is

an navigator, uh, brought in to conversation with a customer, uh, and how did, how do they get brought in?

Speaker 4 (00:13:58):

Okay. That can happen several ways, depending on a navigator. So navigators pretty much are more specialized. Let me say that. So give you a good example. We do have, what's called an income now navigator and, um, Omar, uh, it's been in the workforce system several years now. He worked exclusively with non-profit organizations that provide services to individuals that are homeless. So if an individual comes into the office or open, uh, virtually, and they are, for whatever reason are unable to make the connection for the customer to a shelter or to a nonprofit organization for resources, then they will contact Omar for assistance. So that's one way in terms of, um, that's for customers that are experiencing homelessness and then for the navigators. Now, all of the career office staff are trained to work with any type of customer that come into office. That's their job.

Speaker 4 (00:15:00):

They're rather your home was rather you come in there with a disability. It does not matter all the career office staff where there's a PSR, whether it's an EPC supervisor manager are trained to be able to meet the needs of any customer that comes into the door, IR regardless of what their background is or their current living situation. But we do have navigators sort of specialized in those particular areas that in the event that the office staff run into some areas that are unknown unfamiliar to them, and they need some, some assistance, then they call on a navigator. And so whether the navigator do either one or two things, the navigator will either assist the staff in helping that client, that customer, or in some cases in the, working with the customer alongside with the career office.

Speaker 1 (00:15:53):

Yes.

Speaker 4 (00:15:55):

Okay. Yeah, that was very helpful. I'm sorry. Let me step on your toes. Here's here's another quick incidence. Um, give you another example when the facilitators are facilitating, say one of our, um, lessons that talks about resumes, we might get a customer out of that group to say, can I email you or get some additional assistance? And in that case, then there we have what we have an email that's exclusively for the regional teams. So the customer can email seminars at Wurk and say, I need some help with the resume. And so the facilitator will follow up, uh, and work with that customer, help them with their resume. In some cases, most of the time they really would like some individual help with mock interview. And so there are different depending on the scenario and the situation, that's kind of how we connect with customers.

Speaker 1 (00:16:56):

Um, and Tim really quick, just so, so the services that any of the ECS, or like, I know the whole staff is trained, but the services that the EDC gives, um, like the assistance with the resume or, um, the training, like, you know, your resume, uh, interview training or whatnot. So you're saying that, um, if the EDC or the PSR can't do it with them, then some I remember with your team and navigator will help with that as well. Or is that outside of the realm of an ISI and a PSR?

Speaker 4 (00:17:32):

No. And in terms of, let me see how to say it now. Uh, the office staff are trained to do, to have job search seminars. So they're all trained to do that. And so, um, if a customer comes in, they should be able to help with their resume or, uh, interviewing in some cases, if we're facilitating, say an event with the high school students, we wouldn't direct them to the office. At that point, we would go ahead and make the connection with that student and help that student on a one-on-one if that's what they're requesting. Okay. Does that make sense?

Speaker 1 ():
Yes. It makes sense, Tim, what were you saying?

Speaker 5 ():
No, I just need to hop off

Speaker 4 ():
At what it looks like

Speaker 5 ():
You have a great day.

Speaker 4 ():
Okay. So that, so that does that have we're, we're kind of, uh, we're like the mobile unit of the career office. We're just, we're out in the Houston Galveston area, providing our job search, uh, seminars in our curriculum to schools. We go into prisons, we go into libraries, we go to hospitals, we go to churches, we go all throughout the Houston Galveston area. And we could have anywhere from five to a hundred individuals attending our job search seminars and we, and facilitators pretty much we'll do that. And a customer oftentimes will reach out and say, you know, that was real. Give you a good example. We got a thank you from, uh, uh, from a individual that attended one of Frieda's classes on interview. And she reached out to Frieda because at the end of our presentation, we'll always have the facilitator's name. She reached out to Frieda long story, short, free to work with her for about 20 minutes on a mock interview. And she ended up getting the job. So that's the kind of assistance we provide. Now, the career office staff can provide, also provide jobs or seminars, but they do it more inclusive of their office in their office. And then there is space, whereas we're more we're out in the community providing that service on a larger scale.

Speaker 1 ():
Let me ask you, could you just walk us through, uh, what that looks like now? I know, you know, we had the pre COVID, so I know that those were interacted. They were in-person. So how does that work now? Um, D are they, they're virtual online and if you just walk us through, how do people sign up for them? Where did they find the information? Um, you know, how does that what's that process look like? Okay. So one more thing. And this, the systems that you use, like, in other words, the software systems that you use, like, like for instance, example in the office they use wit and, you know, twist for those that are on snap or, uh, uh, TANIF benefits, but just, if you could just kind of, if you know, the, that you use connect, that would be great.

Speaker 4 ():

Okay. All right. Uh, so let me tell you, uh, how does it work pre uh, COVID 19, they were all face to face, right? So when COVID happened, we were still, we realized that it was time for us to kind of change our mode of operation. And so all of our curriculum, we took it virtually, we redesigned it totally that we could deliver our material virtually versus face-to-face. So now our curriculum is what I consider as well-rounded and more comprehensive than not only can we provide it in person, but we have also made some changes in adaptive so we can deliver the same material, but delivered virtually. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:21:39](#)):

Okay. So let's say I'm a job. Let's say I'm someone that you need to help. How do you get the information to the public? And then talk to me, walk me through it. Let's just say, I don't know anything about how this works, how I can be a part of this. How can I come to one of your seminars? Like what, what do they need to do? What does a customer?

Speaker 4 ([00:21:57](#)):

So there are two scenarios. So if you have a customer that comes in, I'm gonna give you one scenario, and this is the career office scenario. If a customer comes in and say, I just got laid off because of COVID and I need to find a job. So then individuals will go into the career office or contact that number, and then EDC or PSR will follow up with that customer. Do what, uh, do either a short term should do an ECC will meet with that customer either virtually or in person do what's called a short term and a long-term plan. If doing that plan. Um, the ECC feels that the customer would benefit from having some, uh, sharpening their skills in terms of interviewing, developing a 32nd commercial, or even how to complete applications online, then the EDC and or the PSR will register them for a job search seminar that the career office is hosting.

Speaker 4 ([00:22:57](#)):

So that's our customer that comes into either physically get walk into our office or reach out to our office virtually. That's how they get that individual one-on-one assistance for job search. Excellent. However, if you are a teacher ed for being an ISD and you have students that will be graduating and you have part of your curriculum is workforce development, then you would simply send a request to seminars at, which is an email that we have at seminars, ed Wurk solutions.com and that, uh, and you would say, hi, my name is Sheila. I work with career technical and education. I have some that, um, will be graduating soon as part of our workforce development. Is it possible you could come in and talk to the students about labor market information and how to do job search. So then the regional team, we will get that email. Uh, we will see what the date is. The time is the number of participants. And then based on that information, we will assign either one or two facilitators. We will, uh, send a calendar invite to the district. They will accept, and we would conduct the seminar virtually.

Speaker 1 ([00:24:23](#)):

So, okay. I want to go back to the ones that the, okay, so the ISI, so, and maybe, you know, this question I'm answering, maybe you don't. So the ECS and the PSRs, it is not in their purview to, um, to in, it's not in their purview to actually train a person, like as far as like, Hey, let's update your resume. Do they do that in office? And are they, they can do that.

Speaker 4 ([00:24:49](#)):

They can do that in the office. Um, there is, uh, there's a mandate that any person in our system, whether they work in an office or even on the regional team, has to do, what's called a delivering

effective workshop and any person in our system that has, uh, attended the delivering effective workshop and passed it is qualified at that point to be able to facilitate it, facilitate any jobs or seminar class, whether it's on interviewing, whether it's on 32nd commercial, whether it's resumes, uh, how the creative plan, anyone that has taken that is considered certified in our system and can facilitate the classes.

Speaker 1 ([00:25:36](#)):

Okay. But there's, but these are online. Are they online? Now? These are online now right now. So is it a verb is an appointment they set up at like a, through a pointy and then that's how they work with you. Or is there a video

Speaker 4 ([00:25:50](#)):

How the career office is handling the virtual jobs or seminars for customers? Uh, I know they're conducting them. I'm assuming now that they've gone to this new self, the system appointee, we don't use a pointy. Uh, I would imagine that's how they're scheduling their appointments. I'm that I really can't answer because I'm not really sure,

Speaker 1 ([00:26:10](#)):

But how do we schedule yours? So how did, how does that work for you? So once a VC or PSR says, Hey, I need your help. Um, how do they get you with the person?

Speaker 4 ([00:26:22](#)):

Okay. If the career office has a staff that they feel like need assistance beyond what they're able to do, typically they're sending me an email or they'll go to, they'll send an email and say, Elisa, we're working with this customer. Is there anything you can do? Dah, dah, dah that's one way. The other way is the team has an email address called seminars at wr K solutions. They can send an email, a sinner requests through that email through seminars@wurksolutions.com.

Speaker 1 ([00:26:57](#)):

So how do you set up an appointment with the client though with the customer?

Speaker 4 ([00:27:02](#)):

Again, we don't typically we do provide some, uh, some assistance to customers, but that's not our, that's not our primary focus. Typically we get customers that are, that come as a result of an event that we have hope that we have hosted they're reached out to us as a result of that, but we don't typically get, we do get some individual requests, but the majority of our requests typically come because we have facilitated an event at a school or a hiring event or some larger platform. And then the customer typically will reach out to them.

Speaker 1 ([00:27:42](#)):

So let's talk about that. I guess that's what I meant to ask you. So the events, how are you, so how are you connecting to events at this point? Is it only because a school or church organization, a prison requests you, or do you host them regularly, like different times,

Speaker 4 ([00:28:03](#)):

But that probably, I would say probably about 80% is because they've had some experience already with the regional team and we've done some events with them in the past. Face-to-face so like, uh, the libraries we typically have, um, the Houston public library for being library. We have like five libraries we've been working with for years. And so typically they just know the routine and they'll go to the, uh, reach out to us via the email seminars at WIRK slash it says, can you host a job search seminar on this day, in this time and we'll click. Yes. And then we'll just assign it to a facilitator. So, um, so that's kind of how the large groups will contact us is via email. Most of them we've had relationships with all of the school districts, the reasonable team in existence for over 12 years. Right. So it's established a really great relationship with the community that most of them have already worked with us in the past. The other thing is we might do an event at one place, and there's a teacher there from another district. And she'll say, can you come to our school and do that as well? So sometimes it's referral, but most of the, sometime it's word of mouth, but nine times out of 10, it's someone we've already facilitated an event with. We have a relationship with,

Speaker 1 ([00:29:26](#)):

Okay. And I want, you know, just remember now, remember we're outside. We don't really know how all this works. So if my questions are repetitive,

Speaker 4 ([00:29:37](#)):

Yes, I'm making it clear because it's easy for me to talk about it in our system. And I have to remember that you're not in the system. So we have these two methods of being able to meet the needs of the customer. We have the career offices that are like 27, 28. And then we have, uh, the regional team, which tends to provide those same services. But we tend to do it more on a larger scale. We're seeing people in groups, whereas the career office might facilitate an event for FA for two individuals, five individuals, 10, but anything that's typically larger than that, the regional typically will do.

Speaker 1 ([00:30:20](#)):

So 80% is from those who have requested it. I'm just trying to get to the point, like, is this something that workforce solutions promotes? I know you have these established relationships, but I'm saying if this is somebody, if, if I'm a person, an individual, I'm not a part of a group, I'm not a part of a church group. I'm not in prison, I'm not in school. How would the other, how would someone find out about, uh, do you just arbitrary? Do you guys just host them on your own without someone asking you to host these events? Is it

Speaker 4 ([00:30:52](#)):

So, so you're asking if you wanted to attend an event and no.

Speaker 1 ([00:30:58](#)):

Like how would someone know? Cause you said 80% of it comes because you are requested to host an event of this nature, but the other is the other 20% of you. Is that going into an office or is it 20% where you guys have generated and come up with your own, like, Hey, every month or every other month let's do a jobs or some events

Speaker 4 ([00:31:20](#)):

Like, uh, and maybe I need to change that percentage. Um, because it varies. So most probably about, I said 80%, maybe probably about 85 to 90% are established relationships. There are times we get a rare

event request that comes straight from the board. Someone contacted somebody at the board and said, can you help us with this? And then the board will filter to the regional team. Okay. Sometimes it'll come referral. Someone heard about the regional team or the event we did and we'll say, Hey, can you come and, uh, have a table at this event. And so probably about 90 PR, probably about 85 to 90%. My percentage might be all, um, our relationships we've established and the rest will come from different entities, either come directly from the board or come from a referral from someone else that knows about the services that we provide.

Speaker 1 (00:32:23):

Okay. So it's not a self-generating self-promoting, uh, entity part of workforce solutions. It's like, it's more like an internal, external type of thing. It's like, you've got the relationships. Okay. You can request us to come out. We will that, Hey, career offices will also help you. If you feel like we need assistance with a customer, we'll also come in and help you with your training if need be, you know, if you need to. And then the rest is like, Hey, board member who's over, whose sits on a charity board. There's so many of them. Yeah. Um, so they say, Hey, can you come over to my, uh, organization and host this ORC or elected official? Can you co you know, like official calls of, Hey, can you come in, host this in my district? Yeah.

Speaker 4 (00:33:17):

And Ashley, just to give you a good example about that one really quick, um, uh, Senator miles, uh, two years ago, started doing really wanting to focus on young high school students and college student getting jobs. And so they had a hiring event in different areas of the city, and they asked us to come in and do while, uh, do some, pull up some job search assistance to talk to the kids, talk to the young adults about their social media. Um, we, we decided on the topic later, but either social media, how to interview, how to dress. And so we will host the seminars either before the hiring event or during a hiring event. And that's something that came to us through one of the board members that sits on the board, on the board with Senator miles, somewhere else. So things like that happened happened, uh, probably about 10% of them

Speaker 1 (00:34:12):

It's specialized sometimes. Okay. Um, and how do, so now that we're not in person, you're not meeting in person, so how does someone connect? So if you're at, uh, let's say United way, and someone says, okay, I want to attend that a bet that you're have having, do you work with, is this done through zoom, through teams? How are you, how are you getting them the link to participate?

Speaker 4 (00:34:40):

So we have, um, and let me just say, well, we do host twice a month, four days, twice a month for four days, Monday through Thursday, what we call our online job seminar, that's on our website and we do it twice a month, uh, for four days from 10 to 1130 and that's advertised on our website.

Speaker 1 (00:35:06):

Okay.

Speaker 4 (00:35:08):

And so we do all of our attorneys are done via zoom.

Speaker 1 ([00:35:14](#)):

We have

Speaker 4 ([00:35:14](#)):

Done some teams, uh, but typically has been zoom or teams.

Speaker 1 ([00:35:21](#)):

So this, this is one that is self promoting. You do it twice a month.

Speaker 4 ([00:35:27](#)):

Online modules are really directed by the board that we do them. So it's just like, we want you to, uh, do the online modules, uh, twice a month, four

Speaker 2 ([00:35:38](#)):

Days. And it's ongoing. Sometimes we have five people that 10, sometimes we have 20, and that information is on our website. It's on our calendar and we all list the dates we'll list of time. And we'll also list the, uh, platform. Can, do you, are you able to share screen, or can you walk me through going through that so I can see it it's Wurk solutions? Or is it at your, um, at the, uh, other address that you gave the work [inaudible] solutions? Just an email, it's just an email. It has no other function other than to be able to send an email to, to the regional team requesting whatever the issue may be, but it's just simply an email seminars. Ed Wurk solutions.com is just an email inbox. So I'm actually on the website. So where would I go? Do you want me to share screen and you can walk me through or if we already have it up? Yes. Okay. Just a,

Speaker 6 ([00:36:42](#)):

Let me

Speaker 2 ([00:36:45](#)):

And I am sharing now. Okay. Here I am. Okay. Uh, advance your career. This one, uh, try job search. Okay. Uh,

Speaker 6 ([00:37:08](#)):

Oops.

Speaker 2 ([00:37:09](#)):

Oh, you move fast. Uh, this go to, I'm sorry, go to career. Uh, I don't, uh, you can tell, I don't go here very often. Career expiration. Okay. Um,

Speaker 6 ([00:37:29](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:37:30](#)):

Go back to job search. Okay. I'm on job search here. Uh, go to job fairs and hiring events. Okay.

Speaker 6 ([00:37:40](00:37:40)):

Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:37:41](00:37:41)):

Hmm, go down, go down. Okay. There, see, see where it says upcoming events over to the right where it has. Um, it has a hiring event, their young adult hiring event. Okay. Right here. No, don't, don't click on it. Okay. Regional youth event, uh, and young adult Facebook, Lauren home try. I don't think that's what we're calling it. Filter it by try regional youth event. Oh, okay. I don't post them on here. Uh, Oh, there you go. If it's regional, does it mean we're not doing this? This is just, this is where I said, remember I said the officers also hire, cause I recognize Jennifer Bridgford we interviewed, do you need some water? Go ahead and get you some water. Okay. So Texas city apparently is hosting a job readiness seminar on this day. It's the virtual in event and you can register there. Okay. And if you click on it, I think the, uh,

Speaker 6 ([00:39:05](00:39:05)):

Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([00:39:08](00:39:08)):

Oops. Okay. Click on it just on.

Speaker 6 ([00:39:11](00:39:11)):

Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([00:39:17](00:39:17)):

And so it'll just give you the link where it is, where you can just go to the button and register. Oh, okay. So will you all be there? This is when this is an example of something you may be attending or we will not be attending. Apparently the Texas city career office staff, uh, we'll be facilitating this workshop. It seems like workforce solutions has, you know, they have their own things. They have set up where anyone can kind of go in here and set up, uh, their own virtual event. Well, the only ones really let me tell you the calendar pretty much. Uh, the career office have access to add events to the calendar. Um, we have two, uh, areas called employer services where employee services will host like current events. Uh, and they also do. They also do a bit, so they will put there as on here as well. And then we will also list on here when we're doing the online modules. So do you have a date for your next online, larger? Um, should I look, should I search go to the week of maybe the 15th? See if it'll come up there. Hmm. Uh, go back to February. Maybe we haven't put March in yet. Uh, I know we just did it filter, go down to, uh, filter about topic. Let's see what comes up. Okay. Job readiness.

Speaker 2 ([00:41:02](00:41:02)):

Hmm. So it just comes with the youth event again, coming up though. It's not coming up for February. Yeah. Let me do February. I'm wondering if it will show me something that occurred in February. I don't know. It doesn't look like you can go back to February. That's interesting. And it's wiped off. That's interesting. Yeah. Um, and so what would it be called? And maybe I can search for it. Uh, try online module. I can make a phone call and find out what we're doing at, in March. Oh yeah. It's not up yet. I guess I've seen it up here. You've typically Sr. Your virtual events in different since COVID has started. It's typically been available in this way. Yeah, it should be here. Uh, I don't know why

Speaker 6 ([00:41:57](#)):

It's not showing up. Hold on a second.

Speaker 2 ([00:42:03](#)):

Let's see. Let me finish here. I've got some online learning here February. Okay. That's all right.

Speaker 6 ([00:42:39](#)):

Yeah. Is it on the calendar? Okay,

Speaker 2 ([00:42:56](#)):

That's fine. So we do have an online module scheduled for next week. Oh, for next week. Okay. Yeah. The date

Speaker 6 ([00:43:09](#)):

March the eighth. Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([00:43:12](#)):

Okay. Okay. Do you see what I have up right here? April 11th, Debbie, where is it listed on our website? Isn't it under jobs?

Speaker 6 ([00:43:47](#)):

Uh huh.

Speaker 2 ([00:43:50](#)):

Here it is. Okay.

Speaker 6 ([00:43:58](#)):

Okay. Got it. Got it. Thanks David. All right. Bye-bye

Speaker 2 ([00:44:09](#)):

Yeah, I don't, I don't enter the events on the calendar. So as you can see, we'll be doing them the week eighth through the 11th. So here is, here's what I have. I have information session and then I have a targeted plan. Okay. The regional team is doing a targeted plan. The workforce solution session that's being hosted, looks like by our career office staff.

Speaker 1 ([00:44:36](#)):

Right? Stephanie Harrison. Okay. So, but this is your, this is your team right here? Yes. Okay, awesome. Okay. And then you said through the 11th, so let's look at the nine. So here's some more here. Uh, this would be YouTube as well, right? The job readiness toolkit. Uh, awesome. Okay. But this parent chat is not, you

Speaker 2 ([00:45:09](#)):

Know.

Speaker 1 ([00:45:12](https://...)):

Okay. So I think, I, I think I, I get it now that that works. So job readiness tool. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:45:19](https://...)):

We have this great system, but it has different pods of different pods within the system that they were all supposed to come together to make, to make sure that the goal is to make sure that we're addressing all of the needs of the community. And so the regional team was created to make sure it wasn't people, individuals that are unable to come into a career office that we could still provide them that same job search assistance, because the goal is to help them get a job, keep a job. And we can provide that out in the community on a larger scale because the career office staff, of course the offices don't have the capability and the staff to be able to go out into community and provide their services in the community.

Speaker 1 ([00:46:07](https://...)):

Okay. And I see here, so excuse me. Um, thank you. So it is zoom, like we were saying, it's, it's more on the zoom platform. All right. Um, I like that. Okay. And yes, everybody kind of puts every department that has like even the parent chat and this is coming from a different entity. Uh, they put theirs here, everyone just puts it on the calendar.

Speaker 2 ([00:46:37](https://...)):

And now the parent trap, I can tell you who they are, those are what's called career education specialists.

Speaker 1 ([00:46:44](https://...)):

Right. Okay. There it is to

Speaker 2 ([00:46:46](https://...)):

Then hire ability navigators. Now they actually, when I say they're actually employees of the board, H G a C, okay. They're employees of the board direct employees of the board. And so the career education specialists go into schools that are, uh, rural areas like your warden. We have like warden County, some areas that are very drool, no to public transportation. The only place to get to one to the other is by transportation. And, uh, they go into the schools out there and talk to the high school students in the rural areas. That's what the correct education specialists do. So they do a series of things, be able to connect with the community. And the parent trap. Chad is one of them. They go into the schools and do some job search assistance in the school. And they also have what's called a career corner. And it's a YouTube channel where they do a lot of hosting of professionals to provide, um, encouragement to students to finish your education. And they host different careers.

Speaker 1 ([00:47:56](https://...)):

Okay. Okay. So those are so really, um, so I, I, yeah, thank you for that information. Cause I think that, you know, our, our bigger part, our, our scope was just to talk about what happens in the career office, but you are a tenant. These are all a part of career office, but they are not internally in the offices. They are, they may visit an office, but they're not housed in, in, uh, in each career, in a career office, a specific career office.

Speaker 2 ([00:48:26](#)):

We are we're there. Um, on the regional team, there are 20 of us and we all are signed to office offices, Missouri city, but say out of 12 months, 12 months out of the year, I may visit my office 10 times, 12 times. That's only just to get supplies or maybe to have our monthly meetings there. But most regional team facilitators and navigators are not in the office because they're actually out in the community, but everyone is assigned an office, not our office of a disability navigator. One is, uh, have an office at Astrodome. One has an office in Rosenberg, I'm in Missouri city. We, all of us are assigned in office based upon where we live, uh, based upon our home address and where we live. But we typically are not like in the office eight to five, we might visit the office maybe twice a month or three times a month just kind of to connect his supplies and just make copies and things of that nature. But most of our work is actually done out in the community. And I, our cars typically are our office.

Speaker 1 ([00:49:42](#)):

You can see that. I can see that you're mobile all the time.

Speaker 2 ([00:49:47](#)):

Yeah. Because we easily, before the pandemic could be several hundred miles just within a two week period on our automobiles from going place visiting the offices because we've visited offices in schools. So we just really, I like to think of as kind of, as the mobile extension of the career office,

Speaker 1 ([00:50:08](#)):

Love that. Okay. Um, let me ask you, so the, who promotes this too, like, so let's just say the United way has called you and said they want you all to come out and do, um, wanna, you know, a job readiness toolkit virtual event. Do they, are they responsible promoting it? They're amongst their members. They're there. Okay. They're lists. Okay. Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([00:50:32](#)):

All right. For instance, they, uh, library, we go into a library, the library will send us an email at seminars, uh, ed seminars, WIRK solutions and asked if we could host a job readiness to kid on Wednesday from 11 to 1230. So the library will create their own flyer. They'll put it on their website or whatever social media that they have and they'll post it there. We will, we will also host it. I'm sorry. Also put it on our calendar. As far as marketing the event. It's really up to the person that's posting it.

Speaker 1 ([00:51:10](#)):

Okay. Okay. All right. That's good. That's what I need to know. I pulled up another one you have here sharpening your interview skills. Okay. Um, so the only time that these are done in a career office is if the career office, I guess, manager or supervisor staff says, Hey, we need to host one of these. Then they will post it in there. Um, but what, and maybe, you know, this answer, maybe you don't, but, um, so within a meeting with an ISI, I mean, with a C uh, uh, an employee get an AC, um, might a person have time to discuss this with them? Would they actually sit there and help them work on their interview skills? Or do they say, Hey, wait, till we have a interview skill training,

Speaker 2 ([00:52:01](#)):

Chances are, uh, they won't have time to do that because each is a case by case basis. And sometimes you get individuals that, uh, give you, here's a good example. My son recent, this has recently got laid off

from working for oil company for 13 years. He hasn't done a resume in 13 years. So you and I both know how much doing a resume has changed in 13 years, Lennon interviewing, he sees simply don't have that kind of time at the time of that appointment. So do is doing an assessment of the customer, find out kind of what their experience or what they're looking for, what skills they have. And if the ECC determines based upon that, that they would benefit from going to a job or seminar class. And they would scheduled them with one that they're having in office, but they wouldn't do it right then and there on the spot.

Speaker 1 ([00:52:56](#)):

Great. That's what I needed to know. Okay. Because I was asked that question yesterday about, uh, in office, what can they actually do, but it really is, like you said, for the ECS and the PSRs to evaluate

Speaker 2 ([00:53:10](#)):

Yeah. It's a case by case, not if you have someone sitting in your chair and asked you the question, should I put my address on my resume? Well, yeah. Yeah. So it's a case by case. But most of the time, if it's somebody that is looking for employment has been laid unemployed for awhile, um, that really need some more extensive assistance. The ECC will suggest that they attend one of the classes that fits what their needs, that they may not need to go to sharpening and abuse schools skills they might need go to resume, but they won't know that until after they've done a complete assessment. And those assessments sometimes I think can take anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour. Wow. Okay. Um,

Speaker 1 ([00:53:53](#)):

So just sign in and go to the sharpening, your interview skills seminar. You don't have to have had an assessment. It can just be anybody.

Speaker 2 ([00:54:00](#)):

Yes. Say for instance, you have a customer that's in office and the office is not going to be having one. And then, then the ISI can say, um, there's one being hosted online, um, March the 10th, 1130 to 1230, go on our website, give them the link and tell them where to go. And then they can just register. Um, let me ask you

Speaker 1 ([00:54:25](#)):

This. So when, when we're navigating in the website,

Speaker 2 ([00:54:28](#)):

Um, do you have sort of a

Speaker 1 ([00:54:31](#)):

Wishlist or anything that you would suggest changes you'd like to see as far as navigation? Or

Speaker 2 ([00:54:40](#)):

Can we just wipe it out and start all over?

Speaker 1 ([00:54:43](#)):

Well, I'm about to start all over. Okay. Um, so what, so based on that, let's just say, if we did wipe it out and start all over, what would you like to see?

Speaker 2 ([00:54:56](#)):

Uh, I don't go to our website to be quite Frank. I don't go to our website very often. I find it very convoluted and kind of complicated. If you are a person that don't know very much about computers and websites and going here and going there, we have to go through, you have to go through too many different steps to get to where you need to go. For instance, if an individual was looking for the virtual online, there were three places they'd have to get to before they could actually get this place. Right. Yeah. So I think it's great if your ex, if you, if your experience, as far as websites and maneuvering websites, but if you are novice, it can be very intimidating.

Speaker 2 ([00:55:47](#)):

So what would you like to see? I think those things that are most prevalent to job seekers, like virtual online trainings, the job should be very upfront right there, or with just one click or instead of having to go to four individuals, then you go to job search, and then you go here that, that information may be, could be on the side, perhaps set aside. And if you're looking for jobs or seminar interviewing skills, you can just go right to the right or on the left and click and you're there. So just maybe a cheat sheet or something to that effect that you don't have to go through so many different layers to get to where you need to do.

Speaker 1 ([00:56:31](#)):

Absolutely. What about, um, do you, do you think, uh, a virtual chat where perhaps a person get typing, where do I find virtual events, or where do I find a resume events, or even when you do

Speaker 2 ([00:56:46](#)):

That? S unless you, even when you do that, there are things that comes up then unless you know what they are, you're not going to understand. So you're still going to end up having to click here and click here because we have a lot of topics just, just say resume. So there are like four things that are pop up that you're still going to have to go through each one to see if that's what you actually need.

Speaker 1 ([00:57:11](#)):

Okay. So yeah, maybe a sidebar that specifically says like calendar calendar event. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:57:18](#)):

Yeah. Or something that you can go exactly to that without having. Yeah. Because in addition, we have two curriculums, we have a job search seminar curriculum that provides some assistance with resumes. Then we have, what's called a, when I grow up curriculum. So if you just type in resume, you might eat, you might get one or the other.

Speaker 1 ([00:57:40](#)):

Right. So, and people may get confused and sign up and register for the wrong thing. Okay. So making it as simple as possible as an employee now, that's what you're saying outward facing for customers that you feel would be, make it better and more comfortable for them, um, to be able to access that because you're right. Everybody's not technology, doesn't it incline technology-wise. So, um, and I don't know if

they have trouble seeing this on their phone or if they, you know, if they're able to do it on the phone or not. Um, what about internally as an employee? What, if any changes do you feel would be helpful to any Reaper? Do you have a reporting system? Like, do you turn in and turn in your time or your mileage, or do you ha how, uh, just admit any documents through the website or

Speaker 2 ([00:58:37](#)):

Yeah. Uh, workforce solutions, uh, has, uh, three contractors. So all of us are employees of one of those contractors. One is Baker, Ripley, Equis, or, uh, interfaith charities. I work for interfaith now, interface time, keep time, uh, system is different than Baker. Ripley is Baker Brad's care has its own. So each contractor has its own time tracking system. The one that interface uses is called Paycom.

Speaker 1 ([00:59:11](#)):

Okay. And

Speaker 2 ([00:59:14](#)):

I think Baker, Ripley use what's called Ultrapro or UltiPro, I'm not sure what care use. So each contractor uses a different timekeeping, HR, payroll time keeping system, but it's not done through our website. It's a whole different app that we use. We don't, even if we don't go to the website at all.

Speaker 1 ([00:59:38](#)):

Okay. So an app, would you like to see something that was available to you online on the R K solutions? Or, or is it you're okay with the way that

Speaker 2 ([00:59:49](#)):

With the way it is now? Because yeah. Uh, right now we can, we have it on our phone. I mean, we can clock in and out on our phone, keep track of our time on our phone. So it's a lot easier. I think having it separate from the website, because there's just so much information that involves our system, not just the jobs or seminars you saw the parent chat, you got the employed deficient, they're doing hiring events and they hold seminars. Uh, I think keeping it separate apart from the website it's for me, uh, in my opinion, would work is best. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([01:00:29](#)):

Um, okay. So what about, do you have to submit any documentation from these meetings, the events that you have and do the attendees have to submit any documentation? So for instance, if somebody that's involved in snap or TANIF, if they, if they record this, they, I mean, do they have to submit that as a part of like, Oh, this is, was a part of my job training or job search, or, um,

Speaker 2 ([01:00:56](#)):

If, if they're a snap orientation customer and it's a part of their plan, then they probably will have the job search. They probably will take the class in with the career office staff so that they can track it for our purposes, for the regional team. We do keep our own tracking system of all the events that we do for all the events that we do. We track where the date, the time, the number of hours, which facilitator facilitated that events. How many attended the event? What platform did we use? Um, so we track that apart from, uh, the website and other apps. We, we, we have our own internal system we use. And what is that? You're just a spreadsheet.

Speaker 1 ([01:01:45](#)):

Oh, okay. So you're just saying you just create it. Do y'all have to submit that to anybody. Do you have to submit it to the board member or who do you, do you have to submit that to you?

Speaker 2 ([01:01:55](#)):

No, but I do make it a practice to do annual reports as well as quarterly reports. And I submit quarterly reports and annual reports to the board. And you just do that through email. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([01:02:12](#)):

They don't ask you to you just do it. You're saying that's something that you, yeah.

Speaker 2 ([01:02:16](#)):

Okay. It's a good practice to have. It's not.

Speaker 1 ([01:02:21](#)):

Um, okay. So have you seen this shift with the shift from in-person to virtual? Any feedback on that? They like it better or prefer that

Speaker 2 ([01:02:31](#)):

I like get better? Does the team like it better?

Speaker 1 ([01:02:34](#)):

I guess we can look at all aspects of customer the facilitators, which would be like the church, the organizations that are hosting it, the hostess, the hosting, uh,

Speaker 2 ([01:02:44](#)):

Yeah. You know, it's almost 50 50 for a lot of the events that we're facilitating virtually, but let me be more specific. I know the schools prefer face to face because kids tend to be more engaged when there's someone that they can see and you can, uh, interact a little bit more in person than virtually. So I think for our events, with the school districts, once my guess is once this pandemic gets to a safe place, we get to safe place. We will end up going back to face-to-face. We will find out probably we'll probably end up doing maybe 75 face-to-face in 25 virtually, but I think we will end up doing a combination of both depending on the venue. Um, ours, the facilitator's concern, um, is 50 50 us. Uh, uh, most of the facilitators are okay with virtual, but we like that engagement with the students. You know, students get to come up after advantage say that was really great. Thank you so much. I miss we miss that interaction, that one-on-one connection with the, the individuals and stuff. So, I mean, working from home has had its benefits and we're grateful for it. But if we had a choice between continuing what we do virtually and going face-to-face, we would choose face to face. It's just more effective.

Speaker 1 ([01:04:11](#)):

Um, but it's lot. So your, your events are not recorded. They are live so that's actual in real time. So that, that does make a difference too. Um, as opposed to somebody sitting and watching a recording. Um, okay. But you're just saying overall, you think it would be more effective just to kind of phase in some sort of face to face.

Speaker 2 (01:04:31):

Eventually we will. I don't know exactly when it's going to happen, but, uh, of course it's gonna depend on our economy and the vaccine distribution and all those other things, but essentially I, um, I have no doubt. We will be resuming some face to face. We may not, it may not happen until the fall. It may happen in the summer, but eventually we will go back to doing some face to face.

Speaker 1 (01:04:56):

Well, I thank you. That's all I have right now. Um, it's valid

Speaker 2 (01:04:59):

And help, and I haven't thrown a wrench into your plan.

Speaker 1 (01:05:03):

You've been very helpful. Um, I'm so glad that, um, we got a chance to speak with you because honestly speaking, um, none, none of the managers mentioned this, this component of the career office that, because you said you were all based somewhere and that's probably why they weren't looking at it from that perspective, because you're not actually working in directly in the office. You're just housed there. Um,

Speaker 2 (01:05:29):

Yeah. And sometimes we don't even see, we may only see a manager and a career office maybe three or four times out of the year. Oh, wow. So, I mean, we don't really, we interact more with the line staff because they're always there, but, uh, with the managers, not as much because you know, they have busy schedules too, and the time we're in the office, they might not be in the office, but, uh, am I going to say this real quick, all of the facilitators and the navigators are required to make sure that they're keeping the manager kind of abreast of, you know, what they're doing? Um, they report directly to me, but they also indirectly report to the managers at the, at the offices.

Speaker 1 (01:06:14):

And how do they file any reports? Is it done

Speaker 2 (01:06:18):

When I say report like, uh, uh, like for instance, if they're going to be on vacation, they'll send me to request, I want to take vacation, then they'll CC the office manager. So the manager will know

Speaker 1 (01:06:30):

What system do y'all use for that. Is there a workforce solutions, uh, system for requesting time off or is, are, y'all just doing it through email,

Speaker 2 (01:06:39):

It's really based on the contractor. So it's based on the contractor now for the regional team, if a navigator or a facilitator's requesting, um, a vacation, then they will just simply email me. Uh, the office manager say, I'm interested in taking March the eighth through the 15th off, uh, and I'll say, okay, you don't have any events scheduled. That's fine. And then it'll go into whatever system, depending on who,

uh, who their contractor is, either facilitator for Baker, Ripley, then it would go and UltiPro, if it's interfaith and I will enter, then it'll, I will enter it. So. Okay. Does that make sense?

Speaker 1 (01:07:26):

Yeah, it does. Absolutely. It actually does make sense. I understand it. Um, so you've done a very good job of breaking it down

Speaker 2 (01:07:33):

So glad I was so concerned, upset when I saw the email. I'm not in the office and I'm not sure how much help I'm going to be. So I'm, I'm really, really, truly glad that I was able to be a help. I don't need to meet you to be a help, but if there's anything I can do while you're putting this all together and you have some last minute questions or need some last minute pieces, uh, call me, uh, feel free to call me. Or if you send me an email, um, for some reason your emails were going to my junk mail that you told me. And I'm, I rarely check that. Not as often as I should, so I need to make a practice, but feel free to call me. I'll I'm more than happy. Seven one three, okay. Three, six, seven, okay. Five, four, six, five. Great. And I'd be willing to help any, any way I can. So if there's any missing pieces for you and you think I can help you feel free to, and if I can't, I know at least two to point you to Isabella.

Speaker 7 (01:08:39):

No, I mean, I think it was really informative if I could just think about how the curriculum maybe has changed a bit. Now that you're virtual, if you wanted to, if something comes to mind or maybe we'll think more about it, um, how it could benefit, you know, on more of an online platform, just maybe some changes that have happened with that, but we can follow up later if that comes up. Okay.

Speaker 2 (01:08:59):

We're in the process of reviewing our curriculum now because it was great. It's great. Don't get me wrong for face to face, but so much has changed now in a workforce development in terms of how you look for a job and, um, applying online and now most employers are having you do these pre-assessment tests. Um, so a lot of resumes now will be re, are being, are review. And even we've had people interviewed by robots and didn't know it really. Yes, it depends on the company, the larger companies, some larger companies are not actually now using you. You don't even know it are now using robots for interviews. Wow. So, and you have to be very careful because they use, they put some kind of metrics in there where they scan body language. They look at eye contact, body language, they do a lot of, how should I say evaluating you based on tone of voice, your voice, your eye contact, how you move your head, your shoulder, all kinds of things that you would never even think about. So looking for a job is changing, it's evolving. And so we realized that our curriculum is good, but we need to go back and look at it and make sure that we're keeping note with those changes in, in the workplace and how you look for a job.

Speaker 2 (01:10:30):

That's amazing that that's where we're headed. And I guess it's cause a reduction in force also, you know, and work workforce. So, um, um, no, that's helpful. So yes, you're right. So y'all are in the middle of, uh, maybe adjusting your curriculum somewhat to accommodate these new, uh, new interview forms. Yeah. Yeah. My, uh, real quick, and I know you got to go and I got another, me, my daughter, um, got laid off too, and she's been looking for a job and for every job she's applied to, she's had to do some type of assessment in the assessments have been anywhere from 10 minutes to as much as 45. And

each of them have been different. Some of them are behavior questions, one test she had to do where they gave you. They give you some blocks and you have to decide which piece best fits into this block. Wow. So it's changing. And so I said all that to say, we have to make sure that our curriculum and what we're doing to help our customers get employment, that we're keeping up with that so that we can prepare them for, uh, to look for a job.

Speaker 1 (01:11:44):

Okay. Yeah. Thank you. No, that's a very helpful, um, I think that may be good for a, uh, to get to, we also have a partner firm that's also working with us as well. So that may be some good information and feedback to give to them in regards to, you know, adapting, to changes to, um, employment searches or employment interviews. It's very helpful. Thank you so much to Lisa.

Speaker 2 (01:12:14):

Feel free to call me if you have any problems or questions. Okay.

Speaker 1 (01:12:17):

Well, thank you so much. Take care. Bye bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Michelle Westlake, Career Office Manager
Workforce Solutions – Waller

Contractor

Interfaith of the Woodlands

Interview conducted

March 3, 2021

Speaker 1 (00:01):

Um, but we're working with them so that we can look at ways and ways that we can improve the, the system itself, the online system, um, not just for the customer, but also for employees as well. Um, so we have a series of questions and these questions may seem very elementary to you. Cause I know you do this day in and day out, but, um, we'll be asking you questions that basically breaks down the customer experience, the systems that are used within the career service offices, um, by both. Um, so I may repeat some questions or ask for clarity on questions. Um, but under no circumstances, is it, you know, an assessment of your office of that may in that manner, it's more, we're just strictly, uh, operational, strictly operational. Um, and when I make sure that we understand the process better, so I will I'll I have some questions for you. I'm sure. Ron has some questions for you as well. So we'll go ahead and get started. Um, if you can go ahead and just say your name and your title, um, position for us for the record.

Speaker 2 (01:07):

Yes. My name is Michelle Westlake and I'm the office manager for the waller workforce solutions location.

Speaker 1 (01:14):

Okay, great. So my first question, Michelle is describe the roles within the career service office.

Speaker 2 (01:24):

There's many roles, many. Um, so, um, we have like myself office manager who runs the office to make sure that the daily reports were done and make sure everything's running smoothly, make sure that the staff understand the new issuances that are coming down. Um, we have our supervisor that also makes sure everything's running smoothly. He has his own reports that he does, and he helps with, we both help with the training of the staff and making sure that they have a clear understanding and what our, where our customer service to look like according to what our board and our TWC would like to see. And, um, we have a greeter, she answers the phone. She also even assist with resetting passwords, um, for work in Texas. Um, she, she can even do what we call reconsideration. Our, our, our staff are able to do a lot of multiple things, not just one thing.

Speaker 2 (02:19):

Um, we have resources and specialists and we're actually in the process of hiring for that right now. But what they do is they help customers on the resource floor. They can help them with their work in Texas application. They can help them with resumes. They can, if they get stuck on an application that they're submitting to a, an employer, they can help walk them through that, you know, maybe see where they got stuck at and help them through that. Um, they also can provide the greeter and the resource specialist also provide the type of services that we do like that we can provide for our customers. If there's additional resources, they need both are able to provide them additional resources and where they can go. Um, we have employment counselors who help with job searching, resume, writing support services, like we'll work, support, um, multiple things as well. Um, they can give a little bit of information on our training, but then they'll refer the customer to a personal service representative who then in turn does more of the bigger picture with the case management and with helping people with like substantial support, anything that's over 200 training, um, snap, uh, Cain of customers, finding jobs, working with them to track their hours. Um, so that's pretty much the roles in, in, in our offices.

Speaker 1 (03:39):

I want to go back to a question, um, as far as your daily reports that you're preparing, what system or app are you, are you preparing those through,

Speaker 2 (03:48):

Um, different ones? It can come to it's like, um, one of the things we do, like a cash setup report on a daily basis where it tracks the number of cars that we have on hand. And we've pulled that from our, um, matrix is, um, yeah, it's just a matrix thing that, um, is able to report our inventory and how many we should have on hand and how many we gave out that previous day and make sure that nothing was admits that we didn't have an issue with. Maybe Bizel, maybe it didn't swipe out and Gizelle or something. So we keep track of our daily cards and stuff like that, that we submit out. Um, our boss, our directors, our even has, they may send out a spreadsheet that they need for us to track numbers on or, or answer certain questions. So we do a lot of spreadsheets, um, Apple active and inactive reports from our, um, twist.

Speaker 2 (04:47):

And it allows us to see, um, it allows us to manage our cases better because we can see who's coming up. Like, should they be completing school? I need to follow up with them, make sure that they're doing okay. Make sure they don't go past a certain date if they're going to, I need to update it. Um, w work in Texas, I pull reports from work in Texas as well, um, to see who is applied for unemployment, what age group are they in? Especially if we have a hiring event coming up or we're trying to target a certain age group. So we, we use multiple systems to pull reports from.

Speaker 1 (05:20):

Okay. And, um, do you have rehabilitation vocational rehabilitation in your office?

Speaker 2 (05:27):

I don't, but I do have a point person that I can contact and refer any of my, of anyone that might have a need for VR. I do have a point person that I can refer them to.

Speaker 1 (05:39):

Okay. And any recruiters in your office as well?

Speaker 2 (05:43):

They're not located in my office. I do have them assigned to my office and I have a good relationship with the recruiters and the recruiter managers as well. So any type of needs we have there, I'm able to reach out.

Speaker 1 (05:54):

So they're just not, they're not in, they're not there yet, but you can connect with them. Okay. And do you, um, just through regular communication, I mean, there's not a system that you all use for that or

Speaker 2 (06:07):

To reach out to like VR and to creators is sort of regular. I like with being heard, we have a referral referral form that we can use, but we can also, I can take it. The son, I have his cell phone number. I can

reach him through email. Um, so there's multiple ways, um, with the manager of the recruiters or with recruiters themselves, I have his cell phone number. I can reach out to his staff by email.

Speaker 1 (06:31):

Okay. So there's not any particular system that you all use and I wanted to ask you, I should have started with this one with who are you contracted through

Speaker 2 (06:40):

Interface.

Speaker 1 (06:42):

Okay. Okay. And just walk us through, are you still receiving customers in your office or is it curbside?

Speaker 2 (06:52):

No. At this time it's curbside. Um, and, um, it is, I think by appointments only, but we always, of course we always take a septum. If someone just comes to the office and they call us, we'll help them. We don't make them leave. We don't make them set up an appointment. We just do we go ahead and assist them right then and there with their needs, whether it's faxing, whether it be email me something to print off or if they need something copied. Um, so yeah, so right now we're still doing curbside appointments, but if they show up to the office, we'd go ahead and assist them

Speaker 1 (07:26):

And you'll still assist them. Okay. And are customers using the wifi services that are available at the office?

Speaker 2 (07:33):

We've had a couple that I know that have, you know, cause it is, we've had it extended to the parking lot. So I've seen a few that have called and they've actually used it out there once we let them know, Hey, it's been extended to the parking lot. If you need it, you're more than welcome. So, um, I'm going to say we have a few that have used it.

Speaker 1 (07:50):

Okay. So, and the customers are aware of it or is it like you said the, you, um, basically if they come up and then you let them know that they can.

Speaker 2 (07:58):

Yeah. Basically when they come up with let them know, but while are hints is kind of a small area, so word of mouth thing start getting out. So we'll probably see more people coming, you know, or calling us and making sure it's okay to come on that.

Speaker 1 (08:11):

And with the usage of that wifi, are you also having to allow them to use your, um, pads?

Speaker 2 (08:19):

Yes. Most definitely. If they have a need and they're not able to use their cell phone for that need. Yes. They can definitely use our tablets.

Speaker 1 (08:27):

Okay. Cause that's what, that's what we're finding that, um, there's a concern as far as the technology piece that a lot of, uh, the customers may or may not have access to, well, they don't have access to, um, anything other than possibly their cell phone. And there may be difficulty with, uh, uh, completing the documents that they need to complete effectively by using their cell phones. So they let us know that they're having

Speaker 2 (08:56):

Any kind of issues. Then we will definitely offer the tablet to them. Or if there's something that we can help them with, you know, like if they can email it to us and we can finish, you know, we not finish it on private printed off for them, or if they can, if they say, Hey, I can't finish this because of my phone, then we can offer them a tablet.

Speaker 1 (09:14):

Okay. Are there any services that you feel can't, um, occur online at this point?

Speaker 2 (09:23):

No. We've pretty much have been able to go virtual. We can do all sorts of people online. We do our orientation for Alon at the customer. Some customers want to see face to face and, but we're finding most customers rather just talk to us on phone, but they have any issues. We can send out a team invite to them and walk them through those issues. And we have, um, we pretty much everything can be done for actual, if we have a training student that needs our vouchers, I can sign it and send it to them virtually I can send a copy of it to the school, um, as we're doing, um, because we also have painted dock if a customer needs to sign documents, if we're done support service, we can send it through Panadol and they can sign it that way. Um, there's, there's really not much that we can't do virtual now.

Speaker 1 (10:12):

Okay. And, um, can you just kind of go through, I know we've kind of mentioned it and hit and missed. Oh, I did want to ask you one thing. I'm so sorry. I think it just, um, I had it, you know how you have the question? Could you have you said something? Oh, the, um, the appointments, are you all utilizing appointee?

Speaker 2 (10:31):

Yes. Yes. We do use it a lot. We do use a pointy. Yes.

Speaker 1 (10:35):

And what has the feedback been, um, for customers as well as your employees in the office?

Speaker 2 (10:43):

Um, we haven't really had a lot of feedback of course, like issues or anything. Um, the customer seem to be able to go on there. Okay. S in the very, excuse me, in the very beginning, when my, I had a couple of customers that got a little confused, so we would schedule appointments for them if they call in and

they're wanted to know about their unemployment. And they're like, Hey, I see that I need to make an appointment. We'll go ahead and make the appointment for them. You know, it's not a problem. Um, but we haven't gotten any kind of feedback that says that they're having issues using it. Now the staff are not having any issues.

Speaker 1 (11:17):

Okay. Does the staff prefer so overall it's a positive for the staff? They, like I said, overall, it's a positive for your staff as far as seeing their schedule daily and knowing what they do with the issues they have to address every day.

Speaker 2 (11:32):

Yes. Most definitely. It makes a lot easier. And then two, if for whatever reason, if the appointment doesn't take, as long as she thought it was going to take, or if their customer, for whatever reason isn't able to attend, then they'll move on to the next thing. If the customer calls in they'll go ahead and assist them. If they're not with another customer or, you know, we'll have someone else to assist the customer. But yeah, it makes a lot easier. It makes it for my supervisor not to, to see what the staff are doing, what's going on, especially for those that are still working from home. We have a better idea of what their day looks like.

Speaker 1 (12:01):

Okay. That's good. And can you, um, name the software systems that you use in the career office? Whether, I mean, I know they're working from home as well, but what are the, the main software, the software systems that you're using? So like we know it's a pointy, um, you're using work in Texas. Are there, what other,

Speaker 2 (12:21):

Yeah. Oh gosh. Okay. So obviously appointee work in Texas. We use our twist. We, um, use gazelle, which is what our batches are in. We use our fact issue, which is an internal communication between our financial aid support center PFAFFA, which is our payment office and our tracking unit. Um, let's see, uh, I'm looking, um,

Speaker 1 (12:47):

Take your time. I know you probably have to think like, okay, wait,

Speaker 2 (12:51):

Um, uh, Oh, we'll use our document, which is where we do all of our electronic filing for our customers. We keep all of their documents electronically. Um, we use painted doc, which is what we can use to send our customers documents and they can sign it and send it back to us. It's a really easy way for a customer to be able to sign them and also for us to attract. And they viewed it, signed it. So if we're seeing that they're not signing their orientations, we can call them there. Hey, did you get it? You know, I really need for you to sign it so you don't lose these benefits. So it's an easy way of keeping track of what you're, if they've even viewed it, look at it, try to send it back or what's going on. Um, those are the main things that we use.

Speaker 1 (13:30):

Ron, do you have any questions in that area for Michelle? No, I'm good. I think we're covering everything. Okay, great. Okay. Um, so now what, um, what feedback are you, are you getting any other feedback from your employees, um, regarding the online system? Um, cause I know they're addressing customer concerns, but is there anything that you've been hearing consistently from the employees that, you know, Oh, this is kind of difficult for them to do online, whether it's documents or,

Speaker 2 ([14:08](#)):

Um, I've only had maybe recently, um, I noticed that two customers not to, I know it's one of our customers had not signed her documents and she kept telling my employment counselor why I didn't get them. So she sent them one more time to her and she finally got and was able to find them. That was the first issue I've heard of a customer, not receiving the document to paint a doc. Um, but no, I, I think right now the customers appreciate the fact that we can do some of the salons to that because there's still, some are concerned about coming to the office and they'd rather do it either backbone or on teams, you know, one of those it's easier for them. Um, and yeah, they seem to that a little bit better right now, instead of just coming in the fact that too, I mean, again, we can still help them with their other needs, such as, um, printing stuff off for them doing their, you know, copies for them or their faxes. So we really haven't had any negative feedback

Speaker 1 ([15:08](#)):

As far as, as far as from your employees. And then like, I know there's a lot.

Speaker 2 ([15:12](#)):

Yeah, yeah, yeah, no, I'm you, my staff, the only, um, I think the hardest thing was, I think we've got this issue fixed was I have one staff that live kind of far out, um, and the internet service isn't as good, but I think we finally have been able to fix that issue for her and our, it guys were finally able to get her to where she could get tied into her desktop. It may not run as fast as she would like for it to, but I think that's been like the only issue is maybe like the internet services depending on where people live is not as strong or as not as, I guess, not as strong, not as good

Speaker 1 ([15:48](#)):

Right. May take a little bit longer. Um, and then the customers, of course, I know that we've been hearing a lot, that there are some customers and it usually relates to generation. Um, as far as those that want to come into the office, they're just not tech savvy or they, you know, so they're, they're wanting that and or maybe they just want that in-person, um, experience. So are you finding that, um, with a certain age group?

Speaker 2 ([16:16](#)):

No, I don't find it so much with a certain age group as to the frustration. I'm not dealing with software unemployment because a lot of times they tie us into TWC, even though we're the employment side. So a lot of, some things still come into us and talking to us, we can file for unemployment for them. That's where the frustration has come in. Not that they can't do it, not that because most of the people that have called us and we've been able to walk them through it, either have a family member that is tech savvy. And then we just talk with them on the phone with a family member. We're able to make sure that they get that taken care of. The biggest complaint is not being able to get in touch with TWC. And can they file for unemployment through that? That's been the biggest ones,

Speaker 1 ([17:01](#)):

Right? There's still battling that misconception, which I feel it is generational just because, you know, you may have a previous family member that has gone through that system and they think that you guys are TWC or that they can file their unemployment benefits. Right. So, um, I would like you to walk us through, um, we're a new customer coming into the office. Can you just walk us through that new customer experience?

Speaker 2 ([17:30](#)):

Well, because there's so much, uh, it would depend on what the person was coming in for. So, um, let's say the customer, you're a new customer coming in and you need job search assistance. Then we can help you, um, afraid to work in Texas, let you know. Um, it's a really good system to use because this is something implores you use to look for candidates. You can upload up to 10 resumes and you can make those, um, they can specialize towards that employer because my, towards that employers, it's, you're going to get hired with that position that you're wanting. Um, we can help you with job searching in work in Texas to see if we can help you find some good matches. If you're coming in in your first home customer and you're needing work support, then we can talk to you about, okay, you have a job when you started, what is it that you need help with still type food?

Speaker 2 ([18:22](#)):

Yes, we can help you with that. So let's start that process. Um, we got verify your employment. We'll start the process. We'll go through that. If the first time customers coming in and they're wanting assistance with training, then we talk to them about what type of training are they looking for? All right, well, let's take a look at our AGPL and see if that's not, let's see if that film there is, you know, what vendor do we have in the area that you feel like you could, you're close enough to, that you would like to attend the school? Um, the type of, if we assist you with your training, we can often help you with transportation assistance to help you get back and forth, to training. That is something that you need. Once you complete training, we can help you with job searching and help place you in a job. So those are things.

Speaker 1 ([19:10](#)):

Okay. And then what about those that are coming for snap or Tana? What's that process like? Do they automatically go through the greeters? I mean, I guess the greeters are the appointment setters, right?

Speaker 2 ([19:22](#)):

So yes and no. Um, for snap. So like right now, Avon, you have two snaps. You have gen coffin Avon. And right now a bar, Avon is someone that is mandatory to participate. So the customer will receive an outreach letter. And in that outreach letter, it tells them to contact the office or to even it even refers them to our appointee online. Like if their outreach by my office, it will have the link to my office, to the appointee and they can go in there and schedule their appointment. Now, if they happen to call, then the greeter can definitely schedule the appointment for them. No problem. Then we give them a little background about what's going to take place to Jacob is going to call you on Tuesday. You're going to, your orientation will take roughly about an hour. Um, go ahead and register and work in Texas.

Speaker 2 ([20:09](#)):

Cause it'll help us out. If you have any struggles, don't worry about it. He'll help you. Once he make that contact with you, we can walk you through it. We will help you with job searching. We can help you with

work support. Once you find employment, if you need some type of support, why are looking at it? Something else we can assist you with and we'll go over that with you during your orientation right now, um, epitaph customer is outreached. Same thing. There provides a link for the orientation and if they call into the office, we do the same thing and explain to them what to expect at the interview and how long and give them an estimated time. That way the customer, you have to look at kids or something's going on in their life. We try to let them know about how long the orientation will take.

Speaker 1 ():

Okay. And then, uh, with the, with the snap and the TNF there's of what, the three, four week period that they need to obtain a job, correct employment within that timeframe,

Speaker 2 ():

There are different programs that sound different. Um, the answer is yes for, so for snap, for an a box, for instance, St. John's for four weeks, if they don't find employment within that four weeks, if we have a place to place them for, um, workfare, then we'll fight them work. There is still work with them to try and help them find employment can have yes, ideally we would like for them to have find employment within four weeks. Um, but if they're not able to reassess what's going on, you know, with Tim, if you get a little bit more detailed with them, because they're with you longer chain of can be with you for a year or two years or whatever the situation might be. They, um, if they need to get their GED. So with Tana, you get dig a little bit deeper into what's going on.

Speaker 2 ():

They can, well, honestly, they, they, they, they count towards the work rate. You have to make, make me to work right for the state. So it's not, you know, so we dig a little deeper and try and figure out what's going on to help place them in a job. Don't misunderstand me. We help snap as well. But I asked them, for instance, Jen taught me a job or to keep for four weeks and then they're done. They don't have to. And if they're not on a job in that four week and they choose not to continue with you, they're not required to Avon. Of course you try and help them because here they are going to work fair. So basically they're doing what was called community service for the, for to continue receiving their snap benefits. So you do try and figure out why couldn't they get a job and you try and help them as well. Um, that with tennis, if you find yourself digging a little bit deeper, because saying it's a performance you have to meet,

Speaker 1 ():

Okay. And then that work fair. That's another system you have to report to you as well.

Speaker 2 ():

No, it works. There is like community service. So basically instead of turning in jobs for towers, they're only required. So if they get, um, and it's based on the amount of food stamps to think that the value of food stamps, or if they're getting like a hundred dollars, you take that and you divide it by seven 25 and that's how many hours for that meant that they're going to need. Um, so it's just basically trying to help them gain some work skills in case, you know, could you ask them like, you know, why do you think you're not getting jobs that do, do we need to work on some of your skills? I have a place I can place you to help you with those skills or let's look at training, let's take a train. Can we help you into training and help you gain some of that skills too, and get a certificate to help you get that job? Do you need your GED? You know, so we try and figure out what's going on.

Speaker 1 (23:44):

Okay. And just some clarity on TANIF. So wa someone that's with tan F they are receiving state benefits as well.

Speaker 2 (23:55):

Yeah. Temporary assistance for needy families basically is, um, monetary. It said like they may receive like $247 a month have to find a job it's um, and it could be getting that in food stamps. Um, but basically they're participating in job, searching with you to continue receiving those benefits. But the biggest thing is, as you encourage them to get a job, because who can, you can't live off $247 a month, you know, and maybe $300 in food stamps, let's be real. So we're trying to help them understand that let's get you a job, let's help you be able to get, you know, better, you know, stable, you know, so yeah. So they're receiving sustained benefits as well, and they have to job search for those.

Speaker 1 (24:42):

Okay. And their reporting system comes through TWC. Is that correct? Or,

Speaker 2 (24:49):

Yeah. And so, um, they come through health and human services, health and human services. Um, they're they are ran by the state. Um, they, um, so basically our system communicates with our Swift communicates with their careers and it lets us know who needs to be outraged. So that's how we know or lets us know who's receiving benefits. If a customer comes in and says, Hey, look, I was approved for pain. If I need it, I want it. I have an interview coming up. I need childcare. So we can look in there, see that they're receiving benefits and do their orientation and provide that service and help them get that childcare. So it it's, I guess I'm giving you too much. I'm sorry.

Speaker 1 (25:36):

It's great. Because I mean, we, you know, we've done this as like our fifth interview, so we kind of have a little idea about, you know, the process, but each time we learn a little bit more, right. Isabella, it's like, we're getting there. We're, we're learning a little bit, uh, more and you go into more in depth because like I said, you guys do this every day. And so you're kind of like, Oh yeah, it just flows. So we just break it down a little bit more. Um, but, um, so who decides, who is job ready? Who is, or isn't job ready,

Speaker 2 (26:06):

Basically the counselor. Um, and they, they do basically assessment. And I'll give you an example. You have a customer that comes in and they're having a hard time getting jobs. They don't have their GED, unfortunately, realistically, even to work at McDonald's or somewhere, even to work as a CNA, you got to have your GED or your high school diploma. So, um, or if you find that they don't have the skill to try and get that job, you know, so as your, or were they going to have housing? What if they're going through abuse or something like that? So the counselors doing the orientation and I never call it orientation, but realistically it's an assessment to find out what their needs are and to make sure that they aren't already cause you don't want them to fail because if they don't participate, if they don't turn in their hours, they lose those benefits. And that's not what we want. So the counselor does an assessment and then I make sure that they aren't shot. Right. Cause if they're not, we're going to get them job ready to make sure that they do not lose those benefits and they're able to continue receiving them and do what they need to do.

Speaker 3 (27:08):

Michelle, this is Ron. I have a question related to that point, right there. Is there a specific cyst, is there kind of a, for lack of a better word, a codafide assessment that they do or does each of the, uh, counselors kind of do it differently and is there a system or a spreadsheet or a way that they gather and collect that data in case they need to use it in the future? Those types of things.

Speaker 2 (27:31):

Great question. And yes, we use our twist and our twist is our case notes. So we do have a, um, you have like this foundation of questions that you can go by, but as you get more familiar in your role, you start knowing the questions to ask. And as you're learning that customer, you know, different questions to be asking, to find out more about them and we document all that in twist. So not only can I see it, but it seems statewide. So if this customer goes to somewhere else, if they go to Austin, they go to Dallas, they're going to see how we were helping them and continue them with that assistance.

Speaker 3 (28:09):

And the documentation that you do is that, uh, is it standardized? Like there is, is there for, again, lack of a better term on assessment form you use or do they do the assessment and then kind of free flow, text and twist and then that's what people see.

Speaker 2 (28:23):

Yeah, no, um, it depends on the counselor, honestly. Um, there is one that I give my staff to use that we've always used it it's called the comprehensive assessment desk gate. And it covers everything from that person's education work history background, like, do they have a criminal background? Do they have, what about their education with their family? Like, like their family situation, like, um, some people even, um, maybe just go off and then we also have to leave. We have a no like list of like questions that can be asked again. There's like, as you get more familiarized with your role, you don't necessarily go, you don't necessarily do that. If that makes any sense, you kind of knew what questions to start asking. And as you get more deeper with the customer, that's what you're putting into your twist and what the notes are. So it's, I don't know if I'm making any sense. So yeah, we have like a, um, like a basic question thing or something that you can use as a guideline, but, um, each board is different the way they want their notes to look like ours. They weren't very detailed. So we get very detailed. We tell the story and back seeing other case notes from other fours look a little different than ours. I don't know if that answers your question. Okay. Wanted to, um,

Speaker 1 (29:42):

Go back to the orientation, which you said is really typically more of an assessment. Um, does the process change if the customer is, and I'm just going to name the different categories, um, receiving unemployment benefits, seeking skill improvement, job training, seeking financial aid, or as a young adult.

Speaker 2 (30:02):

No, it doesn't. And I'll tell you why, because if we use what I was talking about earlier, just as our foundation, if you will questions to ask, it goes along with anything that you could be a part of. If you go, like, if, I mean learning about your history, your work history, your education history, do you have some type of background? Are you experiencing youth? What are your situation? It might be all of our assessments fit the category. The only thing that changes you may customize it more to what that

customer needs, you know, you know, um, the way that you're going to help them will be a little different. But for the most part, the assessments are the same, but it's been, it is customized to the needs of that person. Does that make sense?

Speaker 1 (30:51):

Absolutely. Um, I specifically, I think I'm sorry, what were you going to say?

Speaker 2 (30:57):

No. No. Okay.

Speaker 1 (31:00):

Um, with this seeking financial aid aspect of it, is there a different, um, is it still being done through twist or is there a different source that you use

Speaker 2 (31:13):

As far as,

Speaker 1 (31:14):

So when they come in and they need the scholarship scholarship, um, the is for like a training or school or whatnot, I mean, that still goes into the same system or is there a separate system for

Speaker 2 (31:26):

No twist is our system for all of our case suits. And for all of our tracking twist is what we use to, um, yeah. To put in our assessments, to pin our service tracking because you have to you'll have your tracking in it, put in the service tracking for them to the board or ourselves can pull these reports and see who's under what tracking where we're at the board can see where our numbers are at through the twist issues for, for all of our, for all of our, um, case management.

Speaker 1 (31:57):

So that online app that they have to fill out for the financial aid goes through that system.

Speaker 2 (32:04):

The online app goes through what we call document. It goes through our electronic. So basically the way that works, um, is, um, a customer calls me. They're like, Hey, look, I'm interested in going to school for CDL. I'm like, okay, great. I'll go ahead and do that assessment right then and there with them. And then I'm going to refer them to the link to go and complete the application so that when that application hits our document system immediately, because then it's assigned to someone in the financial aid support center for eligibility. And that way they already see that I've done my assessment and this customer has a, um, meet majority of the eligibility requirements because you still have to look at income and a couple other things. Right. Um, and then the hinges are part of it. So when the financial aid application, when I fill it out, it immediately goes into our document system so that it can be reviewed.

Speaker 1 (32:55):

Okay. And that's a separate URL or website. I'm sorry. Okay. What's the same

Speaker 2 (33:05):

System.

Speaker 1 (33:06):

Okay. A separate system. Are you, and what's the, what's the system or what's the site? Is it through work solutions?

Speaker 2 (33:14):

It's document, document document? Our filing system is [inaudible].

Speaker 1 (33:21):

Okay. Um, and are you feeling, uh, do you, um, as far as young adults, I'm not sure, do you service a lot of young adults in your office at your location?

Speaker 2 (33:32):

Which yeah. Um, we have, um, and I'm trying to think, because it has been a minute with the whole COVID thing. Um, I know that we've serviced like our numbers at 10. We're probably done between 10 and 15 we've, you know, um, we try to service more is my area's a little different. Each year is different. And within the actual sheets and area, they service a lot more adults, young adults than we do out here.

Speaker 1 (34:02):

But do you, do you feel with the young adults that perhaps there needs to be a separate, a separate site or a separate for them to, to address the needs that they have? Or are you finding that they're the same overall?

Speaker 2 (34:17):

No, their needs are pretty much the same. I think, I think we're where we are going to get where we're actually talking about this and trying to figure out where to get stronger is recruiting them again, engaged in what we're doing is a big thing. It's not so much because the services are the same. They might need training. Ma you know, you have a lot of young men that want to go into like a welding electrician, HVAC, you know, um, we have a lot of, I have a lot of students right now, they're in nursing and some of them fit the young adult age. Um, so they're wanting the training. They're wanting the jobs, they're needing the support services. Those pieces are not different, but what's different is how can we get them engaged and how can we let them know more about it and how can we communicate better with them? That's what we're. And we're actually, I want to work for it when we're working on that, like using the Twitter and the Tik TOK and ways to actually outreach kids, young adults.

Speaker 1 (35:10):

Okay. So you're looking at the different, uh, social apps that you can use to reach out. Okay. Okay. Um, so let's see. Well, I've kind of answered that one, what services are currently taking place. Um, so you think that anything that that's taking place in office, I mean, you've got curbside at this point, so really you only are seeing people that are walk-ups right. They just still in come to the office, but, but, um, everything else is being conducted curbside. So nobody's really coming in. Other than those that are just walk up or curious about what services are. Okay.

Speaker 2 (35:51):

Yeah. And yeah, so far we really haven't had like, um, you come up and we have our nurses on the door to the, Hey, we're here to help you just give us a call, let us know, and then we can go from there. Um, most of the people are already calling. They know that workforce relations is close to headlock right now. Um, I didn't ha honestly, I did have an increase in walk-ups and I'm really think most of it had to do with the case of last week storm. Um, there were some people trying to reach out to unemployment due to that, uh, last week's storm. So we did get a lot of walk-ups for that every now and then I'll get a up for unemployment because the letters that go out say be at the office from the hours of eight to four, you know, so, um, but we don't have as many as you would think.

Speaker 1 (36:45):

Okay. Let's see. Isabella, Ron, do y'all have any other questions? Okay.

Speaker 4 (36:51):

No, I was just thinking about, um, just cause we're talking about online and we're trying to find things that could be translated. And I'm just wondering maybe what is your kind of like wishlist for what you're using, what you're seeing now on the website, what would be like your wishlist, whether it's maybe an addition. I know you guys have been doing virtual orientations, but there's something maybe that you're thinking would be a great asset to add to the website.

Speaker 2 (37:16):

I'm thinking. Um, you know, I think right now, um, with them adding the financial aid application, which I think was a really good thing to do because not everyone has access to get out to the offices or to print out the application. So them being able to do everything online and affluent online, I think that was a huge asset. Most of our stuff is already on there. Our ETPL system are, um, you know, for people to look at what training we offer and who our vendors are in our area that's already on there. Um, I'm trying, I'm just trying to really think, um,

Speaker 4 (37:53):

Or like a, um, mentioning like G like customers kind of like a G chat or some sort of like assistance tool for when people have questions about certain services, but it would just be like online. How do you feel about how do you feel about that?

Speaker 2 (38:08):

I think it would be good. Um, but I mean, the offices are also available and we're answering the phones and can take the call if it's something after hours, that would be a good thing. Um, but because like all the offices are listed online, our phone numbers are listed online, I guess. Like, I see what you're saying. I think that would be good for after hours that most of the questions are already coming in to the office.

Speaker 4 (38:33):

[inaudible]

Speaker 1 (38:36):

Okay. And have you with that, um, what issues do customers frequently encounter on the website? So just for example, are there issues with forms, documentation, or with deadlines and meeting dates, for instance, in the appointee like cancellations, do they experience any delays with that?

Speaker 2 (39:01):

Um, I haven't seen anything with their pointy yet, but, um, we had a few kinks with the on app with it working out. We did some tests, um, some for the, has the officers do some tests just to kind of help them figure out what's going on? Cause initially there were some issues with uploading the documents or getting through the online application. I believe most of that's been worked out because even my office, we haven't received very many calls about people still having issues. Um, most of the, so enlighten the last time I went in and did the practice run, I didn't have any issues, but I think they got most of those kinks worked out for right now. Um, I think one of the things might be is sometimes just finding things on the website. And I know that's another thing that's being worked on is just being able to find things a little bit more easy. Like how is it organized?

Speaker 1 (39:50):

Do you mean like what people, what customers might be searching or do you mean like the way it's organized?

Speaker 2 (39:56):

Um, probably a little bit. It's like, if you're, if I'm talking to you about the, um, like, um, how we can help with training and Hey, just go to the website and you'll find our ETPL, they wouldn't be that easy to, I mean, for me, I guess, because I've been doing it for a minute, I know where to go, but I'm thinking as a new person where I know exactly where to go to find that list of schools or how we can help, you know, so most of the time I walk out and walk a customer through it, you know, especially if it's their first time or my staff, or I will just go ahead and send the ETPL list to them, you know? So I think making it a little bit more user friendly and making that a little bit easier to find things.

Speaker 1 (40:40):

I think that was one of the questions too regarding, uh, we got some feedback in regards to the youth, part of the young adult part of it that, um, if you're on the website getting to that section that's for them. So that's kind of where my question was earlier about, do you think there needs to be a separate site or

Speaker 2 (40:59):

I see what you're saying. I see what you're saying. Um, I don't know if it needs to be separate, but maybe easier for them to find because it does get lost in everything else that we do because we have all of our jobs sort of services on there. You had your financial aid for childcare on there. So I think the youth get, and the, you seem to get lost in all that other stuff. So I don't know about a separate science image. It's just making it like a button right there. It says young adults click it, here's everything, you know, um, you know, it's just something to make it a little bit simpler to see.

Speaker 4 (41:34):

Do you think the areas of like the training or any information about that online is, is, is received well, or do you think that's also another area, like certain areas like the training or maybe someone needs more information about, you know, snap or something, or I know appointee is filling in gaps for scheduling,

but is there just looking at the website for how it is now? Is there any areas that you feel could maybe use from the questions maybe you're getting from customers to like I went online, but I couldn't find.

Speaker 2 (42:03):

Yeah. Yeah. And I think that, I think you're, I see what you're saying and customers are curious about the participation in snap and TANF and it probably wouldn't hurt to have a little bit of information on that or, um, that accounts to be confusing, honestly, because even just with a general, there's just not even a general for snap or attainment, um, hours are different. Participation's a little different. Um, I'm just trying to think if it could just be broken down simple and then just refer them to the offices for more detailed information, maybe for, um, maybe with unemployment, maybe something a little bit more informative about the unemployment might help, you know, they get, I know a lot of customers get confused with, um, wanting assistance in workforce solutions for filing for unemployment or present their passwords or, um, fixing their problem with their UI or answering or, you know, why didn't I get my benefits? And I don't know if there's anything that we can fit on there, you know that, Hey, we're here to help you find a job. If you have questions about unemployment, here's the link to their website. You're more than welcome to call our offices. We're, we're happy to talk to you. I don't know. You know, I don't know how that would go, go over, but I don't know. Maybe you helping people a little bit more clear understanding of how we can assist them maybe, but then you obviously summit.

Speaker 1 (43:31):

That's good. And, um, Ron, do you have any other follow up questions? No, ma'am, I'm good from my end. Okay. And I think the very last question would be, is there anything else, um, anything that we've missed that we, that we haven't discussed?

Speaker 2 (43:54):

Yeah. I've covered snap Tannis training services, I think. And young adults. So I think, I can't think of anything.

Speaker 1 (44:05):

Okay. I do have one now that I see the veteran services. Do you have someone that directly works with veterans veterans in your office?

Speaker 2 (44:15):

They're not in our office, um, but we do have contact. And um, so anytime we receive anyone that meets, so, you know, you'd have to triage them. So if you meet, if you come across anyone that meets that requirement for Yvette, Yvette rep, we do have contacts that we email them and let them know, and we'll let the customer, we're going to get in touch with the vet rep and they're going to we'll have him call you. Um, or if we get an email in our office, email, you know, requesting of that rep we've for that email to our vet rep. Okay.

Speaker 1 (44:46):

So that's just not necessarily in your office, so it's your opposite. I'm just going to adjust them. And it's a little bit smaller maybe than some of the other ones.

Speaker 2 (44:56):

Yeah,

Speaker 1 (44:59):
I thank you, Michelle. Um, just, uh, around again, Ron Isabella, anything else? Or

Speaker 2 (45:06):
I'm good.

Speaker 1 (45:07):
Okay. Thank you for your time. Appreciate it. If you have any additional questions for us, please feel free to email me are, you know, you can contact bathe and she can get in touch with us as well.

Speaker 2 (45:19):
Okay, great. Well, thank you very much. It's nice talking to y'all and y'all have a great weekend. Take care. Bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Amanda Clarke, Career Office Manager
Workforce Solutions – Cypress Station

Contractor

Interfaith of the Woodlands

Interview conducted
March 4, 2021

Speaker 1 ([00:00:40](#)):

Good morning. Hi. How are you? I'm doing well. Thanks for asking. I am Tammy Frazier. So I'm the one that sent you the email, the strategist. How are you? I'm very well, Tammy. Nice to meet you. Good. And this is my colleague Isabella. You're doing good. So, um, so do you have any questions for us before we get started? Cause I know I don't want to take up a lot of your time. Um, I, well actually have time. I kind of separated time. Um, I wasn't sure what this was about. The email came I'm like, what is this? But because I saw you guys CC'd someone from HJC. So I figured that, okay, this is legit. So I bet. Oh yes. With faith Edwards. Yes, yes, yes, yes. Um, so what we're doing is, uh, we have been hired with HJC to, um, we're working on developing a, uh, an RFP for an RFI rather for a new website.

Speaker 1 ([00:01:42](#)):

And so what we were doing is we're trying to see what services, essentially, we need to understand what services are offered in the office and the career offices, and then, um, determine how we can move them online. Um, those that may or may not be able to be moved online. So that's where we're talking with. Um, in our previous conversations with Mike, um, Mike and Dorian Cockrell were just, and, uh, Brenda, so we're, we are doing some back binding if you say so that we can understand the process. So, um, so forgive me if some of the questions seem you're like, wait a minute, I think that's redundant a little, but, but we're just trying to get a full grasp of the operations, um, that occur within the career office service offices. So the Gulf coast region, I'm sorry, are you in the Gulf coast region? Oh, yes. We're in Houston. Okay, great. Yeah.

Speaker 1 ([00:02:42](#)):

I'm sorry. I did, have you ever been to an office before? I have been to a workforce solutions office before. Okay. All right. Um, so it's been, it's been quite a while. It's probably back in the nineties. [inaudible], I'm thinking it's like, it's been way a lot and it was right. If I'm not mistaken, it was over near, you know, I still, I'm still calling everything, the Astrodome, the NRG, you know, like I have an office over there. Yeah. So it's been a long time. So yeah. So, so but I, and, and, you know, I'm talking to people who've tried to talk and just kind of recalled different things. I was like, you know what, we're going to talk to the experts, which are you guys, you're one of the experts. So, um, we'll be able to find out, uh, the information we need and we'll get it straight from you. So I think you'll be able to help. Okay. All right. So let's go ahead and let's get started. Um, I just wanna let you know, we are recording this. Okay. So in case, so we can go back and we can pull material, pull information, so it is being recorded. And, uh, are you ready? Do you have any, because I've got my water right here and just want to make sure cause okay, good. Got it. Okay. All right.

Speaker 2 ([00:04:06](#)):

Dry mouth. And I'm talking and giving session some constantly drink. So did you see me doing that please? Don't mind.

Speaker 1 ([00:04:15](#)):

Oh, that's good. Like, like Isabel's got her cup of coffee. I, you know, that's typically what I have in one hand at all times. Um, but I had to lay off the coffee, so, you know, we good right now, so we'll go ahead and get started. Um, the time is nine 32. And so the first question, if you want to go ahead and just state your name and your position for us. My name is

Speaker 2 ([00:04:39](#)):

Amanda Clark. I am the office manager over the workforce solutions, Cypress station office.

Speaker 1 ([00:04:45](#)):

And how many departments comprise, uh, the career services office?

Speaker 2 ([00:04:51](#)):

What do you mean have how many departments

Speaker 1 ([00:04:53](#)):

Are there different departments within that career service office? Or is it just one?

Speaker 2 ([00:04:57](#)):

I don't like to say they're different areas. I just look at us as one. Some people might say you have the employment counselors, you have the ECS and you have the resource room and the greeter, but I like to see all of us as one. So because, um, it's a good, in my opinion, it's good when we can cross train. So that once one person in this department is not available, somebody else can always take over. So I try to stay away from seeing where have different departments. Now, if I'm going to characterize departments within the career office, I would say we have vocational rehabilitation, which not all offices have VR integrated into the office, but for my location, we do.

Speaker 1 ([00:05:38](#)):

Okay. And I think for the purposes of this back binding is that, um, if you can break down those different, I know you don't want to say departments, but the different services that are offered, like I know you mentioned the greeter and then the counselor. So if you can just break down for us, um, those particular services. So what, what's the, of each one of those, even though I know you don't like to depart departmentalize it in office, but just for us to understand,

Speaker 2 ([00:06:06](#)):

Right? So within the career office, you have the employment counselors, um, and those are the people who help you bind the job. Um, they, uh, provide all the basic services. Then we have the personal service reps who are the ones that you usually send your customers to, if they have, uh, the barriers that does not allow them to quickly go to work. Okay. Okay. Then you have your greeters and your research from specialists. So the greeters are, of course the people who greet the customers coming into the office, they're well-versed in basic services, so they can, um, let the customer know who they need to see perhaps. Okay. You seem like you need to see an employment counselor, counselor first, or seems like you need to see a personal service rep first, or you're here for this specific service. This is the person that you would need to go ahead and see.

Speaker 2 ([00:06:56](#)):

So they are the IOA say they're the strong holes because they are the ones that advise on where each customer should go direct them into the right, um, area. Um, and then we have the resource from specialist who primarily work on the resource room floor. Um, in my office, we have over 60 computers on my research firm floor. So they are the ones that guide and assist customers on the floor with anything they might need as far as using the computer, using the fax machine, using the printers. Um,

and then I usually utilize my resources from specialists to help when we have employers in the office and they serve as like their support and backup.

Speaker 1 ([00:07:34](#)):

Okay. And those are different from recruiters. They're, they're just the only different

Speaker 2 ([00:07:39](#)):

From recruiters. Yes. So we do have recruiters. Um, it's so wrong of me. I always forget my recruiters because they don't report to me anymore. Um, but we didn't have recruiters in the office and their main job is to just work on those job postings that come into our system. So the job postings are signed, you know, we have the Cypress station jobs and then they're the ones that actually work at calling the customer customers to refer them, following up with their employers, updating their employers on the job posting and the status, things of that nature.

Speaker 1 ([00:08:11](#)):

Okay. Okay. So we've got, those are the different roles. Um,

Speaker 3 ([00:08:15](#)):

Tammy, do you mind, um, I love what you were saying about the personal service reps and I just wanted to get a little more understanding of what they do day to day, just so we can, I just want it to fill in that gap. Cause I was kind of, you said send to customers and I just wanted to see if you could expand a little bit.

Speaker 1 ([00:08:31](#)):

We're gonna hold on a second. I do have that kind of question coming on a little bit, a little bit deeper. So just let me go ahead and go through these and then it kind of flows into that a little bit more. Okay. Um, so let's pick up on what happens inside the, the, um, 35 full and part-time offices that you feel that can occur online.

Speaker 2 ([00:08:53](#)):

Okay. So primary that I think that we can take online, um, would be orientations.

Speaker 1 ([00:09:00](#)):

Okay. Currently not offered online

Speaker 2 ([00:09:03](#)):

Right now because we're not in the office. Okay. Um, well I'm in the office, but my staff, majority of my staff work in Burke vert virtually. So they're working over the phone with the customer, with the customers, all of your teams, but normally the orientation is done in person. And I think this can be taken online when I say orientation is not all orientations orientations that I believe that can be taken online as snack orientations, 10 if orientations and unemployment orientations.

Speaker 1 ([00:09:33](#)):

And you said that snap and what was the second one? I'm sorry. Yeah. Tana. Okay. TMI. Okay. And

Speaker 2 ([00:09:40](00:09:40)):

Then unemployment orientations.

Speaker 1 ([00:09:43](00:09:43)):

Okay. So those are currently not being done online, but you feel that they could actually, they could be placed online. Yes.

Speaker 2 ([00:09:51](00:09:51)):

Because these customers are required to come into us. Um, they apply for benefits with like health and human services and they have to come here and do an orientation in that case. It's already required that they do it. So they have no other choice as opposed to things that they come in and where we need to assess to make sure that the customer meets the requirements, but snap, TANIF, and UI, it's a requirement that you do.

Speaker 1 ([00:10:16](00:10:16)):

Okay. The orientation. And can you just break down a little bit? What does the orientation entail? So the orientation

Speaker 2 ([00:10:23](00:10:23)):

Pretty much entails. Um,

Speaker 1 ([00:10:26](00:10:26)):

And they're different, right? I'm sorry. Just, are there going to be different or is it kind of the same? It's a little bit

Speaker 2 ([00:10:31](00:10:31)):

Because we a little bit the same, which is to find your job, which is the bottom line, but the, um, for snap, um, well the premise for all three are the same to find you a job with snap. We're bringing them in. We're talking about what they're doing to job search because only a certain group of snap recipients are sent to us. Only the ones that are coded as mandatory. And if you're mandatory, there are two categories of mandatory. There are those who have kids on their cases or under the age of 18. And if I'm talking too fast, let me know. I tend to, Oh no,

Speaker 1 ([00:11:04](00:11:04)):

No, it's on your work. We're recording it. So you're fine. I knew that there would be a deep dive into the office, but really deep.

Speaker 2 ([00:11:14](00:11:14)):

So we have the snap, um, GP population, general pop, and then we have the AI, the AI bots, a bot stands for able-bodied adults without the dependence. All right. So, so those are the two group of people that would come in if they're coded as mandatory. So with them, we're talking to them about, you know, their job search, why they're not working, um, what kind of job they're looking for, if they need any type of training. So we kind of put together a plan for them, like an employment plan that, okay, this is what you're going to do for the next four weeks. Okay. So snap, they have to participate with us for four weeks, as far as job job search, meaning that they look for jobs. And then they update us regarding, um,

the outcome of that job search. So they bring in a form every week that they fill out, they submit to us showing who they went to work for, uh, went to, uh, what job they applied for, how long it took, what the status of that job is. So they send that to us every week for four weeks, for our general population. After four weeks, we just close out their case. If they don't need anything else, they've done four weeks. That's the maximum they can do. Um, and then for our, a bod after four weeks, if they have not found employment, they would go into community service.

Speaker 1 (00:12:31):

Okay. Okay. So, and that's, and that's for them to receive any additional benefits as well, like unemployment? No, this is just for snap.

Speaker 2 (00:12:41):

Okay. That's that's that's net. Okay.

Speaker 1 (00:12:44):

And so then the next category was the tenant, right?

Speaker 2 (00:12:48):

Canada, temporary assistance, but needy families, which is cash assistance. Not everyone qualifies for that. You have to have a child and you have to have a child under the age of 18. All that determination is done by health and human services. When they go and apply, um, on like snap, where you actually have to be receiving the benefits for TANIF, when you go and apply, even before you were approved, they send you to workforce solutions to do the orientation. Okay. That's the only time we actually see the customer, they will do their orientation. We won't see or hear from them anymore because either they will offer one time tenant, which is usually like a large sum of money. Sometimes there'll be offered, um, a monthly payment. So usually the monthly payments at that time, health and human services has not determined any exemption codes for them.

Speaker 2 (00:13:41):

So sometimes we'll see them one time, they get an exemption code. They don't come, they don't come back again. So we don't see them again after that orientation. And other times we do see them because they are coded as mandatory. Okay. Well, if they're mandatory, they're required to participate on like snap. Once they, they start participating, they have to continue on to that benefit has stopped and that can be anywhere from six months to even up to a year, I've had customers on F for years at a time. So there might be a break because maybe they did not do what they needed to do. They didn't complete orientation. They didn't submit their hours. They're not maintaining contact with us. And then they drop off and they take away their benefits. They can then go back in and apply, but they have to go through the process again.

Speaker 1 (00:14:31):

Okay. Okay. Okay. So, but there's is not, uh, it's not that mandatory timeframe, like you said, like with snap before,

Speaker 2 (00:14:39):

If, if they're coded mandatory, they will have to participate until their benefits stops. And a lot of times it's not four weeks. It's more than four weeks. If they're receiving it on a monthly basis, as opposed to a one-time. So one time just gives them a large lump sum. They can just give them a thousand dollars and that's it.

Speaker 1 (00:14:59):

Okay. Okay. Got that. And then the other orientation

Speaker 2 (00:15:04):

On employment orientation. So this is when a customer has been receiving unemployment for several months and that customer has not found a job. They will send the customer a letter saying, Hey, you need to go to workforce solutions. And then when they come, we just talk to them, Hey, what's going on with your job search? Do you know about our system? Do you know about work in Texas? Do you know about these tools that you can use to job search? What are you doing to job to find employment? So we just kind of have those conversations with them. Now with UI, they have a piece that they already do online right now. That was a, I think in the past it was online and over the phone. And then we sent the, they brought it back into the office years ago for the staff to, um, handle it in the office.

Speaker 2 (00:15:50):

Um, I would say that takes up a lot of our time because it's, uh, we're dealing with snap customers. We're dealing with UI with our UI customers. And this is what the employment counselors usually are. The ones who would complete these orientations for snap and unemployment. The PSR is we'll usually do the ones for, for Tenneth because the tan of customers have more of a barrier. As far as a lot of times they're receiving snap and they're receiving cash assistance and they're not working. So they have more of a barrier to overcome. So there's childcare issues because again, 10 of customers are the ones that have kids. So there's that childcare issues. So the PSRs able to address that with them, provide them with any childcare assistance that they might need. Um, so that's why those are handled by the PSRs. And then they can discuss more too, as far as education and training if needed.

Speaker 1 (00:16:44):

Okay. All right. So yeah, that's a, that's a lot of services that are being offered, but they're currently, so what, um, what services do you feel that we can't move online?

Speaker 2 (00:16:58):

Any service that requires a thorough assessment based on funding? So we're talking about supportive services, um, and in my opinion, anything that has to do with training. Okay. Because a lot of times I've seen customers just do a pick and choose, or these are what workforce stays for. I'm gonna go, um, complete this and that's. And so, because of that, I'm sorry, I'm laughing. My staff's happier.

Speaker 1 (00:17:22):

Are you okay?

Speaker 2 (00:17:25):

Um, so, um, and I see that when customers pick and choose, as opposed to going with a program that they have a passion in, they tend not to stay long-term or they tend not to finish the program. And then

that's the resources that we wasted and invested, um, that yield, no, that you didn't know results. So I feel like the training needs to be assessed and we need to talk about, you know, your background prime example. I see lovely people come in and they want to do SAP. I want to do SAP too. Cause it pays like a hundred per hour in some cases. But the fact about it is that the fact that you have an SAP certification doesn't mean that an employee is just going to hire you because you have that because you have no background, you have no foundation. And the other things that go with the SAP, those things, I feel like need a thorough assessments. And this is where, um, career planning comes in, where we have that discussion that look, this might not be the right route for you, but based on your experience, based on your foundation, this other route might be a better route for you as opposed to just letting people do it online and just complete it and move on.

Speaker 1 (00:18:35):
Mm. Okay. So those are supportive services.

Speaker 2 (00:18:39):
Let me says assessment for financial aid training. Okay. Those are the two that would not, would not, not move online. You're

Speaker 1 (00:18:51):
Not recommending them online now. And

Speaker 2 (00:18:53):
I understand that. I think that we could move on line two would be hiring events or any events, um, childcare, child childcare, um, general childcare requests could definitely go online

Speaker 1 (00:19:12):
And current currently, currently they're in the office.

Speaker 2 (00:19:16):
Um, well right now, because we have with where we're testing out the new, uh, financial aid application, they go ahead and apply online right now. Um, but we still have customers who are still coming in or because of one issue or the other, they can't access the application. They say they can't upload some things. So they bring it into the office in the past. That's how it worked. They came into the office to get an application, complete the application. And then we went ahead to go ahead and, um, submit it into the system for the customer.

Speaker 1 (00:19:49):
Okay. Okay. So let me just, we just want to clarify that those, the ones that you're saying that can be moved online would be the hiring events and then I'm sorry, orientation, um, and childcare requests.

Speaker 2 (00:20:06):
Yeah. Okay. And what do you see move online? I mean, I feel like general inquiries can also be moved online maybe through a chat system, because a lot of times we have customers who have simple, basic questions, you know, uh, what community resources can help me with food. Uh, where can I go and get,

um, uh, clothes for my kids? Where can I go get some clothes to go to work? Um, those general questions, maybe through a chat system, not necessarily online, but through a help desk.

Speaker 1 (00:20:40):

Okay. Yeah. I definitely, we, we did discuss that, um, having that ability to have the live chat, um, for like you said, general questions like that, they don't need to come into the offices for, uh, for those services. Um,

Speaker 2 (00:20:54):

When I apply for UI things of that nature.

Speaker 1 (00:20:58):

Absolutely. Um, so walk us through, um, the new customer experience. So for instance, when you come through the door, just kind of give us a whole breakdown. What is that experience?

Speaker 2 (00:21:10):

Are you talking prior to the pandemic? Because right now our doors are open

Speaker 1 (00:21:15):

Prior to the, prior to the pandemic, what would it be? The new customer experience?

Speaker 2 (00:21:21):

So something that we do here at Cypress station prior to the pandemic is that every morning at eight o'clock all my staff, we go out to the door, we open the door and we welcome customers in. So as soon as they come in, they don't have to get on a wait list to see someone when they come in, Hey, I'm here for this. Someone quickly grabs them and walks them over to the staff's desk. Any staff, if all the staff have have a customer, then we go ahead and place those customers on a wait-list. Okay. So when we put a customer on the waitlist, we always ask, you know, what are you here for? If you're here for like a snap and a TANIF orientation, what we usually advise is that customers get on the computer while they wait and complete their wits application. The which application is the working Texas app.

Speaker 2 (00:22:05):

Um, usually the staff would have to go in and update, but before they can update, it needs to be completed. Our new Wix has a process where the customers have to fill out their Wagner Kaiser first, before we can even put in services before we can give out referrals, things of that nature. So we usually advise the customer, Hey, while you're waiting to get on the computer. Um, I see that, you know, your, uh, application is not up to date or I see that you do not have a profile, go ahead and create a profile or make the whole orientation process go by faster.

Speaker 1 (00:22:37):

Okay. Let me, let me just back up really quickly. So when you're going to open the door, who is that? You're then this is what we're going to talk about the roles. So is that the greeter, the greeters are going out. I know you like to incorporate everyone and not to departmentalized, but is it the greeters that are walking them, walking, welcoming them in and then asking them to either, you know, checking to see what they need? Yes, it's a greeter. Yes. Okay. So the greeter checks with them, um, from that point

they let them, they, of course the customer tells them, okay, I'm here for this. I'm here for that. So once that greeter finds out what they do, is there a system that the greeter uses to go places them in the system like th do they type their names in the system and they determine if they need to talk to like somebody with employment, counselor, um, or personal service rep, or how does that work?

Speaker 2 (00:23:33):

Correct. So they placed them on a wait list on the wait list or collect the customer's name. Um, if the customer wants to see a specific staff, they have the option of selecting that specific staff. Um, if not, there's an option for selecting this customers here to see an ECC, a PSR. In addition, they're here for job search. They're here for orientation. They're here for resume assistance. They're here to see a VR counselor. They're here to see a veteran. So whatever it is that they need, they will go ahead and indicate that on the wait on the wait list.

Speaker 1 (00:24:05):

Okay. And so how do you determine, so from that greeter, and I know you mentioned this earlier about sometimes they rotate roles, so that's why you don't like to departmentalize, but does a greeter have any other role that they play or they just, I mean, cause they're not in a vocational count, they're not a vocational rehabilitation counselor. They're not an employment counselor. I mean, I'm assuming

Speaker 2 (00:24:26):

Vibe basic information. So all staff at workforce solution needs to be able to provide basic services. Basic services would include letting them know about the trainings that we have, hiring events that are going on, um, community resources that are available. Talk about childcare, talk about the resources we have in the office. We have a TTY machine for those who might be disabled. We have a video relay if anyone needs it. These are the staff that we have here to assist you if you are a vet. So they'll go ahead and assess, um, customers who are veterans who would qualify to see a vet counselor as well. Okay. I forgot to mention that's another department. Yes. The veteran services.

Speaker 1 (00:25:11):

Oh, okay. Yes. Okay. Okay. Um, so from that initial Grieder, um, and they tell them what they're there for, how do you determine, um, how do you determine who they need to see? Like who determines whether a new customer is, or is not job ready?

Speaker 2 (00:25:36):

So it's based on the conversation that they have. So as far as the job ready piece, a customer comes in and says, Hey, I'm looking for, for a job. The greeter would engage and say, okay, that's, that's great. Have you reached in and work in Texas? Have you been here before? Have you been saying, Oh, no, I have, no, I have not. This is my first time here. I was told you guys can help me find a job. Yes, we can. Awesome. Great. Let me have you put in your information here. Let me see if you're in the system. Okay. It looks like you were in the system. You were last here in 2015, 2015. Uh, I think your profile, your width profile will need to be updated, but that's not a problem. I'll go ahead and put you on the wait list to see an employment counselor, um, while you're waiting.

Speaker 2 (00:26:16):

Um, I would advise that you get on the computer and update your wit, um, application. And, um, we have resources from staff and the resource from that can assist you. If you need assist assistance, just

raise your hand. They'll walking around and they'll come over to assist you. Here's your username. And I helped you reset your password. So once you log in, it'll ask you to create a new one before you can move on to the next step. Is there anything else I can help you with? No. Okay. So here's your pager? Um, once it goes off, come back right here. Uh, counselor will go ahead and pick and pick you up and then they move.

Speaker 1 ([00:26:47](#)):

Okay. And so now, so I see the greeters, the first person they meet, Amy, they have to,

Speaker 2 ([00:26:54](#)):

The greeter is the very first person that they meet. Yes ma'am. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:26:58](#)):

And so then, um, you said the resource specialist. So from the greeter to, like you said, there, okay. You wait over here, you're going to see a counselor. Um, but the resource specialist now break that down resource. Cause it seems like they are the ones helping. Um, are they helping the customer or are they help? Are they helping a vendor?

Speaker 2 ([00:27:18](#)):

They're helping the customer. Okay. Then there are also situations where the, um, the greeter will recognize that this specific customer needs more help than the average. So they would then go ahead and pay and said, can I have a resource person to the greatest station, please? The resource pressing will come up and then the video will say, Hey, this is Mr. So-and-so. Um, he really does not know how to use the computer. So he needs more help than the average. So can you please help him get started on the computer? I also gave him resources for computer classes at the Barbara Bush library. If he can help him get an appointment for, for that. And then the greeter will take the customer to the computer. This is how you do this. This is how you do that. Start here. Um, I'm going to walk around and help some other people, but I'll be back again to check on you. But if you need me immediately just raise your hands up and I'll get back to you as soon as possible. So that's the resource specialist refill specialist. Okay. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:28:16](#)):

So they're the ones. Um, and I think I know what you're talking about. The I've seen them, like they, they help you with the computers resume. You know, if they have any questions, you know, pulling up job searches, all that

Speaker 2 ([00:28:28](#)):

Customer customers are in the resource from sitting down waiting, Oh, I have a question. You know, what do you guys do about this? Oh, this is this, this and that. Once you get to the ECC, they'll they can give you more information or, Oh, you need a resource packet. Let me help you get one, you get an application or you need, uh, you need to file a wage claim. They know where all the things are, where all the forms are and all the quick information that accustomed that a customer might need. So they're like the runners on the fleet.

Speaker 1 ([00:28:56](#)):

Okay. Gotcha. And I think I'm understanding it. So, cause I actually, I'm picturing, I have a picture in my head, so I'm like,

Speaker 2 ([00:29:03](#)):

Okay, I can also give you a little tour of the office. If you wanted to see the layout to actually get an idea of how that running around looks like that.

Speaker 1 ([00:29:12](#)):

It's a good, that's a good idea. That's something we can probably set up. Um, so, so I know I've got my greeter and I come in. Hi, how you doing Tammy? Okay, great. Um, you're going to wait for an employment counselor, but here in the meantime, work on the computers. Okay. If you have any questions or your resource specialist is going to is going to help me, you know, I can't turn the computer on or like, how do I apply? How do I get to the website? Can you help me,

Speaker 2 ([00:29:37](#)):

Especially, this will help you do that. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:29:39](#)):

So then while I'm doing all that, the next thing that's going to happen to me is that I'm going to get called by called to see a, is it going to be a personal service rep or an employment counselor?

Speaker 2 ([00:29:53](#)):

Either one. So your, so let's say they're here to see an employment counselor. So the employment counselor will go to the page and station put in the number of the pager based on what was on the wait list. The customer comes, comes up. They take the pig, the pager from the customer, they greet the customer. Hi, my name is Amanda Clark. I'm an employment counselor, counselor. I'll be assisting you today. And of course, as they're walking to their desk, I always encourage that's where you start the engagement. That's where you start the talking. So what are you here for? How can you looking for this job or you're interested in this job, or you saw a job online that required a referral from a staff. So, you know, you start to engage and talk and talk to them while you're taking them to your desk. And then once they get there, they have a station.

Speaker 2 ([00:30:39](#)):

This is what I'm here for. If there's job search. The first thing that the employment counselor usually does is, Hey, this is the key pad. Can you please enter your social on the keypad? They try to pull them up and work in Texas. Now the only challenge there is that when there no work in Texas application and the employment counselor has to do that, it takes away time from actually getting to the job search. Okay. So I always advise that to keep everything job focused, start with just engaging in talking about what they're looking for. Just based on, you know, perhaps there might even be an employer that day in the office who was looking for that same position that that customer might be looking for that can buy you time to kind of help that customer kind of get that application complete. Um, the work in Texas application completed because that's where they can go in and give referrals.

Speaker 2 ([00:31:28](#)):

And, um, even in a situation where perhaps there's no referral in our system to go outside and use other resources outside of work in Texas, but that's usually, usually our first go-to place. There's been some jobs that even me, myself, I've never heard about. That's not in our system. And oftentimes I have to go into career builders or indeed to find them. So, but usually our first step is to go into work in Texas because it helps us, you know, because employers also have access to that system. So we always want to make sure that the customer is represented well on paper in the system for an employer that is looking for a candidate through work in Texas.

Speaker 1 (00:32:10):

Okay. So they sit there with the counselor and they go through this and hopefully they've done their wit you know, so this, it doesn't take an extra long time or extra time from that. So, so from there, so with that said, so do they go see a personnel service rep after that? Or is that okay? How do you determine?

Speaker 2 (00:32:31):

So, so in extenuating circumstance, the ISI can identify that, okay, this person needs training. So it looks, it looks like you need training to get the specific job. So what I'm going to do is that I'm going to hand you off to a PSR. So in that situation we encourage hand to hand, um, pass on. So in other words, the ECC will call and say, is there any available PSR and a little bit PSR calls that you see and say, Hey, I'm available. What do you need? It says, Oh, I have a customer here that I'm just job search you with, but they're interested in training. Um, and they will need more information and possibly an assessment. And then that ISI would not take that customer over to that PSR and do the handoff.

Speaker 1 (00:33:14):

Hmm. Okay. So, so let me, so, um, and I'm just doing this so I can make sure, like I'm the person and I'm going through the office. Okay. So I come in greeter, then I see my, um, resource specialist helps me out. Then I see my employment counselor is determined. Hey, you are not job ready right now. So, or I need this, I need some extra help. So then the employment counselor is going to give me to the personal service rep is going to help me obtain training that I need or any type of additional.

Speaker 2 (00:33:43):

Yes. There's some basic things that the customer needs to be job ready. And that could be things like childcare. It could be things like, um, clothing, those things, and ISI can also do an ISI can go ahead and refer the customer to dress for success, success, or career gear. The ECC can also go ahead and say, okay, so you need this resource to go to work. You need this supportive services to be work ready. The ISI can also give that, but in extreme circumstances, like training, that's a situation where they will hand off to a PSR and say, Hey, this person needs some training, but there are also other things that make a customer not work ready that the ECC can manage on their own without having to send the customer to somebody else.

Speaker 1 (00:34:25):

Okay. So those are the basic things that AC can help with. Like, Oh, I don't have anything to wear to a job interview. Don't worry. We'll get you to dress for success. Okay, great. Okay.

Speaker 2 (00:34:33):

You don't have computer skills. Don't worry. I have classes over at Barbara Bush library that I can read that I can refer you to. Those are simple. Those are simpler things. But when he now comes to career training or upskill training, then they would send it to the PSR.

Speaker 1 ([00:34:50](#)):

Okay. Because they're the person that's going to really dive deep and say, okay, you need to, you don't know how to work on word or Excel, or, you know,

Speaker 2 ([00:35:00](#)):

Perhaps even a young adult who needs more of a hand-holding. So we have to open a case and track that young adult. Then I would send that younger does and tell the kids like, Hey, this would be a great candidate for young adults. They have this barrier and that barrier. And I think they'll benefit from a program that coaches and helps develop this young adults. Um, so let me go ahead and transfer you over.

Speaker 1 ([00:35:25](#)):

Okay. Okay. Um, so I've got, I've got a good understanding. So there don't automatically the first, well really the first person outside of our basic services, they're going to see the ISI. Okay. And then if it's, it's a little bit more, if they, if they aren't necessarily job ready in a manner in which the ECC can help, then it's going to go over to the PSR expanded services. Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([00:35:50](#)):

Okay. So they expanded services usually. Like it involves a lot of case management, um, and long period of time.

Speaker 1 ([00:35:57](#)):

Okay. So that's case management more so, so that, so the, so when they get with those personal service reps, like you said, they are like case managers, how do they stay with the person the whole time they monitor them the whole time, or while they're going through,

Speaker 2 ([00:36:11](#)):

If a customer decides to go into a training program, we have to monitor them from start to finish.

Speaker 1 ([00:36:17](#)):

Okay. But if they don't, if you're just going, if you just go that day and say, Hey, I need you to do, to help me with this. And they say, okay, you need to go over to Barbara Bush and do this for this training. And they go, and they're like, okay, well, thanks. So that's where their services end with them. Yes. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:36:35](#)):

That's the orientation. Of course, you know, that keeping up with them for the next four weeks for jobs. And then after job search for a bods, they go from the ECS to the PSR because now they've not found a job within four weeks for the Avon able-bodied adult with all depending. And they need to be placed in a work workfare that work varies usually handled by the PSR.

Speaker 1 ([00:37:02](#)):

Okay. And what's workfare community service. Oh, that's right. Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([00:37:08](#)):

Because, um, the PSR will then have to do the calculation on how many hours that customer would have to participate in community service to continue to receive their benefits.

Speaker 1 ([00:37:19](#)):

Okay. And that's their unemployment benefits or their snap benefits or their tenants, their TANIF,

Speaker 2 ([00:37:23](#)):

Just, no. So this is for snap. So once a customer is participating in snap and they need to go into workfare, we only count their snap benefits. Okay. Now for Tennessee is a little bit different. If you need to go into community service for TANIF, we take your snap benefits and your tan of benefits. Add them together. That becomes income. We divided by minimum wage, and then whatever the amount comes up to as a number of community service hours, that customer will have to complete. So it's like income. So now becomes you earning those benefits. Excuse me.

Speaker 1 ([00:37:58](#)):

Um, okay. So that's interesting. So it becomes like, okay, so you, you didn't find a job within that four week time period, so, right. So then now we've got to, you got to do community service or right. And what are you calling it again? I'm sorry. Work, work fair work fair. Okay. So in order to continue to, we're going to base your hours off of the benefits that you've received so that it can be paid out to you. Correct.

Speaker 2 ([00:38:26](#)):

That's how we determined the number of hours,

Speaker 1 ([00:38:28](#)):

Hours they have to. Okay. Okay. And so, so, so let me just make it clear because I've got a really good on each person's role now, but I bet the personal service reps have to go a little bit further, right. Just a little bit further. So they're going to, they're going to be the people that do the training advise on training, but they also have a role when it comes to those that are, um, they'll snap box

Speaker 2 ([00:38:55](#)):

Customer customers who are a bod and I've completed four weeks of job. So I could I'll find an employment.

Speaker 1 ([00:39:01](#)):

Got it. Okay. Anything, anything else from them in that area?

Speaker 2 ([00:39:05](#)):

No. Now TANIF is handled by the PSR. So the PSRs are the ones that do the orientation for tenant. They implement counts the employment counselors. Don't do the orientation for a tenant.

Speaker 1 ([00:39:17](#)):

Okay. Well, let me ask you about that. You said that's one of the things you'd like to see go online, correct? As far as the orientation. Yes. Yes. So, um, is there a video that you Pele for that, or like you're saying that the, that these reps that they are the ones that they conduct the orientations, but is there a video

Speaker 2 ([00:39:36](#)):

Years ago? There was a video. Then we had a slide show that we used to use, but over the years, as staff get much more comfortable with what is needed and required in an orientation, the seasoned ones usually can do an orientation of top of their head. Like someone like me. I can do an orientation without having to look at the slide. Um, but for the newer ones, it's kind of just a slide and making sure that you touch on this and that who we are, make sure that there's employment focus, you focus in on job search first. They understand the tools that are available for them to find a job, discuss what it is that they're doing to find a job, things of that nature.

Speaker 1 ([00:40:13](#)):

Okay. So let me, let me put it this way. I'm thinking that the, and then you can correct me if I'm wrong. So the person who decides if a new customer isn't or is job ready is actually the employment counselor. It's any staff. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:40:29](#)):

Once they stopped to sit, um, to yes, an employment counselor, but any staff that a customer sits with should be able to assess and say, okay, you're not job ready. We need to do a, B and C to get you ready for this job that you want to go into. Like, you've like for instance, a customer who's been applying for a warehouse job and can not get the warehouse job where discussing, okay. Do you have the tools? Do you have your basic education? Do you have your GED, your high school diploma would, uh, would a certificate as a forklift operator help you and make you a more competitive candidates? Things of that nature. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:41:07](#)):

So, but agree. I just want to get this clear. A greeter would not decide if somebody is job ready. Not at all.

Speaker 2 ([00:41:14](#)):

They cook. Why? Because a customer who comes into my office that is not dressed, could be considered, not job ready.

Speaker 1 ([00:41:23](#)):

Oh, wow. Okay. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:41:25](#)):

So you've come into my office with some tights and a crop crop. Top. Your Fest is all out. Your stomach is all out. I'm looking at you and saying that you're not job ready.

Speaker 1 ([00:41:34](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:41:36](#)):

If it needs to be covered because the employer is looking at you first by your appearance, if you come in your hair is a mess, there's a little bit of a, a smell which does happen. Um, or you come in after you've just had a smoke or something outside and you smelling of something that we know it's not legal. Oh gosh, I'm looking at you and saying you are not job ready.

Speaker 1 ([00:41:59](#)):

Okay. Okay. Gotcha. Um, but let's just say for in general purposes, if it's a person that just comes in and they're dressed decently, you know, they don't smell reek of smoke or anything. And then they're saying, hi, I'm here too.

Speaker 2 ([00:42:14](#)):

Look for a job. Okay. Then they'll go ahead and sit down with a accounting counselor. And then maybe through their conversation, they'll then determine, okay, I see some deficiencies here that might make you not job ready, or maybe you don't have transportation because based on your last job, you could get a job and you could never keep the job because of transportation issues. So we'll go ahead and address the easiest can go ahead and address that. So that, that customer is able to keep that job and continue to go to that job, because sometimes it might be even sending the customer to maybe financial planning classes. That's, what's going to make you job ready because you can get the job or you can't keep the job because when you get the job, you spending your money and then you don't have money for transportation, or you don't have money to maintain your housing or something like that.

Speaker 1 ([00:42:59](#)):

Okay. And then if it's a little bit deeper, then that's when they go to the personal service rep. Yes ma'am. Okay. So then there was another, um, area, you said, um, you went into recruiter. Well, I asked you about the recruiter or you said, you know, they are there, but let's talk about the other services before we get to the recruiter. Um, vocational rehabilitation was one and then the veteran services. Right. Am I missing anybody there?

Speaker 2 ([00:43:32](#)):

No, I don't think so. That are in my office. No. So how does someone

Speaker 1 ([00:43:38](#)):

Go? How do they end up going to veterans services? I guess I'm assuming if they are a veteran.

Speaker 2 ([00:43:43](#)):

So we have questions that we screen, uh, customers for the vet services. So things like, um, a veteran who is between the ages of 18 to 24, I'm a disabled veteran, a homeless veteran. I'm a veteran that was recently septum separated from active duty. I'm a veteran who is an ex offender who, um, lacks a high school diploma, um, low income. We screen those at the greeter station to determine if they can see a veteran career advisor.

Speaker 1 ([00:44:18](#)):

Okay. So

Speaker 2 ([00:44:21](00:44:21)):

Those are the only people that they would actually go ahead and see. Now we do have a lot of customers who are vets. They get priority of service, meaning that they're number 20 on list is they move up to number one. Um, so they're seen, and they can be seen by any staff, but this specific group of customers, um, are eligible to see a vet career advisor, especially those that just came out of active duty, trying to find out, okay. So how do I now, um, get acclimated to civilian life and things of that nature. So that's where they now step in and they give that support.

Speaker 1 ([00:44:57](00:44:57)):

Okay. Okay. And then the veteran services personnel, um, are they typically, always tied up with the vet or is there any other time that they may shift into a different role or they strictly only work with veteran services? Strictly bits. Okay. And then now the next one that you mentioned was vocational, sir, re vocational rehabilitation.

Speaker 2 ([00:45:18](00:45:18)):

Yes. So those that department will help people who have physical or mental disability prepares to find employment or keeping employment or gain career skills, um, learn how to prepare for job interviews. Um, so pretty much they help people with disability increase productivity and independence.

Speaker 1 ([00:45:37](00:45:37)):

Okay. So is, uh, and can I say in both of those areas, I'm just gonna kind of go back to veteran services and vocational rehabilitation. Those, they are the ones that, that would determine who is job ready and who isn't. Okay. And then if let's just say, if a veteran services, um, person says, okay, this veteran's not job ready. So that person goes onto the personal service rep or do they stay within the veteran services areas

Speaker 2 ([00:46:05](00:46:05)):

Within the veteran services because they have, um, resources as well to help vets. They have fundings to help vets. They have special there's there, there there's special allowances that vets have that they will go ahead and present to them.

Speaker 1 ([00:46:20](00:46:20)):

Okay. And same for re vocational rehabilitation as well. Correct. So they wouldn't leave out of that service area. Yes.

Speaker 2 ([00:46:28](00:46:28)):

Okay. They could. Um, but usually they have what it is like, especially for training vets have this funding through the government for education and training. So that's where the vet rep would tell them, Hey, you know, you have this amount of money available for you to go to school and things of that nature. And this is, and you have this special fund for housing and things of that. So they usually stay there. Yeah. Go, do we get vet school don't necessarily see a vet advisor that see a PSR or an ISI? Yes.

Speaker 1 ([00:47:00](00:47:00)):

Okay. Okay. And would you say that they only see them initially, like at their first visit, they see their event, the veterans services at their first, very first visit,

Speaker 2 ([00:47:10](#)):

Only if they qualify to see the vet. So they have to qualify to see that vet rep if they meet any of that criteria that I listed earlier. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:47:19](#)):

Okay. Got it. Okay. Um, so, so I guess there's several, um, and I'm just kind of get back to, if you have, those are your new customers. If you have existing customers, can you tell me, does the existing customers, or do you keep existing customers outside of those that have to go see their, um, the personal service rep and they're tied to either TANIF or either snap? Yes.

Speaker 2 ([00:47:45](#)):

Yes we do. I'm there, there are some customers that whoever they've engaged with the first time, that's the person they want to continue to deal with. I'm the same way. Like my doctor moves somewhere else and I'm like, no, I'm not coming there. She's not there. I'm going to go look for her. Um, so we do have customers who are very much like that. I saw Amanda Amanda's and the person I'm going to see. I want to see I'm going to wait an hour until she sees me. So we do have customers who come in like that. Um, just because of familiarity, the service that they receive, this person is familiar with me, knows my story. I don't have to give her the whole, give somebody else the whole spill. She knows me by name. So this is the person that I want to see. And that there are some that, look, I need to turn in this job, job search log. I don't mind who I see, but I just need to turn to turn this in. So, yes. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:48:36](#)):

And I guess it's hard for me to, like, I'm trying to grasp like an existing customer, because cause that would be someone that's still in the process of, uh, either a training or a person that's in the process now,

Speaker 2 ([00:48:48](#)):

Uh, an existing customer could also be someone that's job searching. See, I tell you, you, you came, you came here. I gave you some assignment that said, okay, you know what? Let's go ahead and try this. Let me send you to this seminar and an activeness seminar. This is the, um, job referral I'm going to give you. Um, so you go ahead and apply and come back and see me next week. And I'll let you know what else is new in my system, whatever, what I was able to find out, if there are any new leads. So that customer comes back in and saying, Oh, I went for this seminar that you referred me to. So I want to tell her how it went. I want to give her feedback feedback. So those customers could also come back in to see an employment counselor that they saw. They might not have a case. Um, but they coming back because you gave me a referral last week or I applied, or I went for that interview. I want to come back and tell you how it went. Do you have any more like that? For me, I'm interested in some more leads. Let's let's let's go ahead and, um, sit down and discuss that. So you would have customers that come in like, like, like that.

Speaker 1 ([00:49:50](#)):

Okay. Now at what point in time? Um, so it's a counselor is not sending someone out or a personal service rep is not sending someone out, uh, um, on jobs that just isn't job ready. I mean, they wouldn't even get to that point unless they were already job ready, ideally. No. Okay. Okay. And then let's talk about, on, we talked about orientation, which I would consider the same as your onboarding process. Would that be correct to say, or

Speaker 4 ([00:50:20](#)):

Yeah, you could say that. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:50:22](#)):

Cause, um, my next question is we're going to pertain to the onboarding process for if customer is unemployed and receiving unemployment benefits. Um, so if you can walk us through that and it kind of categorizes each one, so that would be the first category unemployed and receiving unemployment benefits. Is there an onboarding process or is it the same for everyone? It's just like you come into the office, you fill out the wit and you've,

Speaker 2 ([00:50:49](#)):

It's the same for everyone. You come in, you'll receive an unemployment. You're looking for a job. I'm going to focus on trying to find you a job. But now it's different if you're coming in for unemployment orientation, because you were sent a letter, meaning that you've been receiving unemployment for a long period of time and you're still not exactly sure.

Speaker 1 ([00:51:09](#)):

And you need to come in because we need to find out why you're not get a job.

Speaker 2 ([00:51:13](#)):

Yeah, exactly. We need to find out what it is that you're doing is they work in, can I give you a suggestion? And for them it's a one-time thing. And then we keep in touch with them. Um, every 30 days sometimes they respond. Sometimes they don't, sometimes they tell us I'm fine doing the job. Like I can do on my own or the kind of job I'm looking for. You guys don't have it in your system. I'll have, I have lots of customers who would tell me that, look, my level is not on your

Speaker 1 ([00:51:38](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([00:51:40](#)):

Standard job is not in your system. It's very specialized, but you know, I'm just letting you know what it is that I'm doing. I'm like, Oh, okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:51:48](#)):

Yeah, I was gonna, I was gonna say that because I know that I, and I've told the team this too, I had a friend that was like a higher level executive. And even though, you know, she got laid off and you know, she was receiving unemployment benefits. But the problem that she experienced is that the jobs that were, I guess, in the system were not at the level that she was, you know, she was like a VP with, uh, you know, I mean, she, she has a head Hunter helping her now, but I'm just saying that it was like, she didn't.

Speaker 2 ([00:52:18](#)):

And that's, that's the part that we're understanding that there are some jobs that require people like head hunters. Um, and there are some jobs that are very specific whereby it's certain people that have to reach out to you for those kinds of jobs. And we do understand that. Um, so the most we do is to just let them know, Hey, if at any point, you know, where you want to look at things like transferable skills,

maybe something that's, we can go into, you know, these are the options available, or this is who we are. If you ever need help here and there. Um, I know that years ago when the oil and gas, um, market crashed, um, there were a lot of people that did not even know that food stamps was an option. So that's where we then step into. Okay. Look, I, I admit, I look, I can't, I don't even know what your job means, but thank you for educating me, but let me tell you about what resources are available to you that you can take advantage of.

Speaker 2 ([00:53:12](#)):

Oh, okay. I always try to kind of say, okay, if you say, I don't know your job and I can't help you find a job, well, let me tell you what it is that I can help you with. And let me tell you something that you did not know about that I know about. I always try to turn the tables around because a lot of times it does get there where people are like, you can't help me. You know, like you, you don't even know what my job means. Every day I learned about new jobs. That's how I learned about SAP. Like what, what is that? You get that. But I always encourage my staff to change it around and say, Hey, I know you're receiving unemployment, but do you know that you qualify for a WWI or for training, you have training money available. You can apply for food stamps, even though you feel like you might not need it. You might just help Cushing you a little, a little bit, you know, just telling them about what's available is turn the story around so that doesn't look like you don't know how to help me find my job. I may not know, uh, what that means, but, um, I can't help you in some areas

Speaker 1 ([00:54:13](#)):

And some other areas. Okay. So let me ask you this. So the onboarding process is the same and the onboarding is everything we've already talked about it, which is just, you know, getting them to apply for wit or designating register for, for wet, um, or, or snap or TANF, if that's what they need to do. Right. Just make that, that that's the whole, that's the whole onboarding process. Okay. Um, what about if a customer is seeking, um, is employed, but do you ever work with this? They're seeking to improve their skills? Yes, but they're already employed and they want, okay. So is it the same onboarding for them as well?

Speaker 2 ([00:54:56](#)):

So in a situation where a customer says, Hey, I currently have a job, but you know, there's this promotion come in and it could benefit from an upskill training in a situation like that. Um, perhaps you're you have an accounting back background and then you need an SAP and finance that could help boost you up and help you get that promotion. You would come in and have a discussion with a PSR to discuss, to discuss upskill training. So they will assess you. And the PSR said, okay, great. So you already have a job as an accountant and you need this training and you can't pay for it because of XYZ. Okay. Here's the application. Go ahead and fill out the app, the athlete, cation, based on the information you provided to me today, I'm going to go ahead and compete in assessment. Here is labor market information regarding how much you can earn in this new position. If you get this training and then we submit the application over for, for eligibility.

Speaker 1 ([00:55:51](#)):
Okay. So you can do that. If you're employed,

Speaker 2 ([00:55:53](#)):

You can do that if you are employed, but as far as if you're going to get the training funds or not, we don't determine that we just submit your application for eligibility, the eligibility department outside of the office, terminates if you're eligible for funding. Because again, we're, it's we're um, income-based so you have to meet the income requirements. You're working. You have to send us your paycheck stub so we can determine if you meet the income requirements. Okay. And

Speaker 1 ([00:56:24](#)):

What about financial aid? If they're seeking financial aid?

Speaker 2 ([00:56:28](#)):

So financial aid is the same thing. I'm talking about training or training for school support services. Um, we'll have to do, um, to determine eligibility. Now, anyone can come in and say, Hey, I need a gas card. I have a job right now, but I'm unable to make it to work. I need to get to, I need gas to get to work. We can offer a one-time assist us, just assess them so that customer can get to work. Now, if that customer has already used that one time, um, opportunity in the last three years, they would have to go through the financial aid process, but before they can even go through that financial aid process, we have to determine that the need warrants, this us going through this application process, because what we don't want to do is now make it something like, Oh, I received yesterday, but I need again today. So I'm going to go ahead and fill out a financial aid application. No, we need to justify why we're helping this customer long-term as far as going through an application process and then case managing the customer, it really should not be a one-time thing. And you get what you need to end you go, okay, okay, you need this, but we also identify that you need long-term help to maintain this.

Speaker 1 ([00:57:46](#)):

So that's a CA that's a counselor that would determine it. Then they would need to meet with the counselor

Speaker 2 ([00:57:53](#)):

With a personal service rep with a personal service rep. Okay. Now the one-time can be handled by an employment counselor,

Speaker 1 ([00:58:02](#)):

The one-time. Okay. Gotcha.

Speaker 2 ([00:58:04](#)):

Because a lot of the, um, ECS we'll see customers who just come up the street, you know, I have a job that's about to start tomorrow. I need work boots. I need this. I need that to go to work immediately. Okay. So the ECS can go ahead and handle that the ECS also handle any financial requests from their snap customers. So if the snap customer needs guests to job search, the ECC will also go ahead and take care of that. Now, the term that they use is that anything over 200, as far as the amounts, the PSR will handle, but there are some situations whereby um, what the customer needs is more than 200 that the ECE can handle. It's just a matter of them getting approval from management, that this is an extenuating circumstance where we need to do a one-time that's more than 200, that needs to be approved so they can go ahead and handle it. But usually anything over two 50, we most, most often see it with our training customers because their books are over two 50, two Wisha and things of that nature. So we

usually see those with the PSRs, not a lot under 200 for most of the things that the employment counselors can.

Speaker 1 (00:59:14):

Okay. Um, let me see. And when I go through, so just to be clear, um, on what is, is there a different process for onboarding youth and young adults?

Speaker 2 (00:59:28):

You're saying young adults at the same thing.

Speaker 1 (00:59:30):

Okay. Well, I know they were saying they were trying to cause don't, y'all have like a high school program and then you have the, like the over 18 there's like young adults. Okay. So that's okay.

Speaker 2 (00:59:43):

Everything, someone said they like young adult better, so we just switched it, but we still use the word, we just intertwined the place the same. Okay. Okay. So yes, it's a different process. Um, so again, it's mostly handled by the personal service rep, but trying to, because we just, one department cannot meet all young adult numbers. So I usually get all the staff involved. So for the employment counselors, I always encourage them. When you can do the initial assessments and collect the application, it makes things go faster for everybody so that we don't lose that young adult try when someone else is trying to now make contact with them. So, but the process is different. It's almost like an orientation, but with the young adults, uh, we need to, um, assess and determine what their barriers are to see if they meet the requirements. So there's income requirements for them. And then there's barrier bar barrier requirements. So I didn't put that as one of the ones that can go online because there's some things that a young adult that I've learned over time will not tell, will not volunteer voluntarily. Tell you, except if you ask or while you in conversation with them, they will just mention it on a side note, Nikki, that you didn't catch that, but you caught it. So it's, there's more engagement needed in my opinion.

Speaker 1 (01:01:04):

Okay. So that needs to stay in office that needs to stay in. Okay.

Speaker 2 (01:01:08):

Without a sustained with this. Yes. That, that, that is still

Speaker 1 (01:01:12):

Okay. And you said there's a there's, um, boundaries, there's barriers, there's income bound requirements. And so what, what are those just kind of break that down? Is that something that we need to know about? I mean, so

Speaker 2 (01:01:27):

Yes, where the, uh, my younger dose qualifies, if they're receiving any type of food stamps, um, ink. So if they, if they don't receive any type of food stamps, but perhaps they are working or they were working, then we'll look at their income. If they're receiving UI, they already meet the income requirements, but that's already off, that's already a check. And then the barriers are things like high school dropouts, um,

a foster child. So some of them say, well, I was in foster at one point, but I'm not there. Now, if you've been in foster at any point, you do qualify. So again, those are engaging things that we need to have a discussion with them, for them to reveal if they ever been arrested misdemeanor felony, um, if they're parenting, um, if they have a child. Um, and I think that's it. I mean, if you have a disability, you'll be surprised a lot of young adults have a disability, but they look at it as something so negative.

Speaker 2 ([01:02:30](#)):

So they will not tell you, except you're having a conversation with them. So that needs to stay in person. Yeah. I've had discussions with young adults who have disability, and I know because you will refer to me by VR, but you will tell me you don't have a disability or you check on the application, you don't have a disability. So these are things that we have conversations about, that it then comes out that, okay, I know you have a disability, you might look at it as something negative, but for me, that's a barrier that I can document for your eligibility purposes. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([01:03:02](#)):

I just have a couple more questions. Um, what online portals are used frequently by the career offices staff?

Speaker 2 ([01:03:08](#)):

Yeah. So, um, online portals work in Texas. Okay. Is, um, is the main one that we do use, we use our web website, which is R solutions because that's where a lot of our issuances are processes, procedure, um, updates, system, system updates. Um, but that's pretty much it

Speaker 1 ([01:03:36](#)):

So wit and work solutions.

Speaker 2 ([01:03:39](#)):

And of course we have our internal stuff, twist tiers, web report, K twist. And what else? Web report before it. Okay. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([01:03:51](#)):

Okay. And, um, what issues do customers frequently encounter on the website? Have they told you, have they shared that with you all?

Speaker 2 ([01:04:00](#)):

Yeah. Sometimes they can move on to the next page, but a lot of times I see that it's just them not reading through the content to make sure that they're checking every box. So we always have to say, you know, anything that has a red star next to it and needs to be completed before you can go to the next page. Okay. All right. I think

Speaker 1 ([01:04:24](#)):

Anything else, Isabella, because I know we're going to wrap up now, do you have any, is there anything else?

Speaker 3 ([01:04:31](#)):

This was a lot of great information. Um, I think we're good. I love, I like how, you're, how we talked about the issues of the website and everything was in detail and great. So thank you. Okay,

Speaker 2 ([01:04:41](01:04:41)):

Good. Glad I could help. Yeah.

Speaker 1 ([01:04:44](01:04:44)):

Yeah. Thank you so much. Really appreciate it. Um, you're a wealth of knowledge, so this should help us moving forward with some of the other interviews. So thank you so much was the pleasure meeting you and if you have any follow-up questions, just let me know. And um, if I have anything I need to reach out for you and, uh, I'll, I will contact you. All right. Not a problem,

Speaker 2 ([01:05:07](01:05:07)):

Not a problem, ladies. Thank you so much for your time. Thank you. You too. Have a good day. Bye-bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Jimmy Madrigal, Business Consultant
Workforce Solutions – Westheimer

Contractor

Employment & Training Centers

Interview conducted
March 10, 2021

Speaker 1 ([00:49](#)):

Well, thank you for joining us today. I really appreciate it. My name is Tammy Frazier. I sent you the correspondence and I'm the media director for Outreach Strategist. My colleague is also on the phone, Isabella Harkrider. She'll just be monitoring and jotting down notes for us in regards to the conversation. We have been hired by HJC. We actually have been working with Workforce Solutions for six years and we do a lot of your external media and public relations work. What's happening now is they're about to put out a new RFI and RFP for the website because as you know, with COVID, everything's probably, you know, been taken online, you know, a lot of the offices are closed, right? So, um, what they want to do is they want to make sure that the way the website is, um, is up to par that it's easily accessible for not only for our, for your candidates, but for employers, for employees,. Just making sure that all those services and services that are available as if you were in person are actually transferred online and they also want to assess what works and what doesn't work. So what changes we may need to put in for that RFP. Um, so that's basically, so this is not, I know I've had to, I've had many of these conversations with different, uh, sectors in the Workforce Solutions team. And I have to tell you, it's not a job assessment.

Speaker 2 ([02:30](#)):

I completely understand that. So no worries on my end. So I want to be as candidate straightforward as I can be and give you some more insights from what I seen my perspective. I can speak on behalf of some of my cohorts and peers about it too, that have the same concerns and issues or some of the successes that you guys are, this, the platform it has. So not to say that everything needs to be, you know, changed and liquidated, but I mean, some of the stuff is working.

Speaker 1 ([02:57](#)):

Okay, great. I love it. I think we're going to have a really interesting conversation and I want you to understand, so some of the questions I may I ask you, you'll be like, okay, that's pretty elementary, but remember we're not actually in the offices. So it's almost like you're having to walk us through what you do, your job description, how you service the employers. If there's anything that I'm leaving out, then please feel free to say, "Hey, but we also do this or this is the systems that we use." That's the other aspect of it too, is that we also have a part of the RFP is for the systems. So if there's anything that you're using daily, weekly, monthly, you know, that you have to submit documents or you regularly use, we need to know that information as well. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([03:44](#)):

Long-winded but I got it.

Speaker 1 ([03:47](#)):

I just wanna let you know we are recording this. So go ahead and just state your name and your position and what office or your work or who you're working with.

Speaker 2 ([04:04](#)):

Absolutely. Like I mentioned before, my name is Jimmy. Last name is Madgriggal, currently been with employer service division for four years now as of this April, 2021. So I've been doing what I've been doing for the past four years. I'm loving and liking it so much. I came from a retail type of industry, so it was kind of applicable to what I am doing now. My role is a human resource consultant, throughout my four year tenure with ETC or ESC, I've been transitioned into different roles each and every program. You whichever my capabilities were, that's where they kind of swayed me to, which I don't mind at all. I

love the growth. I liked the understanding of the system, making sure that I'm able to provide as much information to not only to the candidates, but to the employers that we service.

Speaker 1 ([05:06](#)):

Great. Well, that's good. I'm glad you mentioned candidates because honestly, I guess I thought within your role that you're kind of removed from the candidates, but we'll talk about that as well. You know, what, make sure you have your hydration, your water and everything. And if you just don't mind, let me get my water bottle. I left it right over here on the counter.

Speaker 1 ([05:44](#)):

Let's start with, how do you establish relationships with Employers?

Speaker 2 ([05:52](#)):

Absolutely, there's still a magnitude of ways that I can definitely outreach and connect with employers. My biggest thing do is to connect with those employers that we've already serviced within our system with Work in Texas. It's just a constant follow up with them to see what type of program services and that we can provide them during their time right now. My focus at the very moment is talent development. Anything deals with registered apprenticeship, current worker training, young adults, rapid responses or outplacement services. We are here to service them in any capacity for them to, you know, work properly though. I also have ventured out not to cold call individuals, but to see who in the world is looking to hire in in our region. So I've used platforms such as Indeed to canvas who is in our region, that's looking to hire so I can target them and see what, you know, what, let me talk to this employer who we probably have never heard of Workforce Solutions that may be, um, some kind of use to them.

Speaker 2 ([06:57](#)):

So that I came out with great success with that when I had the On the Job training program that I was trying to push. So a lot of employers didn't get a lot of that back from me. Then also believe it or not a underutilized platform that people don't necessarily use in my realm is LinkedIn. So LinkedIn right now is a strong pivotal point for us to be in the human resources realm. I've had three employers connect with me asking about what services they can use from us. So making sure that you have the most current up to par, you know, platform. I mean, I know people spend hours and hours on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, you name it. But if we invest those amount of hours into other professional platforms, we can connect the dots and see who is out there.

Speaker 2 ([07:46](#)):

Who's needing our services and believe it or not, I've had such luck with them. I've established great report with those previous employers that I assisted in years past. They keep asking for me. So I keep replying back to them, believe it or not. I have, I had a rapid response, which is an outplacement service that we service employers with when there's a mass layoff or reduction in force. That was two years ago. They called me again a couple of months ago saying that they're having a reduction in force in a different job site. So instead of going directly at TWC, they contacted me first about it, which is kind of neat though, that I sat with connections with those individuals who are in the HR realm that I can assist with. So it's the magnitude of who you talk to connect with, you know, and foster that culture that you know, what we are here for them.

Speaker 1 (08:41):

Okay. Well, that's interesting. Maybe you can explain to me the hierarchy because I know I've been interviewing recruiters. When a recruiter mentioned the business consultants, okay, well, those are the people I really need to talk to that have the relationships with the employers. So there's not a master list of employers that's given to you maybe from HGHC or, um, the vendor that you're working through. I mean, do they say, well, here's a, you know, a list now start cold calling or start reaching out. Is it basically, those relationships, like you said, that you seek yourself, you know, maybe you're looking in the area that you're in and you say, Oh, there's some new businesses opening and I reach out that way. So there's not any particular system that they forward you, contact information for employers.

Speaker 2 (09:35):

It's one of two it's, it's a mixed bag. I had the much success with, um, my direct supervisors who provide leads. Of course those are the employers that we get service in the past. If we service them in the past, more than likely they will be needed to be serviced this current year. So it's just an ongoing, you know, building relationship with those, of course I can generate reports myself, which I've done with Work in Texas.com. Again, instead of getting the lead list from my direct supervisor, I can build it my own and filter to the criteria that I'm needing. And again, cold calling is not essentially the easiest route to do because you're throwing darts in the dark. So you don't know what's going to land and what's not. But essentially, I mean, there's a hit or miss, and I've had a couple successes with cold calling myself though, too. But relatively speaking, that would be my last alternative to do, as opposed to just getting a lead list generated by me and or my supervisor.

Speaker 1 (10:30):

And you do that through the lead lists are generated through WIT. Exactly. Okay. Is there a limit to the number of employees you work with employers that you work with?

Speaker 2 (10:44):

Well, I mean, depending on how small or large, no, I don't have, I've had roughly I'm at probably 67 plus employers thus far from the beginning of this program, which started in October. But again, my goal is to try to capture as many employers as I can to meet their needs. Not because we're trying to do these goals that we're given it. My thing is like, what, how can we impact our communities within our region? So, and I know with the pandemic still going to make sure that we are here to support them in any way. So someone's calling me as you can see, it was my boss Benito, who had told me to be on this call today. So you probably didn't know that I was on it. So it''s a magnitude of ways that you can definitely use those resources.

Speaker 1 (11:54):

Let me ask you, so do you work directly with the hiring managers or HR with these employers?

Speaker 2 (12:02):

The privilege of working with you name it, I mean, all the wigs, the hierarchy like directors and executives, owners, CEOs, I mean, it's just a matter of who you get your foot across with and talk to. But they're really receptive though, too, because most people, when you email or leave a voice message, they say, who is this Jimmy guy who's calling me. I don't know Workforce Solutions, but what I do with my connections in my communication is that,the power of the emails also underutilized many people just think that a phone call, it will be suffice. When in fact, nowadays we're still in a pandemic. We're still

meeting virtually. People need to know that there's other ways to communicate. (inaudible) I always email my employers that I connect with.

Speaker 2 (13:22):

I know I've been speaking to anyone under the sun that will be willing to hear from me, director, CEO, managers, owners, you name it. I spoken to them.

Speaker 1 (13:35):

What are the, what are the employee size requirements? Are there any requirements for employers? What must an employer do to be able to work with WFS, go through WIT and work with WFS?

Speaker 2 (13:49):

Well, according to our parameters, the only thing that they need to be a need, the employer needs to be is up to par with their taxes. So if they're current with their TWC, Texas they're, um, up and go with any of our programs and services, that's how we get the funding. So otherwise, I mean, we've helped assisted in the past for those employers who did not have current and liable tax IDs. We were given them the privilege of a one-time kind of service, you know, just to give them a heads up that they would be fully capable of receiving any and all of our services that we render, if they're just up to par with their taxes.

Speaker 1 (14:28):

So they have to register through TWC or how does that work?

Speaker 2 (14:34):

They need to be registered with TWC and that valid tax ID. Yes. WIT is Work in Texas, that works with WFS. Most people think that it's the same, but it's quite different though.

Speaker 1 (14:47):

Let me ask you, so do you all assist, you do assist them to some extent with the TWC thing?

Speaker 2 (14:55):

Yeah, absolutely. Like for instance, again, DHL is the employer that I'm going to meet on Monday for the outplacement services. So actually I'm going to go in-person in Baytown to address the need. And then also talk to them about, you know, the many hiring events that we're having for those employers that affect her for that.

Speaker 1 (15:13):

Are conducting in-person meetings at this point, as well as online?

Speaker 2 (15:26):

It by far the majority, since the pandemic in March of last year, it has been done virtually as you know, case has been going down and being, you know, more lax. I've been okay. I've been okay. Going personally to go in-person with, you know, of course safety measures with mask and social distancing. I'm okay with that. But now with the city being open or the state actually for that matter being open effectively today. I'm not against of going meeting employers, that person. I've had some of my peers

who are okay with it. And of course, some who are not, which is okay. I mean, some of them do meet the requirements of age limits and, you know, preexisting conditions, which is fine, but, I'm okay. Meeting employers in person and I've had that prior, COVID, which I've gone to meet with them and discuss what Workforce Solutions is all about and what programs they can utilize at the time.

Speaker 1 (16:23):

I see. So it's a preference. Do you prefer? Because I think that we're looking at what they're looking at now is that because everyone has had to utilize the technology because of COVID and now, like you said that we are making some, a little curve in that, um, do you actually think that maintaining this connectivity online is, do you prefer that, is it better or do you like that in person

Speaker 2 (16:51):

I'm more of a human person I'd rather meet and greet someone. Um, of course with the pandemic and all we couldn't do handshakes and stuff like that, but I'm okay with, you know, change. It's all about being flexible to what the employer's needs are too, because we need to respect their needs as well. Also just in case the desire just to go fully online, I can definitely do that. Um, but, um, there's some expect with the employers they're okay. By meeting in person and otherwise be, um, virtually, but yeah, I'm okay with either, either option.

Speaker 1 (17:20):

Okay. And what, so explain to us exactly what are the services you provide to employers?

Speaker 2 (17:26):

We have an array of services and programs, initiatives, or whatever word you want to use that we provide. So the big, well, one of the big ones, the one that I started with On the Job training, OJT, I don't know if you guys are familiar with that. So that was a service, and now a service that I, as a consultant, is need to be providing to employers, register apprenticeship for those employers who do not know what that is or how to establish that. That's what we're here for.

New Speaker (17:57):

Job postings, that's when we connect with employers to see what type of postings they want us to post and work in Texas. Job fairs, just in case anyone needs any type of job fairs for their hiring and recruitment needs. We also have trainings, current worker trainings. These are customized trainings for those individuals that they have on staff right now, most of them, most of these trainings are soft skills. In addition to the trainings, we also have the funded training, which are the ones that are more specialized, a little more technical. That's where we source out providers within our region to see, what they can offer to those employers lacking. I have an employer right now, who's doing ESL. So of course we don't provide ESL training because we're not certified. So I had a source a provider that it is so they can connect the employer and employee to get the training they need.

Speaker 2 (18:55):

It's pretty lengthy and then of course, all these initiatives that we're providing any type of grant that TWC or H-gap provides, we have to push, we got the job coach pilot, we got the path grant. We have the job coach pilot. There's so many initiatives that we're trying to push at the same time, along with what we're doing. So it is a lot, but it is, it's good to know that there's this type of funding and initiatives to provide.

Speaker 1 ([19:29](#)):

Okay. That's really good because I wasn't aware of that. We've talked to the career service office, employees, you know, the ECS, the PSRs we've talked to all of them, but really, they're making the initial connect, but it seems like you got, you guys are going in, developing it more. You're actually going through with the process and arranging these (opportunities).

Speaker 2 ([19:55](#)):

I think. Yes and no, because with the career offices, from my understanding by far 90%, I think just saying 90% of their traffic is candidate base. So those are the individuals needing assistance with unemployment, jobs security and or any of those special services they offer. Yes. Some employee, I mean, people that do walk into the career office are employers themselves, owners. They're looking to render some type of service or needing services. And that's when the career offices does help and then kind of delegated to the appropriate person or parties to handle that situation. But yeah, most of the, most of the traffic that I have held was on my own and it's not driven by career office, but now that we're partnering together more, I see that we can definitely work hand in hand with that though, too,

Speaker 1 ([20:45](#)):

That's what I was going to ask you, it depends on who you talk to. You will say the numbers as far as who comes in seeking a job and who's coming in because they're receiving state benefits. But these OJT, the apprenticeships, the grants, the job fairs. So that's that the financial assistance, you provide the financial assistance as well as it was. It relates to the scholarships and everything. Is that a part that you work with?

Speaker 2 ([21:18](#)):

It's a funding attached to it. So of course Workforce Solutions gets those funds to appropriately provide that to the employer. Um, most of our grants are at no cost to the employer. These are awarded by the TWC and H-gap (?). It's just for us to find those employers that can, you know, who are suitable for these grants/

Speaker 1 ([21:40](#)):

Suitable okay. For the grants. So, and note, so you really, you don't really work with the job candidate, right?

Speaker 2 ([21:48](#)):

In the beginning, when I started back in 2017, I touched base with the little couple with the employees because some of the employees that connect with me and they wanted to outreach me for some reason. So I was able to speak to them, but I haven't had that rope with any candidates. So I don't, I don't necessarily handle with them. So that's where the career office comes in and the PSRs and some of the coaches, coaches, and other stuff that I have at ESC or EDC that do handle that connection with the employees. There other people in my org that definitely handle the employee side. So I personally do not.

Speaker 1 ([22:27](#)):

Okay. And can you walk us through how you onboard a new employer?

Speaker 2 (<u>22:33</u>):

Definitely. Well, first of all, it's just a meet and greet though. Two kinds of things. I always introduce myself who I am and what I do. I also get information from them because it's a two way street. I just can't be the one talking. Then I need to get some buy-in from them, you know, establish that rapport. After that, it's just making sure that I address and hear their needs. I mean, there's no point in me just throwing them everything under the sun if they're not needing it. So I've got to make sure that I hear what they're asking for, for me to provide the solutions that they are needing. So, from that point on, there is communication between us, I establish that to and from communication with the employer back and forth feedback. And then I guess, I have no issues connecting with anyone. So I just got to make sure that I'm as candid and straight forward with these individuals as well. I don't promise over promise them anything, as well, because I want to make sure that we are just as real as possible, but we are here, service them as much as we can. And that's ultimately my goal.

Speaker 1 (<u>23:49</u>):

Okay. And the systems in which you communicate and, and as far as the services they have to provide, that all comes through, is that you telling them, are you referring, like, for instance, like you said, if somebody walks in the career office and they say, Hey, you know what, I have a business that I really like to work with you all to make these connections. What, you know, just explain that process to me. How does that work?

Speaker 2 (<u>24:17</u>):

So how does, how I, you kind of lost when that question.

Speaker 1 (<u>24:27</u>):

So when they're walking in, so it's a new employer, right. And let's just say they walk in and they don't know anything, Oh, I think someone told me I could come here and get some, you know, some help, some support with them hiring. So of course the career office manager is going to refer them to you, possibly, you know, you or someone in your same position. So how does that process work? Is it, you immediately just say, okay, hi, great. I'll work with you. Or like, Hey, I need you to reach out to TWC first. You know?

Speaker 2 (<u>25:02</u>):

Of course we don't want to neglect anyone. So obviously I don't have all the answers to everything. So I would definitely hear the employer's needs. And from there I would follow the path that's most appropriate for the solution. So, I've had conversations with employers who have asked me something, which I don't know, I'm not familiar with. I would say, you know what, let me partner with someone that can give you the right answer and having them speak with them. But by far the majority of the times that the people that I speak with or the employers, um, I'm able to answer their questions right on the spot and then continued the rapport and make sure that we establish that connection and build, you know, everlasting relationship with them. It is important because otherwise they're thinking this is a one-time call, and then they're never going to talk to Jimmy again. And then that was it. And they're going to call again at H-gap or TWC and they speak to someone else. So we will want to make sure that we don't give them so many unanswered questions.

Speaker 1 (<u>26:00</u>):

Right. Do you have to submit any type of information or paperwork on them and what if you do, what systems do you use to submit that information?

Speaker 2 (26:12):

There's no reporting on my end. I track myself personally, who I spoke to, who is biased to use some type of service. I track myself, I spoke to the employer XYZ. They're requesting this on this date. We'll have a follow-up on this day and that date. But there's no need for me to report anything. The only thing I do report are those employers that do service. And that reporting, I provide that to my direct supervisor to let them know that I had a service rendered to employ XYZ for a program or initiative XYZ. So they'll know who is in what, what employers service or what candidates been serviced.

Speaker 1 (26:53):

Okay. And that database that you said that you, uh, that maybe your boss will send to you, um, how are they collecting that? Do you know how they're

Speaker 2 (27:05):

Just simply, mother's not theirs or SharePoint? I mean, something that they, we can, you know, I mean, I haven't had Google drives at all, but, um, anything that, that we, as a group, we can all see our work, our performance, everyone can look at what we're doing or who we spoken to, but, um, anything that's been solidified and concrete and completed, I send, uh, uh, email to my direct supervisors. I ended, this was completed. And this is the documentation that you may need on my end, just in case HVAC or TWC is requesting it. So

Speaker 1 (27:35):

Do you communicate through WIT, the WIT internal platform?

New Speaker (27:39):

Speaker 2. No.

Speaker 2 (27:42):

That's the first time I hearing it though, I didn't know. There was a communication in WIT to communicate with them.

Speaker 1 (27:48):

Yeah. I was talking to the interview I had prior to this there's a WIT internal work center. And so the recruiter was saying that that was a way that they communicate with the employer. And so I just wanted to see if you fit into that, if you all fit into that?

Speaker 2 (28:06):

If knew where that was, I would probably utilize it though, too, because that's another way for them. The only thing that I can say as a catch 22 is that most employers don't log into their WIT. So I can see that as a cautious way of communicate them going forward, because I can communicate with them all day long in WIT and never get a response, as opposed to me connecting with them with their personal email and they get the feedback that I need. So, I could see that as a useful tool, but I can also see that most employers don't communicate through WIT, they communicate through a personal email.

Speaker 1 (28:42):

I think that that's the difference in the roles, because according to that person, that is the format in which they will communicate. They also said that, and I told them I was going to ask this question further because I was curious as to how that works, because there was two parts to it. They were saying that the messages can be put into that platform, but unless the employer is alerted that that communicate is there. They don't necessarily see it unless they go, unless they sign in.

Speaker 2 (29:22):

Yeah, two things, Tammy is that as you're probably familiar with or not familiar with, um, WIT itself got a major upgrade. So that threw a big wrench in us to see it's another way for us to find it, use it and, and apply it, as opposed to be the old way, like two, two years ago, which we were kind of fluent and we were familiar with it. I mean, there's still a lot of kinks in WIT, I'm probably not so sure how to use, and it's a massive thing to utilize. So I'm not going to say, Oh, I know where that is when I don't, so I'm not going to, I'll keep up with what I know is best. It's just an email and I'd get rapid risk responses from anyway.

Speaker 1 (30:03):

I actually some people I was interviewing that are going to the training today. So they are, you know, because like you said, there was an upgrade and update and like you're right. Some people are utilizing it more so than others, and they're able to give that feedback, but your primary source of communication with anyone is just basically emails, phone calls.

Speaker 2 (30:26):

And Zoom, then at this point, any type of communications like we're doing right now, so, yeah.

Speaker 1 (30:30):

Do your employers have to meet a specific qualification to become an Employer with Workforce Solutions, other than a, you did say the licensing, the taxes, but are there any qualifications on our end other than just, just make sure you have your taxes? Correct. And you've got that tax ID.

Speaker 2 (30:54):

I know that that is it. So other than that they can come in as is.

Speaker 1 (30:58):

Okay. And so you manage the relationship after your onboarding. When do you start to assign the employer to a Workforce Solutions on-site recruiter?

Speaker 2 (31:11):

Oh, that's when I do find the job posting for the job posting to be set in their profile because otherwise the career office won't know who to recruit for or who needs assistance. So it's critical as a consultant to have a job order in Work in Texas for them to work hand in hand, like I said, the consultants ESD that's who I am and that career office are working hand in hand though, too as well. I was a business consultant. I was assigned to Willowbrook back in my first year with etc. So, now that we have an additional, um, partner with ESC, which is grant associates, they have held all the business consultants to all the career offices. So we don't do that necessarily now, but the way they were doing business

now, employers can now do an appointee meeting. This is something new. So we are now assigned to a career office. I have five offices just in case any employer has a question on anything that I can help them with. They can definitely connect with me and make an appointment and that can address their needs there and then, so that's something else that we're utilizing right now and making sure that we connect and help anyone that needs help.

Speaker 1 (32:33):

Okay. Let me, so let me just make sure I'm getting clarity on this. Cause you're, you've kind of said some things that are a little bit different, what I have had before. So, in the office, there's the recruiter and are we calling them recruiters or do they, is that the correct name for them?

Speaker 2 (32:50):

I mean, the titles are interchangeable, but I'd see them as recruiters, employment counselors, I think, I mean, just speaking on myself, I'm being candid. I think it's one and the same, but again, out of respect of who that person is, I would like to address them in their title. I don't want to diminish their position in any way. So if they'd like to be addressed in one title over the other so be it, but I think it's one of the same.

Speaker 1 (33:15):

Okay. The way I got to you with, because our recruiter pointed me to a business consultant, they said, because I was seeking more information about the connection between the employer and then without actually having to interview an employer. So they said, Oh, you want to talk to a business consultant, but I'm, you're referring to yourself also something else. Right?

Speaker 2 (33:41):

Well, again, my just like their title, my title has changed, um, a couple of times, but I consider myself as a business consultant and also as the human resource consultant. So it's interchangeable, it's one in the same. We do title, we do the same type of service. It's just making sure that we get to help those employers with their talent development needs. But yes, at the beginning, part of my tenure with ATC, I was a business consultant and then human resource consultant and we'd do the same thing, but the way, and I'll be okay, well, you can call me Jimmy and I'll be fine. I don't need a title to be throwing this.

Speaker 1 (34:22):

I liked that. You said, so you are designated five career offices. Okay.

Speaker 2 (34:27):

20 now platform that we're using. Yes. I have five career offices that I'm assisting any employer who needs any type of talent development needs that I can extend that. So yeah.

Speaker 1 (34:37):

Any pushback or anything in Appointee?

Speaker 2 (34:40):

Like that? Not right now, we're still working the kinks. Of course I was, given 15 appointments, which I had no idea what to speak to about, again, I'm not the one to waste anyone's time or, you know, act like

I know what is. I had 15 appointments about something that I did not know. So I had a partner with the career office. I said, I need you guys to contact these individuals because don't know what they're asking for, but they're needing some assistance. So we got to act proactively to make sure that their needs are being met. Again. These are all candidates. I never assisted candidates. My thing is the employer side. So, um, I haven't received any appointments for them, but there's no pushback. It just like any other type of platform, zoom, MySpace, you name it. I went old school MySpace because they have a MySpace on the Appointee appointment, it's funny and it's good, but just making sure that you're familiar with it and getting to know how to work with it. But I personally don't see it as a pushback. I mean, we got to roll with the punches, learn what the changes and making sure that we know what we need to do to serve as those candidates and or employers

Speaker 1 (35:51):

Are any of the Employers, what's their feedback been with the systems and operations, I do know that they're having concerns, concerns about WIT. I know that some employers have been....either they're locked out of their account, they need their password reset. There's different, things like that. So are you, are you, you're the person that works directly?

Speaker 2 (36:20):

I experienced that too as well. If I had phone calls on my end where, I get phone calls, track, well thrown to me to say help this employee get credentials and or passwords resets. And that's easy, something that I've done before.

Speaker 1 (36:34):

So no other pushback from employers, you don't hear any other feedback of them saying, Hey, this is kind of difficult. Um, you know, what can we do to make this process easier?

Speaker 2 (36:45):

I haven't had that at all. No, no, no. Again, just like anyone locked out of a past, out of their account. It's just a simple step of them communicating with us, but nothing like, Oh my God, I can't, I'm not going to do business with you guys ever again.

Speaker 1 (36:58):

Right. And does the Employer supply Workforce Solutions, or supply you with the job descriptions and qualifications, or do you as the business consultant provide that information based off what they're giving you? Does the employer supply you with the job description, descriptions and qualifications?

Speaker 2 (37:25):

Again, it can be either way because it may be a previous posted that they had before that we can extract from Work in Texas for, it can be a new position that they're trying to post, which we don't have that we would ask for them to provide that information to us.

Speaker 1 (37:40):

Okay. And then once the Workforce Solutions, once there's a staff match, let's say there's an employee match to a job. What does the handoff look like between you all with the finding the candidate for them and the candidate transitioning to the employer?

Speaker 2 (37:58):

On my end, I don't see that happen at all. I think that's on the career office that it's assigned to that job posting at that point, there's a recruiter, EDC staffing specialist, you name it, whatever title you like to now, they're in charge of that job posting to make those referrals. So that position at that point, that employee will definitely talk to the candidate about this job position to apply. So at that point we have no, no say on how they do it or how they run it because, um, we don't run the job postings. We just extract that information from the employer who is looking to hire.

Speaker 1 (38:36):

So does the employer ever contact you and say, Hey, great job. You know, we got all of our positions filled, thank you for what you've done.

Speaker 2 (38:44):

It's a very odd thing. It's nothing like that. I've heard a lot, people say that they don't have enough candidates and not get any feedback from any candidates being given to those job posts. And I did hear that before, but again, we are in a pandemic mode. A lot of employees are not wanting to work, which is kind of, you know, the norm because they're getting more from unemployment. So they want to stay at home. And so of course, we get the frustration and then people get to hear that a lot. And I can see that though, too. So not because it's the lack of effort. It's just the fact that people don't want to go to work now. So, and with unemployment being up again, $300 per week, people are making more by not working then going to work. So exactly, that's the thing that we're doing all the time. So a lot of employers are not getting enough candidates. Your job posting is not driving results. And then of course the recruiters who are recruiting for these positions are having just as much hard time talking to these employees about the job that's available.

Speaker 1 (39:48):

Right. Well, you know what, I think they don't realize that, you know, unemployment benefits will run out at some point in time.

Speaker 2 (39:56):

I think so. And once you know what everyone's going to be searching for that job. And then everyone's, we're going to be inundated by a lot of candidates looking for jobs. And then, you know, where were you two, three weeks ago or two months ago. So, that's the frustration that we have right now. So we could post the best jobs that make, you know, decent livable wages. But again, we can't find those people to fill us in because people are getting way more by not working.

Speaker 1 (40:21):

The services that you provide to employers, um, it's recruiting, do you do the screening, referring and testing of job applicants?

Speaker 2 (40:41):

Well, personally, not myself, but in my org ETC. There is a special unit that does that. So I wouldn't be able to elaborate

Speaker 2 (40:53):

The process, but from my understanding the steps. So if we have a special, a special project to do, and there's this employee who needs special recruitment, and of course they would do all those steps to get that right candidate.

Speaker 2 (41:14):

I know it's probably my connection. I do apologize. At ETC there's a special unit that does the recruiting and they're able to do all the steps necessary to do the pre-screening and onboarding of that individual. They go through, you know, prepping these individuals, making sure that they're, they're wind to work. And then of course that they want this position. Because again, we don't want to throw people who don't want to work and don't want this position to go and apply for someone's it's a waste of time on everyone. So they do that pre-screen I, on the other hand do not do that.

Speaker 1 (41:46):

Okay. And that's ETC (Emplyment Training Centers) Right?

Speaker 2 (41:49):

Yeah.

Speaker 1 (41:53):

Okay. And they provide the labor market information, state and federal labor laws, whatever, whatever that's needed on that aspect, they do all that.

Speaker 2 (42:04):

Yeah. I can, I can even provide that to the employer, to the case that we're requesting that. So I've done that before where I sent labor market information to employers needs, because again, we want to provide them with, information that connect track people. Because if you underpaid people, people are not going to work with you. And they're going to go across the street for 50 cents more. So why would you want to do that for yourself? So they need to be competitive. They need livable wages. No, one's going to work under the minimum wage nowadays.

Speaker 1 (42:38):

No. Yeah. That's been the big debate, you know, going on right now and yeah.

Speaker 2 (42:43):

But again, we can't, I don't, I'm a believer that when the way it shouldn't be $15 either. So we have to meet (middle ground) that's way too much. Then if that's the case, an inflation will go up and everyone's going to be like, well, you guys want it at $15 an hour. Now let's deal with that. So we don't want that to happen.

Speaker 1 (43:00):

Okay. But you provide that information just in general. And the labor laws and all that good stuff. Again, just looking at the communication systems, is there like a required Employer meeting, do y'all have like daily, weekly or monthly community? Is there any specifics that are there that you must meet with the employer? Like, is it, is it like, Hey, I've got to talk to the employers at least once a month or every two weeks. Is there anything that's kind of like specifically that you must do?

Speaker 2 ([43:37](#)):

On an as needs, as, as needs to, because not every employee wants to be over-communicated to it because there'll be like, why is he hounded me? So what I do is give them a couple of days, send them follow up email. And then by the end of the week, I'll give them a follow up phone call to say, Hey, didn't forget about you. We had a conversation the beginning of the week. What are your thoughts? Because I know life keeps on going pandemic mode, live, family, you know, whatever the case may be. You never know what's going on in their lives. So they're just as human as we are. So we give them a couple of times, but then at that point you can assess to see if this is going to pan out to something like, if they're still needing that. And there's some people that you want that, you know, service or program that we're offering. And then they'll just definitely, you know, yeah, let's do this and start this. So yeah.

New Speaker ([44:29](#)):
Speaker 1. Do you work with the vendors?

New Speaker ([44:32](#)):
Speaker 2. No, we don't. We have parties that do that for us. Then they will definitely help us partner and put, find the provider that can give the training and, or the necessary, um, jaws for that stuff.

Speaker 1 ([44:49](#)):

Okay. So that's, that's a separate group or entity within Workforce Solutions that pulls the qualified vendors for the trainings or for, like you said, and I may be getting confused with my conversation, but if you have like someone who was a nurse, or if you have someone who is like an, a top executive and they need a special, different kind of training, you know, as opposed to basics.

Speaker 2 ([45:11](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. We have no control over that. We would have to partner with one of our providers. There's hundreds of providers within our region, but there's certain entities that helps us a lot. That's region six or the HoustonCounty department of education. There's a couple of entities that we partner quite often with. So we partner with them quite frequently about the trainings that we can't offer because we're not certified and they will assist us to find the right provider for that employer. So

Speaker 1 ([45:44](#)):

That's interesting you work with region six, cause I always just associate them with teacher trainings.

Speaker 2 ([45:50](#)):

I do a lot more than, I mean, they are a good reliable resource, again, speaking to the right people that you talk to and communicate and specialist and establish that report. I spoke at to Trey Daniels all the time and it's like, we have each other's phone on cell phones, like what's up what you need. So it was like, can you help me with this? And it's share, went up. Okay. Again, connections,

Speaker 1 ([46:14](#)):

Connection. Right. That's good. Um, okay. So what, um, so just moving into the, the website service, what employer services have moved online and has it made it easier or harder for you?

Speaker 2 ([46:31](#)):

I don't see that it's made it easier or harder cause I really wouldn't know what platform or what website to go to, because the only one that I'd go to is WRKsolutions. And that's the only one that I've been used to since day one, if there are other ones I'm unfamiliar with, but I think it's still, you know, it does what it does, its job. So I don't think that it needs to be drastically changed. So it's just matter of you just using it.

Speaker 1 ():

And what do you have to do specifically on worked on WRKsolutions?

Speaker 2 ():

I looked for zip codes because I want to make sure that whoever I speak to is within our region, because if they're outside our region, it doesn't benefit as in the, in the least, because we want to make sure we impact the livelihoods of those in our communities. So that's one thing. I also look at the directory, to see who is in that office that I can partner with. And then I also go there to see what type of trainings Workforce Solutions offers. I mean, it's pretty vast if you, I mean, you can probably get lost, you can get one to one link and they'll take it to another one and another, this, it keeps ongoing, it never stops. So if you play, play with it enough, you get to get lost and stuff like that. But I think it's really, really great. I had no issues with that though.

Speaker 1 ():

What would you like to see maybe added, I mean, an added feature on there, cause you kind of just kind of said it goes through all these like pathways and sometimes you can click and click.

Speaker 2 ():

Yeah. I can hear you. I can hear you.

Speaker 1 ():

Um, yeah, I just think it's the internet. I know I saw AT&T driving by down the street. I don't know if it's mine or whatnot. Um, um, so what features would you like to possibly see added to the website? Because you just mentioned how sometimes you have to click and it takes you on an Odyssey. It takes you from one point to another. So is there, would you like it to be a little bit simpler? Would you like maybe something interfacing on the front page that would make it more easily accessible or maybe a chat feature?

Speaker 2 ():

I think just by sheer looking at it, I'm looking to look at it right now. I think it's, user-friendly, I don't think anything here should change. Again, it does its purpose. If you know how to maneuver it, you'll find what you need to find, but I have no issues with it, to be honest.

Speaker 1 ():

Okay. Have any of the employers, the employers don't have any reason to go on WKR solution?

Speaker 2 ():

I know quite not the opposite employers do. Like my biggest account is the city of Houston and they went to WRKsolutions to find the trainings that we offer. So some of them are pretty savvy. They want

to see what it's out there. So I wouldn't underestimate any employer, not going to, again, to find out what we are and what we do cause most the biggest misconception is that we are the unemployment office and that's what we do. And that's not the case. We don't do that. So, so I've had employers look at this and, you know, click and just find, and I had the city of Houston browse for some trainings that we did not know. I did not know that we provided, so...

Speaker 1 (49:45):

Okay. So the feedback has been positive from the, from those employers who have to go onto the website?

Speaker 2 (49:53):

Yeah, I haven't had anyone complain about it at all.

Speaker 1 (49:59):

Are there any services that we haven't discussed that I haven't touched on that you provide?

Speaker 2 (50:07):

Again, the other programs that I've mentioned is work based learning, um, young adults, second chance. I mean, I mean, it's just, it just keeps on going.

Speaker 1 (50:23):

Second chance.

Speaker 2 (50:27):

Yeah, those are for individuals who had committed, you know, life experiences. And then we want to bring them back into the workforce. Young adults are for those individuals to get internships, you know, when at a young age to get some work experience and then work based learning, or again, those internships that are outside, you know, the young adults. So that's year round.

Speaker 1 (50:48):

Do you all work with schools on the young adult learning?

Speaker 2 (50:54):

We try. I haven't seen any success with that though, but I mean, we'd done our attempt with HISD, which is our biggest school district in our area. So again connecting with the right person to see if they will be willing to hear what we have.

Speaker 1 (51:11):

Absolutely. And so that would not go through you though, cause you're you don't deal. I mean, cause I would think that the Houston independent school district, it's more of a

Speaker 2 (51:22):

Conglomerate, but no, but no, no it is, but no, no, but I've had communications with big corporations though that I've had connected with. So if they had some concerns and I'm able to answer them, I

probably would be able to give the solutions to what they're needing. So I wouldn't be against calling them or speaking to someone in line what I do, but it's just no different from your mom and pop shop. They have needs though too as well.

Speaker 1 (51:47):

Okay. So is there anything else that you feel that we should speak about regarding player services.

Speaker 2 (52:13):

My question to you guys, this interview that we're conducting, what is this going to do and what is this impact?

Speaker 1 (52:20):

Okay.

Speaker 2 (52:21):

I was giving you wrong answers. I just want to know what this is all about though.

Speaker 1 (52:27):

Okay. So again, they're putting together an RFI and RFP. That's about to go out in may, I would say for a, someone to, for a new website development. So they're looking at the current website, looking at what's accessible and available on WRKsolutions, wanting to bring in Wurk solutions website into, you know, to make it easily accessible and make it, um, an overall one-stop shop. That may be more, we're doing this because maybe we can find out if it's more customer based, if it used, is it, or is it employer based like you just share with me employers don't really, they may, if they can work through it, they'll go there. So it's really just to look at the different offices, the different services that we provide, what systems are used, because if there's a system that's not working, like you said, like Apppointy is one that's been added.

Speaker 1 (53:23):

Okay. Does that work for everybody? Is everybody okay with the pointy or they're not. And we've been getting feedback about appointee and how everyone uses it. So that's why when you said I'm like, yes, we're very familiar because everybody's, you know, discussing it. Some people are like, yeah, that's great. Some people are like, Oh I don't. So we report those findings because what they'll do is when they get ready to put the RFI an RFP together, um, that'd be something for whoever they hire to do this they'll know. Okay. So you're looking for a system that may work better than Appointy overall for your comfort workforce solutions. Okay, you work through wit, okay. So you're telling me, that WIT although it's, you can access it, there are some, there's maybe a need for training.

Speaker 1 (54:12):

Okay, great. Well, we, we know what are the pathways to get to wit? Is it easy for those or is it easy for some, is it not easy for some, maybe we can combine these systems together, although they report to state agencies, state, and government agencies, maybe there's a way that, you know, everything can report one on one platform because I know you're not submitting documents, but others are, others are, they're having to upload. They're having to submit. So making sure that there's a unified way that, that everything, every system can communicate, which is we're not working on that part of it. We had

the other consultants that we're partnering with they are working on the technical part of it, like the systems that are used, but we will report back to them. Hey, they use DocuSign, they use Appointee they're working through WIT.

Speaker 1 (55:14):

So they may ask us, what are the employers using? What do they use? Well, they have to make sure they're licensed through TWC. Okay. And then they work through WIT and that's how they'll communicate with workforce solutions. So it's just giving them the pathways. It's breaking it down because when you first come on to the system, it's kind of like, you don't know where to start, you know, you don't, you just like, Oh, career office. Yeah. Let's talk to them. It's like, then you find out, wow, there's other components, other people that are involved other areas and it's bast. And so in order to really, truly put out a and give a good report of feedback to the board on the systems and operations and how it works. Sure. We can talk to your operations manager, Dorian Cockrell, which we have, but he's not in the offices. Day-to-day, he's not doing that work. So let's talk to everybody that kind of works day to day and see what their feedback is and that's what we're doing. So we'll do an executive summary of everything we've found out. And then they can look at it and say, okay, this works, we want to keep this, we want to put this in as the art for the RFP, this doesn't work. You know, maybe we need to look at another system. Can they provide us another option where the systems, so

Speaker 2 (56:33):

I hope that my input helps a little. I mean, I'm not just gonna just throw things out there just from my perspective. So this is what I see.

Speaker 1 (56:42):

Yeah. No, and helps because it helps understand because now trust me, I went two months ago, three months ago. I don't think that anyone that was at the table can explain in detail, the whole process that goes on with candidates and employers. And now we are able to do that because we've been, we've been communicating with you also now, now we feel very comfortable saying, okay, this is what happens in the world with the candidate. This is what happens with an employer. This is how it, so that they can Oh, okay. Even from those conversations, what can we do that will make this improve it. So know your input is very, very helpful. So definitely. And we have two more interviews for business consultants.

Speaker 2 (57:34):

You're talking about my peers. I think you're going to have to speak to Tori and Jessica. So

Speaker 1 (57:39):

That's who I'm talking to sorry. I have them already scheduled Torian Jessica, and we're wrapping up also some other recruiter interviews. So yeah. But thank you so much. I appreciate your time. Um, I know, you know, taking your time out of the day too. Yeah.

Speaker 2 (57:58):

Anything that helps the system is great. Again, if you need anything on my end, just email me or call me either way.

Speaker 1 (58:04):

Absolutely. Thank you. And again, I'll defer to Isabella, anything Isabelle?

No, it was great. Just yeah. If anything comes to mind and when you think of the website and what can we improve? Just send him an email. Okay, great. Thank you. Okay.

Okay. Thanks so much, Jimmy. We appreciate you. Alright. Okay. ETF and Isabella, do you want to stay on for a second? Okay. Bye. Jamie, take care and good. Okay. All right. So I'll see you possibly at one 30. I'll probably be a little late. Okay. Okay. All right. Thanks. Okay. Bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Jessica Mollon, Business Consultant
Workforce Solutions – Main Office (Downtown)

Contractor

Employment & Training Centers

Interview conducted

March 11, 2021

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

I'm Tami Frazier I was the one who sent the email and I'm the Media Director at Outreach Strategists. We have been working with HGHC for six years, we basically do a lot of their internal communication, and partner with them on events, workforce events. We are very much a part of Workforce Solutions but now we're working on helping with a new website and we are basically looking at the services operations, per department, as far as what service services operations they use, what works what doesn't work online, and most importantly, is it successful for employers and employees and candidates. As you know with COVID most of the services have been taken online. So we want to make sure that everybody's has the best experience that they can, and in order for us, we have to understand the systems that you guys operate. So this is not an assessment or anything of that nature. We're taking it from the angle of: we don't know anything, with the assumption that I don't know anything about it. We are recording the conversation so that we can use go back and look, at the transcribe, pull that information. So if you can state your name, your position, and the office you work out of out.

Speaker 2 ([02:25](#)):

Okay. I am Jessica Mollon. I am a human resources consultant and I work for employer services division. So I'm downtown in our main office.

Speaker 1 ([02:35](#)):

Okay. The title, business consultant, because you work directly with the employers in progress. So you're not faced with, candidates.

New Speaker ([02:46](#)):

Speaker 2. Correct. Not at all. Yeah.

New Speaker ([02:50](#)):

Speaker 1. Great. Great. So how do you establish relationships with employers?

Speaker 2 ([02:57](#)):

Typically it's initially from outreach, through telephone. And so that can be from a range of different networks. I do a lot of LinkedIn to outreach initially. Then a lot of employers that are already in Work In Texas, and then to continue relationships and build those relationships. A lot of it is again, email exchange and telephone conversations, meeting their needs, addressing what needs they have, things of that nature.

Speaker 1 ([03:33](#)):

Okay. But your primary communication condition is via email?

New Speaker ([03:38](#)):

Speaker 2. Email and telephone.

New Speaker ([03:39](#)):

Speaker 1. So is there a component where the employer has to register with TWC?

Speaker 2 ([03:51](#)):

TWC and Work in Texas. Yeah.

Speaker 1 ([03:55](03:55)):

Okay. Okay. But are they using WRKsolutions at all?

Speaker 2 ([04:01](04:01)):

Not typically. They are not typically routed through Work Solutions unless I get their contact information say from a supervisor because they have gone through the Workforce Solutions (website), but typically the people that I handle are through outreach directly made by me, not through the website.

Speaker 1 ([04:25](04:25)):

Okay. Directly. And is there a limit to the number of employers you work with?

New Speaker ([04:30](04:30)):

Speaker 2. Nope.

New Speaker ([04:33](04:33)):

Speaker 1. So it's just how many can you can establish that relationship with?

New Speaker ([04:38](04:38)):

Speaker 2. Correct.

New Speaker ([04:41](04:41)):

Speaker 1. So, I'm looking at my chain of command here. So do you get a listing of employers in your area or is there someone that does the initial list or something that you have?

Speaker 2 ([05:02](05:02)):

So, yeah, so we typically do get an outreach list from our supervisor. He will put that list together for us. Occasionally we are busy, we're on a bunch of different projects and we're needed to outreach to employers that we find. So depending on whatever the project is that we're working on, we will sometimes, you know, reach out to employers that we come up with or that we find through email or, you know, just local, wherever you live, you know, kind of just determine it through that. But typically we are outreaching from a list that has been approved.

Speaker 1 ([05:39](05:39)):

Okay. And how this list distributed?

New Speaker ([05:42](05:42)):

Speaker 2. Through email, through email.

New Speaker ([05:45](05:45)):

Speaker 1. And does your Supervisor pull from WIT, is that a source?

Speaker 2 ([05:52](05:52)):

Yes. So Work in Texas is a source. A lot of times he will run a report to see who's active. Who's not active, who hasn't been serviced, this program year, things of that nature. They also utilize different sources or different outreach lists that they've had for say, if we're working on a job fair, for instance, maybe candidates or employers that have previously attended job fairs, they have a list of those, employers and we outreach to those as well.

Speaker 1 (06:24):

Do you work directly with the hiring manager or HR for the employers?

Speaker 2 (06:31):

Typically I do. I typically I'm working with human resources staff member of whatever employer I'm servicing.

Speaker 1 (06:46):

Okay. So that's your primary contact and what does that relationship look like?

Speaker 2 (06:54):

It's actually very good. I like helping people. A lot of times we're very back and forth as far as communication goes and how can I help her or him make their job easier on when it comes to the services that we are or will be providing. Typically if I have a good relationship and we're building, different courses or we're doing multiple different services with them, the communication in relationship is, is very mutual.

Speaker 1 (07:32):

What services you provide directly to employers.

Speaker 2 (07:39):

Me personally, or like our employer services division?

Speaker 1 (07:44):

In your job description. What technically what would you provide?

Speaker 2 (07:56):

Okay. We are in charge of building the relationship and offering the employer services. I helped with recruitment assistance. I'm able to create job orders for those individuals or for the employers so that they can then be posted onto the work in Texas database. We provide current worker training. I don't specifically provide the training, but I am the kind of the middleman between the employer and our training facilitator. So we determine, what trainings are needed based on the employer's needs. Then we facilitate those trainings. So I will get on the trainings whenever they're being offered. You know, see if I can assist either the HR rep that's there or my training facilitator, if they need any assistance. Those types of things. We work on different projects. So depending on what project we're working on, I either get the lead and I pass the information along to whoever's in charge of the projects or, I mean, that's typically what I do when it's a special project. It's kind of 'get the confirmation of the leads' and then pass it along. Same thing with work experience programs.

Speaker 1 (09:21):

So are you conducting the training or are you there to suport?

New Speaker (09:27):

Speaker 2. I'm just there to support. O.

New Speaker (09:27):

Speaker 1. Walk me through onboarding?

Speaker 2 (09:40):

Onboarding as far as just introducing them to the services and getting them registered in Work in Texas?

Speaker 1 (09:47):

Right. For a new Employer, is there an onboarding process that you walk them through?

Speaker 2 (10:02):

It's depends on each employer. Some employers prefer to have a more hands-off approach. So they prefer that we do it for them. In that case I will get the information that's needed to create a profile, or to post the position over the phone because they don't want to have to do it themselves. There's also times when employers would prefer to do it themselves. And so I'm able to provide them a list of steps and the proper documentation that they will need in order to get their profiles updated or into place. So it really is dependent on the employer's desire or preference.

Speaker 1 (10:50):

Okay. They create an employer profile?

New Speaker (10:53):

Second 2. Correct.

New Speaker (10:56):

Speaker 1. Okay. And this is uploaded in WIT?

New Speaker (10:56):

Speaker 2. correct.

New Speaker (11:02):

Speaker 1. Okay. They're not going to be on WRKSolutions?

New Speaker (11:08):

Speaker 2. Not typically.

Speaker 2 (11:14):

I do inform them of Workforce Solutions or WRKsolutions and the website and the different resources that they have on there. But quite often when I'm talking to an employer, I'm kind of serving as that resource or that informational point for them, to allow them the information on what we service or what services we provide them.

Speaker 1 (11:38):

Some of them will independently look for this on their own, but typically speaking for you would be communicating the services.

New Speaker (11:49):

Speaker 2. Correct.

New Speaker (11:52):

Speaker 1. So you primarily communicate with the employer via email? On the phone. Are there any documents that you have to send to employers?

Speaker 2 (12:05):

Yeah, so we document almost everything. Actually, realistically we document everything, depending on what service they are interested in or what services we are going to provide. So for when we're helping with the recruitment or job postings, we have a job order form and so either I get the information on that form through our telephone conversation, or I will email the form over and then they can email it completed back to me. And then that goes over to our jobs division and they input that information into work in Texas. So that's for the recruitment job posting type of thing. If we're doing recruiting for work experience programs or a couple of our other special projects, we have work site applications. And so employers have to fill, once they've, you know, uh, listened and agreed upon the specifics about the program or agreeing to want to know more about it, I guess. We have them fill out the work site application. It just shows that they're interested in it. It's, it's a form, it's an agreement that then we send over to the proper department to continue that relationship in that direction. As far as when we are planning current worker training or essential skills trainings, we do not have a document specific for that. We do a needs-assessment typically with the training facilitator, and then both he and I will take notes and then move forward from there, but there's no specified form for that. And then of course we document all conversation, all outreach, all everything, and Work in Texas.

Speaker 1 (14:02):

Okay. So its all in Work in Texas. Any document submission, there's not a system your loading this through?

New Speaker (14:02):

Speaker 2. Correct

Speaker 2 (14:14):

It's through email. So if we get a work site application and we need to forward it to the right entity, we do it through email.

Speaker 1 (14:21):

Do Employers have to meet specific qualifications to be a Workforce Solutions contractor?

Speaker 2 (14:40):

Um, no, well, it depends on the program. So to just work with Workforce Solutions employers in this region that are recognized employers in the state of Texas have access to Sorkforce solutions.

Speaker 1 (14:55):

Tell us more about that process, they have to have a tax ID number?

Speaker 2 (15:04):

So they have to have their federal employee number or their federal identification. They either have to have that, or they have to have their tax ID number.

Speaker 1 (15:15):

And if you don't have it to help, help them get it so they can work with WFS?

Speaker 2 (15:20):

I have not personally done that. We do have a system where we're able to look up information, say they, they don't know it. We're able to look up that information and see if they do have it, if they don't have it, however, I typically pass that information on to a supervisor.

Speaker 1 (15:43):

If you are able to look it up what program are you using?

Speaker 2 (15:50):

Mainframe.

Speaker 1 (15:52):

Okay. (inaudiable) What's the website?

Speaker 2 (15:56):

I actually don't have access to that. I'm still relatively new to the position. I've only been here since we've been in the virtual world, so I got hired post-COVID. So previously it was on all of the computers at our main office, however, and there was a training over it and everything, but since we've gone virtual, not everybody has licenses to that. So, I don't personally have that access.

Speaker 1 (16:29):

Do you think it would be benefical if all of these exinternal websites that you have to conenct to were available on the WFS website?

Speaker 2 (16:45):

Yeah. I feel like we have a lot of different channels that we have to go through, you know, depending on what we're servicing, what need we're servicing for the employer. It kind of is you have multiple screens open all the time.

Speaker 1 ([17:04](17:04)):

Okay. So it would be good if everything was central?

New Speaker ([17:11](17:11)):

Speaker 2. Yes.

New Speaker ([17:11](17:11)):

Speaker 1. When do you assign the Employer to the Workforce Solutions on site recriuiter? Is that what you do?

Speaker 2 ([17:25](17:25)):

I do not. So I don't do the recruitment side. So what I will do if employer is interested in more specialized recruiting services, or interested in recruitment outside of just posting a job order, then I send that employer's contact information and their work in Texas ID to my supervisor, and then he sends it over to the recruitment department.

Speaker 1 ([17:54](17:54)):

Okay. Does he have direct contact with Employers?

Speaker 2 ([18:08](18:08)):

It's typically the human resources consultants, unless there's something, it's going to be a big, you know, a big employer that we're going to do multiple different projects with, or kind of work with them in multiple facets. But typically it's just the human resources consultant.

Speaker 1 ([18:25](18:25)):

Okay. Do you maintain contact with the recruiter or is it only your refering ...? [inaudible]

Speaker 2 ([18:37](18:37)):

Yeah, unless I have questions. So sometimes, you know, I've been working with this employer through, you know, doing XYZ. I have a good relationship with them. They asked me about the recruitment services. And so they got channeled that direction. We will occasionally touch base on what's been said, or what's been done or any of like, kind of background information, but outside of that, no.

Speaker 1 ([19:01](19:01)):

Okay. Do the Employers supply you with the job descriptions or is there template you use to set up a job description?

Speaker 2 ([19:17](19:17)):

We have a template for what we are going to, the information that we need in order to input it and to work in Texas. And that's our job order form, but we do not provide them the information for their jobs. So they provide us their job description, um, their salary expectations, um, and all of those things, but we have a template for them to fill in, but they put all the information and if that makes

Speaker 1 ([19:43](19:43)):

Okay, it does, um, began once a month, once you set up the profile descriptions and then how do you match up for a job candidate?

Speaker 2 ([20:01](#)):

So I don't do anything on that side. As far as that goes, I ultimately get the job order, or the posting. And then I don't even post it into work in Texas. I send it to a different department to get posted, and then once the posting is done, I do know that then whoever is in that region of where that job is, that office assigns a person for that. And so, I don't know the recruitment side, or the individual side.

Speaker 1 ([20:36](#)):

Okay. So can you provide us with what services you do provide? The recruit, screening, referring.

Speaker 2 ([20:58](#)):

I don't do any of that. So ultimately if I were to summarize my overall job description, or what I do is I outreach to employers to get them interested in WFS or to teach them, introduce them to the services that Workforce Solutions provides to employers. And so that would be discussing customized training talent development services, we have our work experience program programs, our work-based learning programs. And so I'm just informing them of the services. And then once they determine that they would like to utilize these services, then I, if it's the training portion. So if it's, talent development in the form of essential skills, trainings, customized trainings in those rapid responses, I will be the facilitator of those. But if it's anything that is a different program, then they get sent in the right channel or in the right direction.

Speaker 1 ([22:10](#)):

Okay. So you're giving them the information. You're not conducting, executing?

New Speaker ([22:17](#)):
Speaker 2. Correct.

New Speaker ([22:20](#)):
Speaker 1. Okay. Do you discuss the state and federal labor laws or data and wage?

New Speaker ([22:32](#)):
Speaker 2. I do not.

New Speaker ([22:32](#)):
Speaker 1. Okay. Who has daily contact with the Employers, how often?

Speaker 2 ([23:03](#)):

If I'm working with that employer, so for instance, I'm just going to throw this one out there because it is one of my bigger employers. (She had to pause for a moment to run to get her dogs in)

Speaker 1 ([23:33](#)):
You are the person who has daily contact with Employers not recruiters?

Speaker 2 (26:16):

Well, if they are just working on recruitment or if they're working on recruitment, then yes. They also have to. So for instance, Goodwill, may I work with Goodwill employees or employers, I guess. Um, and so they, people in are in employer services because for me, I'm facilitating all of their trainings and they're doing a six month course or a six month kind of series of a different training each month and offering it multiple times. And so in, in like in that aspect of her and I are in constant communication all the time about the training, and I introduced her to our reentry program. So reentry program, it's one of this, one of our work experience programs will that then I don't do after she showed interest in that I sent her to that person, that point of contact that works with the reentry program. So she does have multiple people that she communicates with often, not just me about everything, if that makes sense.

Speaker 1 (27:32):

It does. When they complete a training, or Employer you are saying could send their employees to the training or potential job candidates, is there any documentation for this training that you have to send?

Speaker 2 (27:58):

Yeah, we call it our tracker, it's a participant registration form. We have that tracker. That is how Texas Workforce Commission is able to document who who's done, what trainings. And so that gets the individual's contact information that attended, their social security number, their job titles, salary, those types of things. Then once we get that, we send it to Benito and then w or whoever your supervisor is. And then from there, it gets sent to the person that then inputs it into Twist or the, the program.

Speaker 1 (28:40):

So how are you sending documents?

New Speaker (28:41):

Speaker 2. Email.

New Speaker (28:41):

Speaker 1. And then they upload it to Twist and that person is your boss, supervisor?

Speaker 2 (28:50):

He doesn't upload it into Twist. He gets it to the person uploads it in this way. So it's shuffled through quite a few people.

Speaker 1 (29:00):

Okay. So that's only for people who are receiving benefits, right?

Speaker 2 (29:08):

Yes.

Speaker 1 (29:09):

Okay. So that might be maybe somebody who has a financial assistance. Yeah. But for people who do not see any of those benefits, you don't have to have to have that?

Speaker 2 ([29:27](#)):

No, we fill it out for every person that attends any of our trainings, unless, the only time that we don't do it is if the, the employer won't provide that information. But typically we lead with, if they're, if they're going to receive training or talent development services, we let them know that is required. We're going to need this information for the candidates or for the employees that attend or utilize the service ,so that we can keep track of it.

Speaker 1 ([29:55](#)):

Okay. Are you keeping track of it based on age, or demographics?

Speaker 2 ([30:01](#)):

I don't know that. I just know that they put it in Twist. Once I get the information and send it over to Benito, I have no clue what happened to it.

Speaker 1 ([30:13](#)):

When it comes to the current online interface are you happy with what's been moved online?

Speaker 2 ([30:28](#)):

So that kind of goes back to, I started when we were all online, so I started during COVID, so I started in June of last year, so I don't know how it was before, so I can't really answer that one, but I do like it virtual. I mean, I think that it is more convenient for Employers and I feel like you get more, kind of involvement from individuals when it is so easily accesible.

Speaker 1 ([30:59](#)):

Okay. Is there anything about the Workforce Solutions website you'd like to see added or improved? Is there any feedback like that feedback like that?

Speaker 2 ([31:20](#)):

Not necessarily. I do think that it could be helpful for Workforce Solutions employees to have something,kind of like a SharePoint, but it's just for ETC (contractor). We're a contractor, so we have our own, and then it gets input to the right channels from cyberspace. I don't necessarily know where all of the documents go or why, but I feel like it would make Benito's job easier if there was one place for everything. So, you know, for the tracks so that the person that actually receiving them on the other end can just grab them from there. I think that that would be easier.

Speaker 1 ([32:09](#)):

Do you have any push back from Employers, about the website and what they'd like to see?

Speaker 2 ([32:22](#)):

No, nobody's said anything. Typically, I feel like when you start building that relationship with the employer and you have that foundation, then they don't really need to utilize any outside platform just because they have you as their go-to person. So for instance, if I'm talking to my Goodwill rep, then she's not going to go look for an answer to a question. She'll just ask me.

Speaker 1 ([32:50](#)):

Okay. For Documents, do you send your time sheets?

Speaker 2 (33:09):

Yeah, we have our own, um, system, our own it's 'Nova time,' and I know that they're transferring that over soon. And so we have, we have our own clock-in system. It's not a part of WRK solutions.

Speaker 1 (33:26):

Is there is anything else that you feel I'm missing?

Speaker 2 (33:32):

No, I will say though that most of my leads do not come from Workforce Solutions website directly. So a lot of, a lot of the employers that I'm reaching out to have no clue about Workforce Solutions and the services that they have offered to them. So, I feel that if more employers knew of the services, they had offered to them, they would be utilizing them more. But I just feel like a lot of employers have no clue. So that's, my job is to get the word out about them and then help facilitate how to get them into play for them.

Speaker 1 (34:16):

Okay. How would you suggest when it comes to makreting this should be done?

Speaker 2 (34:38):

I have no clue, honestly. I know. I mean, like maybe, obviously you can't go back, but maybe going forward with new businesses, just providing that information. Like when a new business registers in the state of Texas, like giving them the resource or, uh, I don't know, what's provided when that happens. Obviously I don't have a business in Texas, so I don't know what already that is, but what if maybe they provided some type of training or offered some type of resource to them letting them know about them? Not that they wouldn't necessarily look at it, but....

Speaker 1 (35:20):

That's good,

Speaker 2 (35:22):

I don't know how you reach the people that you need to reach in employers to get them more aware.

Speaker 1 (35:32):

This is fine, this is infomraiton and feedback and thank you so much for your time. It was very helpful.

Speaker 2 (35:55):

Thank you. let me know if you needed anything else

Speaker 1 (35:59):

I will follow up email you.

Speaker 2 (36:07):

Okay, perfect. Thank you so much. Take care.

Speaker 1 ([36:10](#)):

Bye-bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Tori Simon, Business Consultant
Workforce Solutions – Employer Service Division

Contractor

Employer & Training Services

Interview conducted

March 11, 2021

Speaker 1 (00:02:59):

[inaudible] [inaudible].

Speaker 1 (00:07:25):

I'm good. How are you? Thank you. Good. I am Tammy Frazier with outreach strategies. So you and I were communicating via email, and I'm going to introduce you to my colleagues that are on here as well. I'm just letting one more person in. This is Zach Miller. He is our communications director and outreach strategist. And then my colleague Isabella Harkrider, I think we're expecting, we are expecting one other person before they come on. As I said in the email, we are, we have been working with HGAC for the last six years. Basically providing communication support, external communication support. We help them with job fairs. We provide the public relations and media.

Speaker 1 (00:08:26):

This is Ron Webb. Who's with sat with our Savage consultants as well. So just so now that you know, everybody that's on the call. So as I was saying, so what we're doing here, this is really a conversation, we're doing fact-finding, information wise into operations services and systems that are used with the Workforce Solutions by their employers, um, employees and job candidates. So this is not a job as to estimate. So to make that clear, it's not an, it's not an assessment. So a lot of the questions I'm going to ask you, and we're asking that you kind of respond as if we were not familiar with the inner working. So just bear with us, if I maybe repeat a question or it seems redundant, but we're just trying to really get good insight as to the services you provide, specifically in your position and the systems that are used, if there's anything that we miss also, please let me know from the questions that I'm asking.

Speaker 1 (00:09:37):

I have spoken with some of your coworkers, so just a couple fellow colleagues. So I do have, I may reference some things that I know I've learned from them. So you can always just correct me if it's anything, and we'll go ahead and get started. I want to let you know, for the record that this is being recorded and it's only being recorded so that we can go back. And when we're doing an executive summary that we can look back at the information, it's so much easier than trying to write down everything that you say.

New Speaker (00:10:14):

Speaker 2. Right. Right. Exactly.

Speaker 1 (00:10:17):

So for those purposes, if you can go ahead and just state your name and your position and the office that you're working from. Um, and if you happen to know some of the employers that you work with, okay,

New Speaker (00:10:31):

Speaker 2. Well, my name is Tori Simon. I'm a human resources consultant, With Workforce solutions, employer service division, we're located off of our West, Alabama in the Greenway Plaza area. And I work with a lot of employers. For example, I've been working with a lot of municipalities, such as City of Pearland, City of Huntsville, city of Houston, in various private sector employers providing, various talent development services. So essential skills, training, soft skills training for their current workers. So when

employers have a need to enhance and upskill their, their current workers, that's where I come in play is I kind of let them know what their options are. Make sure that they're taken care of, as far as their current worker skills.

Speaker 1 ([00:11:42](#)):

Okay. So how do you establish the relationships with employers?

Speaker 1 ([00:11:48](#)):

Yes, by several methods, it could be usually it is calling employers, sourcing those employers from various, web searches. Or what have you, making sure to see if they're hiring? I email employers, I communicate on LinkedIn. So there's, you know, those various methods I use to, and of course, word of mouth, them, sorry, word of mouth. So I use those various methods into networking with employers and building the pipeline.

Speaker 1 ([00:12:25](#)):

And so do you guys have an employer list? I know it was Benito your supervisor as well.

New Speaker ([00:12:32](#)):

Speaker 2. Yes, he's the manager. Yes, we really, we kind of developed our list, just with the outreach that we do. So we kind of establish pipeline. Now we do have employers that are in the system and list are generated from the system as well, but primarily we are outreaching to employers, establishing and maintaining our own pipeline.

Speaker 1 ([00:12:58](#)):

And what system is that? What, what system do you all use for the list?

Speaker 1 ([00:13:03](#)):

Sure. WorkingInTexas.com.

Speaker 4 ([00:13:10](#)):

You mentioned that some of the skills development training that you all use with folks to help get them up to speed. Do you guys ever do any training for people that would need to be accredited as like a continuing-ed type of thing you do?

New Speaker ([00:13:24](#)):

Speaker 2. Well actually, if you're referring to HR related type of critical, is that what you're referring to? Okay. We do have one of our partners, in the employer service division that we with their division does provide those types of credits. That's a monthly meeting usually have to provide credits and things of that nature. We work very closely with them and we can definitely give those referrals as needed to the employers, you know, because we're all here to support them.

Speaker 4 ([00:14:02](#)):

So as a, as a follow-up then, so when it's, if it's a training that is specifically accredited for, for a job field, how is that warehoused or cataloged, and is it really more on the individual taking the training to kind of reply back that they've completed those credits? Or is that something that is generally sort of reported

out by, by y'all or, or by the employer? Because the reason I ask is because we're trying to get our arms wrapped around how many different sort of parallel systems a future system for Workforce Solutions would need to speak to. So if it needs to, you know, sort of back into an existing data set for, you know, accounting, you know, continuing-ed credit or teacher continuing ed credit or anything really,

New Speaker (00:14:52):

Speaker 4. We would just want to be aware of what those systems are, so we can make sure that the future website they're all able to plug into them smoothly.

New Speaker (00:14:59):

Speaker 2. Okay. So if I understand your question, it's in regards to the HR certification credits. Sure. Yes. That'd be a yes. Yeah. Okay. So I'm going to speak in two ways here. One regarding the HR certification credits that our colleagues provide, within the employer service division, that team specifically handles that I'm not sure about their reporting mechanism on that end, because that's handled by a different team. Now, as far as our team is concerned when it comes to the current worker training, uh, we report those metrics through week, of course, reporting and Work in Texas.com. We have our various sign-in sheets that we record who attended the training. So those are primarily-- and of course the SharePoint system. So those are primarily the way that we track our metrics through the current worker training program, which I'm a part of in employer solutions. So, or employer services. So that kinda is how we, um, how we've been tracking so far. So if those two could are, if those systems can somehow come together, that would be great, you know, and we'll know, you know, all have the same information.

New Speaker (00:16:23):
Speaker 2. Does that kind of answer your question?

New Speaker (00:16:26):
Speaker 4. Yes. Ma'am yes. Okay. Okay.

Speaker 1 (00:16:29):
How do you all distribute that employer list, is it in WIT, would you say it's in WIT?

New Speaker (00:16:41):
Speaker 2. Yeah. And it comes through labor market information. So we do have a reporting specialist, that pulls the fresh LMI every day, from the system. And it kind of shows us, you know, what employers are new to the system and what employers meet services and things of that nature. We get that every morning, every morning, it comes over email, in a spreadsheet format. But once again, I believe he goes into work in Texas. He sorts, he filters and then he puts it in a spreadsheetand sends it to us.

Speaker 1 (00:17:21):
Okay. And that's distributed through email again?

New Speaker (00:17:24):
Speaker 2. Yes.

New Speaker (00:17:25):

Speaker 1. Okay. Is there a limit to the number of employers that you work with that each counselor worked consultant works with?

New Speaker ([00:17:34](#)):

Speaker 2. There's no limit the more the merrier, there's no limit, and what we want to make sure that we're providing exceptional customer service all the time. So every employer gets the same level of outstanding customer service, but there's no limit, we want employers, we want to have employers, you know, know that we're here and, you know, we can get more employers to Workforce Solutions and let them know what we're providing. Uh, that would just be absolutely perfect.

Speaker 1 ([00:18:09](#)):

Okay. Do you work directly with the hiring managers, human resource department? Who do you typically, what's your connection with the employer, the owner, or depending on the size of the company? Could you explain that?

New Speaker ([00:18:27](#)):

Speaker 2. Yeadh Pretty much all three, um, you know, we're recalling, we're emailing. So, we generally ask for, um, the manager or the HR department liaison, and usually, if the manager is available, they might not know, what the current availability is at that moment, but they'll let me know, Hey, please call the HR manager. I've even talked to owners as well. So we generally talk to pretty much all three. The smaller companies. Um, you can have more direct communication with the owners. Okay. the bigger companies are usually, if we get in contact with them, it's the HR managers or the HR directors, midsize companies, you know, management, you know, so kind of how it, it's not cut and dry like that, but usually that's kind of how it is.

Speaker 1 ([00:19:27](#)):

Okay. And then how do you cultivate that relationship with them once they are assigned to you? Is there an onboarding process?

New Speaker ([00:19:36](#)):

Speaker 2. There's no onboarding process. It's just that, you'd have to kind of maintain communication, let them know, uh, based on your conversation, what you recommend for their, current workers, what would be beneficial to their organization and you just want to maintain, you know, maybe a biweekly call email, just to kind of keep that relationship going, but that's purely up to the individual who brought the employer in. So, I personally keep, a reminder in Outlook. I don't let things go.

Speaker 1 ([00:20:20](#)):

So are there any particular system that you are using that you have to upload documentation to on a daily or weekly basis, um, for the employees, employers that you work with?

New Speaker ([00:20:33](#)):

Speaker 2. SharePoint, yes. Ma'am we use SharePoint. If their employer is going to pursue like an essential skills training, we'll upload the proposal for that to share point to make sure all the management team knows, Hey, this is what we're doing. We put the employer on the SharePoint spreadsheet to make sure management team can kind of see who we're working with. Of course we'll

update Work in Texas.com with all the notes. So you'll see, when you log in, Work in Texas, you'll see the relationship developing with the notes and the dates.

Speaker 1 ([00:21:12](#)):

Zak, did you have a follow up question?

New Speaker ([00:21:15](#)):

Speaker 4. As you were given the question, you said anything, you have to upload to conversely, anything you have to download from, are there any other systems out there that you need to pull data or, or items from that would be handy to have sort of, you know, aligned with whatever the future computing system is that you guys use?

New Speaker ([00:21:36](#)):

Speaker 1. Not really. I just, usually I have a document out, documents rather I'll have a folder on my desktop where I just do my personal downloads, but nothing system-wide, that would be good. We use SharePoint for various reasons, but, and then some documents on the SharePoint too. I did notice that recently, so, yeah, but everyone pretty much, you know, has their organized way of keeping documents. And there are documents located on the SharePoint if people need to download.

New Speaker ([00:22:15](#)):

Speaker 4. And then within the SharePoint, that's just sort of standard Microsoft templates, like word Excel, PowerPoint, image engineering, and then you all, and then you guys start a file tree of some sort, I'm assuming with this file is Jacobs engineering, and then sub file is, you know, training we did in January of 19, you did training January of 20, that kind of thing?

New Speaker ([00:22:36](#)):

Speaker 2. Exactly. Every employer is listed by date in the SharePoint. And if you, we have one of our well, several of our cousins who have multiple employers in one file, it was the same employer, but multiple locations. So organizing the file.

New Speaker ([00:22:53](#)):

Speaker 4. Zak: So each consultant is free to sort of manage that, that file tree. However, it makes sense for them.

New Speaker ([00:23:04](#)):

Speaker 2. Yes. We're all logged into the SharePoint, we'll all see who, what employers we're working with.

Speaker 5 ([00:23:12](#)):

Rob: Tori, I have a question related to that. You said that you would upload a proposal if you're going to pursue, if an employer wanted any services that you needed to provide or develop a proposal for. Do you have a standard set of templates for proposals that all consultants use or do you kind of have your own that you work from?

New Speaker ([00:23:32](#)):

Speaker 2. Yeah, we have our standard set that we all use.

New Speaker ([00:23:34](#)):
Speaker 5. Rob, And that's on Sharepoint?

New Speaker ([00:23:35](#)):
Speaker 2. Yes, I believe that blank one is on SharePoint.

New Speaker ([00:23:45](#)):
Speaker 5. Thank you.

New Speaker ([00:23:46](#)):
Speaker 2. You're welcome.

New Speaker ([00:23:48](#)):
Speaker 1. We've kinda touched on the services that you provide to employers. One was the training as well. Can you talk to us about the other services that you provide for employers?

New Speaker ([00:24:02](#)):
Speaker 2. Yes. We talked about essential skills training. We have various projects going on right now, separate from the essential skills training. One of which is the job coach pilot that we're doing right now. That's is that what you're referring to? So the job coach violet is what we have that services, young adults who have unique abilities. We refer to them as disabilities anymore. It's unique abilities, and these are high functioning, young adults who were trying to place in a work site within ten miles of their, of their home. Okay. And basically in that program, we talk with the employer, we will kind of assess what their needs are as far as hiring. If that program is a good fit for the employer, we'll definitely, make them aware of the program.

New Speaker ([00:24:59](#)):
Speaker 2. I tell them about, you know, what the program offers, what job coach pilot. If that impart/employer decides to hire one of our young adults, there'll be reimbursed to a certain amount for a certain time. Okay. And then, that young adult will have a job coach that works with them one on one for a few days until they get comfortable with the position. And then the goal is for them to eventually wing off the job coach and become a full-time employee. And eventually on the employer salary once we are done paying for the four to six week training period, if you will. That's the job coach pilot. The second project that we're working on is called Paths for Texas. Primarily what that does is we received funding from the Walmart Association and other state-related funding to help individuals in the retail industry to enhance their skills.

New Speaker ([00:26:10](#)):
Speaker 2. So, based on if they're in a retail position, and if they're, if they qualify based on their family size and their income, we kind of talk with employers about, Hey, you know, we can definitely help your current workers receive their certificate in sales, basically. And if an employer, has an interest, we'll definitely send them information, the application and they'll have their employees sign up for the program. It's basically, you know, they're getting paid for education if they want to pursue retail

certification. So that is the Paths program for retail employers. Another program that we're currently working is the City of Houston re-entry program, basically that's when individuals who have a blemish on their background, we're trying to find employer work sites for them. That will be like a second chance important understanding of this person. They've paid their debt to society. They're coming back and trying to reintegrate into society. So, we primarily target employers who, will hire on a case-by-case basis if you will. So when I'm recruiting or when I'm sourcing for that, I'm looking for employers. I know that we'll work with people, you know, kind of in their area of town.

Speaker 4 (00:27:48):

It sort of reminds me of something, another question that I've got. Are all of these projects managed directly through SharePoint using sort of the standard Microsoft office?

New Speaker (00:28:01):

Speaker 2. Yes. All these are managed through Sharepoint.

Speaker 4 (00:28:05):

The program you just referenced, is there a need for, or ever an occasion where you might need to say access any kind of like sort of criminal justice database or work with the County to identify these folks are being released? They meet the criteria for participation in a re-entry program, any kind of systems discussions between Workforce Solutions and other agencies that you all might need to have sort of formalized into a new computing system, anything like that, that springs to mind?

New Speaker (00:28:38):

Speaker 2. Not on my end, because I'm just specifically focused on bringing the employers to Work for Solutions, but that might be a good idea for the actual career centers who are working with the customers that come in, but we don't do it on.

Speaker 4 (00:28:56):

Okay, perfect. Please proceed.

Speaker 1 (00:28:59):

Okay. And did y'all have any questions about those three programs that I just talked about?

New Speaker (00:29:05):

Speaker 4. No.

Speaker 4 (00:29:06):

Very promising programs.

New Speaker (00:29:07):

Speaker 2. Okay. Then a couple of more, we have the on the job training program where employers, if they decide to hire someone through our program, they're reimbursed a certain percentage of the salary for a certain amount of time. That does have documentation as well now, you know, that's, yeah, that definitely has documentation, as far as sending the employer, the on the job train documents, and then receiving those documents back. So we have a DocuWare that is currently,they started using on

that. Okay. Yeah. So, um, that's another program that basically helps entry-level individuals, secure employment opportunities that they probably wouldn't have gotten, you know, just the regular looking for a job because they don't have skills. So that's OJT and then the apprenticeship program, that's basically, hybrid, well, not really a hybrid, but a more extended version of OJT where the employer has said, okay.

New Speaker ([00:30:19](#)):

Speaker 2. Yeah, we want to definitely have for entry level people. And we also want to train our people and get them certified with a state credential of some sort that's the goal is to have them in, at the end of the program with a state provided credential. And, the reimbursement, if they're approved for that particular apprenticeship program where they're training new and current workers in a specific field. Their reimbursement goes a little bit higher. For a little bit more extended time on that apprenticeship program. Yeah. So I'm just try and wrap everything up into like a neat bow of what we do provide. So as you can see, we have a lot of different services. So with integrating wherever, you know, documents and all that can be in one system, that would be excellent.

Speaker 1 ([00:31:17](#)):

Do employers have to meet a specific specified qualifications to become a Workforce Solutions contractor?

New Speaker ([00:31:26](#)):

Speaker 2. Well, basically for the two programs I discussed OJT and apprenticeship. Yes. They have to have three or more full-time employees, w two employees, they have to have full time positions ready to hire ASAP. They can't the temporary help be permanent permanent positions, and full time, non-seasonal W2, immediate type positions. So those are the qualifications for OJT and the apprenticeship program pretty much the same, you know, for that. But the positions are going to be more of a longterm thing. Let's just say, if someone is, goes through the apprenticeship program, they received certification and then they're brought it to a supervisor, you know? So that's kind of how the the OJT and the apprenticeship program different.

Speaker 1 ([00:32:25](#)):

Well, as far as employers, like the employers that you work with, so like the districts or counties or whatnot, I mean, municipalities, sorry. Do they have to have any qualifications, like, do they have to be registered with TWC tax ID?

New Speaker ([00:32:38](#)):

Speaker 2. Yes, yes.

New Speaker ([00:32:40](#)):

Speaker 2. Yes. We have to make sure when they're coming to these type of 18 apprenticeship programs, that they are we do our due diligence and make sure they're registered in TWC website. They have UI tax ID number FEI in number, and that they're, you know, they're up to date with everything.

Speaker 1 ([00:33:05](#)):

Do you help them if they're not, do you help them or do you just refer them to those sites?

New Speaker ([00:33:10](#)):

Speaker 2. Well, I've had a couple employers who were not in the system and I had to give them TWCs information and I make sure that they understand, I don't just leave them out there and told, I make sure I give them the proper information and kind of follow up with them and kind of see how things are going. So, but we don't, we can't set them up in the system. They have to go through to WC for that.

New Speaker ([00:33:35](#)):
Speaker 1. Do you use mainframe?

New Speaker ([00:33:37](#)):
Speaker 1. Yes, ma'am.

Speaker 1 ([00:33:40](#)):
So through that mainframe, what are you inputting there?

New Speaker ([00:33:45](#)):
Speaker 2. Well, I don't input in mind frame. We research in mainframe. So TWC, staff, they're the ones that input in mainframe. Yes, ma'am.

Speaker 1 ([00:33:59](#)):
Okay. So the size of businesses, there's no particular size you'll work with, like you said, it depends on some of the qualifications as to like, they have to have to an important number of certain number of employees, but there's, there's not any other guidelines that the companies, the employers must fit into to work with workforce solutions or provide employment opportunities?

New Speaker ([00:34:23](#)):
Speaker 2. Right. Those are the basic guidelines. We even have some employers who might not be there just yet. They could still participate in the other programs, like JCP essential skills, JCP, which is job, coach pilot have some re-entry, it's just that the OJT and the apprenticeship program, they have to go through those. We have to make sure that they're in TWC, they're registered and they're good to go. We do our due diligence with that.

Speaker 1 ([00:34:53](#)):
And how do you manage the employer relationship? You continue that relationship as from the onboarding process, how is that managed? Is there a weekly communication, daily communication, monthly communication?

New Speaker ([00:35:10](#)):
Speaker 2. When you're an employer at first, you might have daily communication with the communication. Then as the relationship kind of matures, you know, you'll have your bi-weekly or monthly, and sometimes, you know, every few weeks, you know, so that's kinda how it develops in the beginning. It might be more frequent, the normal, you know, more frequent. And then once they get to the process, it's a more of a normalization maybe every two weeks, every month or so. So from daily to monthly.

New Speaker (00:35:45):

Speaker 1. And that main communication is coming in the form on WIT, correct. And also through email?

New Speaker (00:35:53):

Speaker 2. It's primarily phone calls, phone, emails.

New Speaker (00:35:58):

Speaker 1. Okay. And who assigns do you assign the employers to a recruiter?

New Speaker (00:36:06):

Speaker 2. So like if we need support for the employers that have like multiple positions?

New Speaker (00:36:11):

Speaker 1. Right. So the recruiters are handling the candidates. And then, so do you, do you make that connection between the, can you explain how that kind of happens?

New Speaker (00:36:23):

Speaker 2. Oh, it happens. Yes. So basically if I have an employer, that's looking, well all the employers are going to hire, but I will, submit an email to manager and I'll submit a couple of different, we have a work form, it's called a work prep form. So the employers that we service, we provide the candidates with like a work prep. To get them ready to see the employer. That's the difference that we provide here. So for example, if having an employer who wants ten customer service reps with three years of experience, and they have to know how to handle high volume of calls and be very professional with medical experience or whatever, that's something. Of course I would document the request and put the request in an email format. I would put it on a work prep form. I will put the job on a job posting form. I would, put all that together in an email, put a little summary of what the conversation was with the employer, what the, you know, what they need. And then I would send that to the jobs team who inputs the job postings for us. And then also I would CC our manager, um, on the email, so he'll know to assign that to the special recruitment team.

New Speaker (00:38:02):

Speaker 1. Okay. And you're doing all of that through WRKforce Solutions or is it just strictly email.

New Speaker (00:38:16):

Speaker 2. This email? That's how we've been kind of doing it and it's been going really good so far, I guess now.

New Speaker (00:38:24):

Speaker 1. Okay. And does the employer supply Workforce Solutions you with the job descriptions and qualifications, or do you provide those a template for them?

New Speaker (00:38:36):

Speaker 2. For job descriptions and qualifications? The employer provides that to us and then we put it on the template, in very rare occasions, you know, I've created a job description for an employer who

might be new and craft that job description and get their approval. But generally the employers provide us with their, a word document. Um, and then we'll just transition it to the TWC, jobs form. So that's the template you're speaking of the twp jobs from. Okay. Yes, ma'am.

Speaker 4 ([00:39:10](#)):

And then all of your templates, I don't mean to keep beating the dead horse, but I don't want to miss anything. All of the templates are just, they're just held in the SharePoint file in that SharePoint system. And it, and the templates are all fairly standard. It's either a word document or an Excel sheet, nothing, nothing unusual or external that we've, that a future website might need to be aware of?

New Speaker ([00:39:35](#)):

Speaker 2. I want to say the job team, I think they use the same job template. It's just that I don't know what they do as far as the their specific way they keep up with their forms. But I do know they keep the forms. I believe they're in SharePoint too. I know they do keep those forms stored.

Speaker 4 ([00:40:06](#)):

Okay. And then in terms of security or is any of the data that you're working with or using or saving, is any of it sensitive enough that it has security protocols around it that that might need to be thought about for a future sort of work platform, like mask data or lock a documents? You can't see everything on it, only parts of it, anything like that ever, ever an issue?

New Speaker ([00:40:31](#)):

Speaker 2. Um, when we get our non-funded participant trackers from the essential skills training classes, a lot of employers just put the last four of the social on there for the participants. We'll create like a little password that we kind of go back and forth with with the employer. You know, even if they do have the full socials, we still have a way of encrypting the information and the employer has the, you know, they'll, they'll provide me with, or I'll provide them with a password and kind of we'll work like that with receiving documents, but we haven't had an issue with security.

Speaker 4 ([00:41:13](#)):

Above and beyond the standard, you know, add password to this document, being more intense than that really?

New Speaker ([00:41:20](#)):

Speaker 2. We haven't had any issues. Just the, kind of the add the password, and yeah. And then for a matter of fact, an employee and I, we created our, she gave me the password, so we were able to communicate with the information like that with no problems.

Speaker 6 ([00:41:43](#)):

Speaker 2. You all were mentioning passwords and that made me think of the question that I had asked previously on another call, um, a little bit I learned from the recruiter. So sometimes the employers are, they get locked out of their accounts, their Work in Texas accounts, um, and have expressed that, you know, um, they have feedback in regards to assessability on Work in Texas. So are you, do you all help them with like the resets and any problems they have with work in Texas?

New Speaker ([00:42:18](#)):

Speaker 2. Yes. Ma'am. Especially when it first came out the, the newer version. But they've pretty much gotten used to it. But yeah, I always helped the employers with their passwords and, you know, resets and things of that nature. Cause sometimes it won't let them reset their own password and it's very frustrating. So I didn't take that time to do that.

New Speaker ([00:42:42](#)):

Speaker 1. It seems like there's a lot of applications you have to go through that are not on the WRK Solutions page site. So, um, it's like you're having to log into another system. Would it be helpful if everything was like on that front page or maybe in case solutions that you'd be able to connect to all of these different applications that you have to go into because at some point in time, do you have like multiple screens ?

New Speaker ([00:43:14](#)):

Speaker 2. I do. I have several screens going on right now? When you say WRKSolutions, you know, we, we do have the website called Work in Texas.com. Is that kinda what you're also referencing?

New Speaker ([00:43:28](#)):

Speaker 1. Yes. With that as well, because it's a connection to that, correct?

New Speaker ([00:43:35](#)):

Speaker 2. W R K solutions and Work in Texas.com, they don't speak to each other. They're separate WRK Solutions is basically for anyone who wants to get on and what both of them are for anyone. Work in Texas is the job bank where we keep all the jobs and stuff. And those relationships we were talking about earlier and then works WRK Solutions.com is just for all the information. As far as various financial, for childcare and all the other training, anything you want to know about work force solutions, you will find on Work Solutions.com, any information. Even if people are looking to be at Workforce solutions projects everything's on there. But Work in Texas.com is just about the jobs. So if a centralized area where everything can be in one, that would be perfect. Like all of our documents are, you know, work solutions, you know, click here, go there. I mean, it will be a one-stop shop. Definitely benefit, you know, having it in one system. Is that what you're saying? Having it in one system?

New Speaker ([00:45:02](#)):

Speaker 1. Yes. Yes. Because it seems like it's like, you'll have to go to WIT on one in and then you're like, okay, wait, now I got to come back over here because I'm talking to them about the services that we offer and whether that's a training or, or whatnot, and then you having to go into wit for the jobs, but it also seems like the employer is working mainly through WIT or they made their main connect the employer.

New Speaker ([00:45:28](#)):

Speaker 2. Oh yeah. They can go through WIT and look at candidates and resumes and applications. Yes. They can definitely go on there anytime. And so we're both using the system, you know, the employer and Workforce Solutions staff. And if you look on, when you first go on the page, kind of see it on the side and area where it'll differentiate, you know, I don't even know if it does this anymore.

New Speaker ([00:45:52](#)):

Speaker 1. But right. Cause it's been updated right now. There was no training today,

New Speaker ([00:45:58](#)):

Speaker 2. So yeah. I mean, we use it in concert with the employers. So a one-stop shop.

New Speaker ([00:46:08](#)):

Speaker 1. And one of the things that you provide is information about state and federal labor laws, include jobs, specific wage and salary data to make sure that they are in line with the state average or whatnot. So how do you provide them this information? This is more like a verbal conversation or is this a let me refer you to a resource site.

New Speaker ([00:46:41](#)):

Speaker 2. It's a verbal and I give it to them, you know, I'll email it to him sometimes, you know, cause it's right there on Work in Texas.com, it's called labor market information. I just click on it and give it, you know, the information to them. And I've even sent emails to them with the current, um, labor market information for their specific industry. Like some of my reach out and say, how much should I pay for this and how much, you know, and I would do that analysis through Work in Texas. And there's an area you can send them the email with the, you know, with the results and you know, it definitely benefits them. It definitely does. Verbal and email.

New Speaker ([00:47:24](#)):

Speaker 1. And I'm going to kind of go back to like what Zak was asking. So when you do something of that nature for this client, you save it, it's in the it's in the SharePoint, correct?

New Speaker ([00:47:34](#)):

Speaker 2. I won't save it in the SharePoint per se. I don't even know if Work in Texas saves it, but when I sent it to them, I can track it on my email.

New Speaker ([00:47:43](#)):

Speaker 1. And do you guys provide testing as well? Or is that a separate if an employer says, I would like you guys with the screening process, we also like to administer a test for our employees. Do our candidates do a test for their candidates? Do you do that as well?

New Speaker ([00:48:04](#)):

Speaker 2. Yeah. I believe, the recruiters do have access to tight testing. know they used to and um, I know the career centers do I know they do so. So if the employer wants a typing test or a basic math test or, you know, whatever the case may be. We can definitely get them in that right direction here. They don't have to go anywhere else for it. We can take care of them.

Speaker 6 ([00:48:32](#)):

What was the testing called again?

New Speaker ([00:48:37](#)):

Speaker 2. Tabe testing TABE. I'm a kind of preface it. I used to work in the office, the career centers back in like, 2005 to 2011. Then I left and I came back in 2018, to Workforce Solutions. So, I kind of have a historical perspective as well, if that makes sense. But I know we used to, way before COVID we had the, job seekers come in and do the TABE testing the tape. And that just kind of gives a summary of their general math, reading, writing skills and things of that nature. And then employers would kind of use that or typing tests or whatever the case.

New Speaker ([00:49:33](#)):
Speaker 2. Now I believe, what they do now is all virtual, if I'm not mistaken if they request that.

New Speaker ([00:49:43](#)):
Speaker 1. And so a lot of the services have been moved on line to the virtual space because this is, these are the things we're discussing. These are things that you would normally take care of an office, right. When you're in the career office.

New Speaker ([00:49:56](#)):
Speaker 2. Yes. Career offices.

New Speaker ([00:49:58](#)):
Speaker 1. But now that they've moved to the virtual space, Is there anything that we're missing that is a service that you were offering in office that is absolutely not available online and it's still, you know, you're kind of struggling with like, okay, we need to probably really have this available to the employer?

New Speaker ([00:50:17](#)):
Speaker 2. No, it was pretty much doing everything. I mean, everything has shifted, it's shifted, surprisingly pretty smoothly to the online platform. I don't think so. In the employment services division, nothing is really missing. If that makes any sense, nothing is missing as we're hitting the mark. So nothing, I can't think of anything missing right now.

New Speaker ([00:50:53](#)):
Speaker 1. So it's nothing where you're like, Oh my gosh, I've got to go now drive to the office and go submit this or anything like that. There's nothing that you have to do in that.

New Speaker ([00:51:06](#)):
Speaker 2. No, cause everything is pretty much done virtually and then we're, you know, we're, Sharepointing back and forth and we're emailing back and forth. And so no.

New Speaker ([00:51:16](#)):
Speaker 1. Okay. know you're contracted through vendor. So when you're submitting,your employment hours or log in time, you know, sign in or sign out. You're doing that on a separate application, correct?

New Speaker ([00:51:35](#)):
Speaker 2. Yes.

New Speaker ([00:51:36](#)):

Speaker 1. Would you like to see it on like maybe like WRK solution site where you could just click that you are with like either interfaith interfaith or Baker, Ripley, or, you know, w what was she, would you like to see something like that on that page?

New Speaker ([00:51:55](#)):

Speaker 2. I mean, anything that makes it, where we can just get to information quicker and assess easier? I think it would be a plus. Yeah, that would be good. That would be just a click on work solutions or working.com and clicking. That would be good.

Speaker 6 ([00:52:22](#)):

Speaker 1. Yeah. And just have it done right.

New Speaker ([00:52:24](#)):

Speaker 2. Then and there right then and there instead of having to go and click here. Yeah.

New Speaker ([00:52:29](#)):

Speaker 1. Okay. So that's one thing. Um, do you think, is there anything else, so just kind of thinking outside the box, like kind of thinking like that, what other things, um, that you know, that you have to perhaps open other, other windows and do this, what would be great to see just right there on there, on the WRK solutions say?

New Speaker ([00:52:52](#)):

Speaker 2. Well on the Work in Texas.com site, I know we have several reports that we, that we do. I would like to see, you know, maybe an additional section on reporting if the reporting could be streamlined, within the Work in Texas.com system. I know we, they, generate information from Work in Texas, based on what we put in there. Um, but you know, how can I describe it? I just think reporting needs to be condensed into one single format. You know, I know we have SharePoint, maybe one big one on SharePoint maybe, and we could maybe do a SharePoint and then all of our projects will have a dropdown for this project or dropdown for that project. Beause right now, for example, I have about five different tabs I go through throughout the day to report information and Sharepoint. Does that kind of answer your question there?

New Speaker ([00:54:17](#)):

Speaker 1. It does. It does, but of those five different reporting, what are those types of, what, what does that consist of? What are the reporting?

New Speaker ([00:54:26](#)):

Speaker 2. You know, those particular programs I mentioned to you earlier, they each have a report in Sharepoint So the essential skills training, the job coach pilot program, the paths program, the re-entry program, OJT apprenticeship, they have, um, uh, different tabs within the Sharepoint. And you know, a lot of things open throughout the day report information to upper management.

New Speaker ([00:54:59](#)):

Speaker 1. What kind of feedback do you get from employers, as far as their interaction with the website, I mean, cause we're, we're actually talking about WRK solutions. So for the, what, for the

services that they go to WRKsolutions for, I don't know if it's like a 20%, 20% of the time, but if they are, if it's 80% of the time, what feedback have you gotten from employers?

New Speaker ([00:55:32](#)):

Speaker 2. I haven't received any negative feedback about it, because a lot of them are referencing with everything going on. No. What I do is I go in and I'll help them find their local office. I'll help them connect with someone at the local office if need be, if I can't, you know, if their particular issue needs that type of assistance, but usually it starts with our department. We take care of them, whatever questions they have, whatever concerns they have. So they don't really have any issues with the WRK Soltuions site, Now Work in Texas.com is a different one because, you know, they'll get locked out. They'll, you know, um, at first they were kind of getting lost in there, but as they gotten more used to it, I've seen less calls about it, you know, about it, about the Work in Texas.com website. Work solutions, you know, usually, you know, whatever concerns they have, we'll take care of employer services. They don't have to even, you know, do anything extra there, but Work in Texas.com it's a little bit more time because we have to kind of go in there and reset the passwords, navigate through to make sure they understand how to kinda get to each tab. And like I say, at the past couple of months, I've noticed less of that at first, when it first, when it first came out, it was like, that's all we were doing was pretty much it, you know, instead it goes support, but, it's much better now with Work in Texas.

New Speaker ([00:57:20](#)):
Speaker 1. If you had to give a percentage, would you say that the employer is using 80% of their time or maybe even 90% if they're using Work in Texas as opposed to WRK solutions?

New Speaker ([00:57:33](#)):
Speaker 2. Yeah. They're, they're using Work in Texas.com more because of, um, um, some businesses are really booming, you know, some interviews, like I had an industry, a germ fighting company or a sanitation company and they were exploding. So they had to, we were in a Work in Texas.com trying to find people. So, um, I would say about 60% are well, 70% Work in Texas and 30% work solutions.

New Speaker ([00:58:09](#)):
Speaker 1. And when they were on that work solution site, what primarily are they doing on the work solutions?

Speaker 1 ([00:58:14](#)):
Speaker 2. Just trying to find information about the local career centers,to send someone that might be looking for work. They might be looking for, just pretty much that, you know, and other information about workforce solutions, scholarships, or if they're like laying off or something, you know, they might want to reference that to have some additional information to give to their staff that might be impacted. What else might they use it for? Um, those are two things that are coming to mind right now. I know they do use it quite frequently, but I've seen more action on the work in texas.com website. That's what I'm in pretty much all day long.

New Speaker ([00:59:16](#)):
Speaker 1. Um, Zak or Ron, do y'all have any questions?

New Speaker ([00:59:21](#)):

Speaker 4. No, I think that's everything I needed to, to check on.

New Speaker ([00:59:27](#)):

Speaker 1. Isabella, do you have any questions for Tori?

New Speaker ([00:59:30](#)):

Speaker 5. No, I'm good. Thank you for your time.

New Speaker ([00:59:33](#)):

Speaker 2. You're welcome. Thank you very much. We really appreciate it. You're welcome. You're welcome.

New Speaker ([00:59:38](#)):

Speaker 1. Thank you. And you have a good afternoon.

New Speaker ([00:59:42](#)):

Speaker 2. You too, Tammy. Thank you so much. Thank you everyone. Y'all have a great afternoon. It's here to make sure bye-bye. Bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Diane Keller, Recruiter

Workforce Solutions – Conroe

Contractor

Interfaith of the Woodlands

Interview conducted

March 5, 2021

Speaker 1 (00:02:01):

Hi, Diane. How are you? Thank you so much for being with us today. I'm gonna just kind of roll through this. I'm Tammy Frazier. I am with Outreach Strategists. This is my colleague Isabella Harkrider she''s Outreach Strategists. As I said in the email we were hired by HGAC to basically look at the way that in-person services have changed. Of course, due to COVID-19, and assessing whether what's available online to customers, clients, vendors, or whatnot, are successful. And if everything that they need is accessible online. If there needs to be any improvements, if there are certain services that you can't take online, or a certain services that you'd like to see online, we're just doing that assessment because they're going to be putting out a new RFI for the website.

Speaker 1 (00:03:26):

So in order for us to understand what's needed, you know, we've conducted interviews with career office staff. We've gone the gamut, just trying to see everyone that utilizes the website in any shape, form or fashion we've had to we're interviewing because we want your input. So, this is not an assessment of how you do your job or anything like that. It's just tell us, is, is the system working for you? Is it working for your employers? Is it working for customers? And if so, what do you like about it? If not, what would you like to see change? What would you like to see added? So we're at that base so we can do that. Okay. So what I'd like to do is before we get started, if you can, I just want to let you know this is being recorded and it's recorded because we transcribe the notes, uh, the recording, so that we can look back through them with our partners, um, our partner group as well. Who's also interfacing with HGAC as well. So we all look at that, put together an executive summary. So if you can just state your name and your position for the record.

Speaker 3 (00:04:43):

Diane Keller. Recruiter.

Speaker 1 (00:04:45):

Thank you. And what office do you work out of.

Speaker 3 (00:04:53):

Conroe? Like, I'd cover the, I work out of the Conroe office. I cover both Conroe and Huntsville.

Speaker 1 (00:04:59):

All right. So is it mostly, are you mobile? Are you you're in the office like five days a week?

Speaker 3 (00:05:08):

Yes. Normally I'm in the office five days a week.

Speaker 1 (00:05:11):

Okay. All right. And what's the number of employers or employees or employers that you represent? The theory is it's like the business, the business partners. I mean, so who are you, how many do you work with.

Speaker 3 (00:05:33):

So employers, you mean how many employers do I interact with on a regular basis?

Speaker 1 ([00:05:39](#)):

The businesses? And let me, let me preface everything by saying this Isabella and I don't know anything about just, you need this, just talk to us. We don't know anything about the services. I may, from time to time put something on the table that you'll say, Oh, okay, well, you know about this, but we don't know about it in depth. So we, you to kind of break it down, explain it to us in the most simplest form, um, the process. Cause we're not, we need to understand it from the complete, from the inside out,

Speaker 3 ([00:06:09](#)):

If that, um,

Speaker 1 ([00:06:11](#)):

Thing something correctly than just, you know, let me know, correct me on, you know,

Speaker 3 ([00:06:16](#)):

Well, um, I mean, we work with a large number of employers, uh, just depending on who post their jobs onto the work in Texas website, because normally, I mean, unless it's a government agency, um, which those are employers that we don't necessarily, um, interact with because they upload their own job information. Um, and we don't, we don't necessarily have to follow up to make sure that everything is done it's that everything is in there correctly and that sort of thing. Um, I would say, um, gosh, a hundred plus employers just depending on, um, any given time of the year.

Speaker 1 ([00:07:04](#)):

Okay. So it's not, it's not where you have a designated, like for, I'm just throwing out some examples, like for instance, you work with, um, Texas instruments or Schlumberger, or those are your clients. I mean, do you, you don't have specific. Okay. So it's just basically those who post on WIT, correct. Okay.

Speaker 3 ([00:07:27](#)):

And I mean, that can be, I mean, we work with pizza hut and then we work with, now I will say that we do work with Texas department of criminal justice sometimes because they like to, when our offices are open for employers, they like to come in and do onsite interviews and that sort of thing. So that particular agency, we do deal with quite often because of the fact that we are in the Northern part of the Gulf coast. And of course the main, the large hub of TDCJ is in Huntsville. So they do pull from Conroe as well. So that is one employer, government employer that we deal with quite a bit. But yeah, I mean, we deal with pizza hut all the way to, you know, your professional, employers.

Speaker 1 ([00:08:21](#)):

Okay. But I guess for me, it's just not any specific for your region for your area. Right. Maybe TVs, TDCJ, because they are, you're kind of in that group, that area. Okay. Makes sense. Okay, so on the Workforce Solutions customer side, how do you contact the customer, the job candidate? Is that something that you do or are they working with the ECS and the PSRs?

Speaker 3 ([00:08:52](#)):

Well, no, we reach out to the customers because of course as recruiters, we're kind of working for the employer. Okay. So the employer has posted their job information. We've made contact with the employer to if need be to discuss a little bit more in detail, what they're looking for in a candidate. And

then we search our database and try to find candidates that meet those specifications that the employer has. So we outreach them a number of ways. Um, initially we try to contact them by phone so that we can engage in a conversation and see what it, you know, what their background actually entails because unfortunately, sometimes they don't put enough information on Work in Texas or their resume, shows that they've got the experience. But depending on, you know, what the employer is looking for, we may need to ask a little bit more, more questions about what's on the resume.

Speaker 3 ([00:09:53](#)):

Cont.: ...So we do try to make a phone contact. If we're not able to get in contact with them by phone, then we can send them an email and request that they contact us. Sometimes we give them just a brief, a description of the position that we're trying to fill. We don't give them employer information until we've actually spoken with them because we don't want them to, you know, just start trying to contact this employer without us first talking with them and seeing if they actually meet the requirements. But, uh, initially it's by phone. Then we try to do an email. If we don't get a response by email, through the work in Texas system, we can outreach them through that, website. They might get alerts and things like that from workforce solutions that we're trying to make contact with them. And, we do it that way.

Speaker 1 ([00:10:46](#)):

So when an employer do, who do you work with on the employer side? Are you working with the HR representative or the hiring managers or human resources at those businesses? Or is it one person, one department?

Speaker 3 ([00:11:04](#)):

It's usually the person who is in charge of hiring. Okay. I mean, that could be depending on the company, it could be any anyone in that chain of command. For example maybe a retail store has posted their job and they list a manager on there, then that's who we're engaging with when we make a contact with the employer.

Speaker 1 ([00:11:33](#)):

So it just depends.

Speaker 3 ([00:11:36](#)):

It's usually it depends on who the employer has listed as the contact for that particular position that they have posted. And I will tell you, like here recently with Huntsville ISD, they posted seven different positions of four different teacher, and then they had bus drivers and things like that. And each one of those positions had a different contact. So I just had to, you know, yeah. They're at different schools, so they each had their own contact person for those positions.

Speaker 1 ([00:12:10](#)):

Makes sense. That's a good way to understand it. Okay. So whoever the employer puts as the contact and then as far as the candidate, so you are working off of the Work in Texas system. So can you kind of explain that process to us as far as on your side with the candidates...

Speaker 3 ([00:12:35](#)):

Of how we find them?

New Speaker ([00:12:36](#)):

Speaker 1. Yes.

New Speaker ([00:12:38](#)):

Speaker 3. Well, there's a couple of ways that you can try to do it and Work in Texas. One of which, is just to run what we call running a match just off of the posting itself. Unfortunately, that one does not usually pull a good match because it pulls people from all over the state of Texas, sometimes outside of Texas. And then there have been occasions that it pulls people with that do not meet the criteria that the employer is looking for specifically. Um, so you have to do a little more digging. Um, we also can pull it by resumes. You can go into work in Texas, go into the virtual resume section and put in, you can do it by keywords and see if you can find candidates that way. Um, you can also add location, but again, sometimes.

Speaker 3 ([00:13:37](#)):

And I think the glitch with the location situation is that job seekers will put that they're available to work anywhere until you call them and ask them if they're willing to work in Conroe and they live down in Bay city, then they're like, no, Conroe's too far. So, some of it is just the job seeker. Maybe not understanding exactly how to set the parameters for their work in Texas search. So that sometimes can run it and you'll find a really good candidate, but they're, you know, not anywhere near. And I mean, there are some it, I don't want to discourage them for doing that because there are some job seekers that depending on the position and how much it pays, they are willing to travel or relocate. And we do have some job seekers in the database that, live in another, city of Texas.

Speaker 3 ([00:14:39](#)):

And they're trying to move to the area where we have the job openings. So they're just scouting for those positions before they make their move. But we can search by, like I said, running a match, and a resume search. We can also run what's called an ad-hoc report. And, what we do is we just run all the, all the candidates that are registered in any particular office. And then you can search by their job titles as to what they might be looking for. And then you can contact them off of that. You can look them up first, see what they have in the Work in Texas system. And then you can call them or send an email depending on how many people you find to initiate that contact for them to either email you back or to call you directly about the position that you have. I personally like to use the ad-hoc report. I think I get better matches that way, of candidates that are in my area that are willing to, that are interested in positions that I might have available

Speaker 1 ([00:15:47](#)):

It's ad-hoc, a part of WIT?

Speaker 3 ([00:15:51](#)):

Yes. It's one of the reports that we can run in work in Texas.

Speaker 1 ([00:15:55](#)):

Okay. So you do Work in Texas. So is there another software app or website that you use as well to search for candidates.

Speaker 3 ([00:16:05](#)):

At this time? No. Um, we have been told that we can use social media, but, we haven't, to my knowledge, we haven't been given the, go ahead. If there's not an account already set up for your office, we've not been given the opportunity. We've not been given the go-ahead to set one up on our own. So some offices do you have a platform that they can post some of their jobs? I believe, uh, we also have WRK Solutions has a Facebook that you can submit your postings to the jobs office, and then they can post those job openings for you and direct people to contact you if the candidate is interested and would like more information from us about any particular positions.

Speaker 3 ([00:17:06](#)):

I was just going to say that if we do occasionally get, um, some jobs that are very specific to maybe a computer software or, just a specific occupation that we don't get a lot of candidates, just registered and Work in Texas. So, um, the, the ETC etc, which is the employer services office, they do have specialized recruiters that work cover certain industries. And so if we have occupations like that, that we're not being able to find people in our database, we can go through, we can request, one of those recruiters assistance in trying to find a candidate that might have that specific software or, you know, whatever it is specific for that employer that they're looking for to see if they might be able to help us with finding a candidate for those positions. So those are few and far between, but we do have them.

Speaker 1 ([00:18:10](#)):

That's ETC. You said?

Speaker 3 ([00:18:13](#)):

Yes, that's the employer services division.

Speaker 1 ([00:18:16](#)):

Okay. And would you consider those are the types of jobs that are like a little bit higher level, higher skill level, maybe executive level or mid -exec level jobs. Okay. So at any time, do you ever work directly or interact with employment counselors, personal service reps, veterans services, or vocational rehabilitation? Do you ever though that are housed in your office? Do you ever maybe have those immediate conversations? If a PSR is sitting there with someone and they know that you have a position that's posted for an employer that that person fits the bill for, do you ever make that connection within the office?

Speaker 3 ([00:19:02](#)):

Yes. Definitely. We're always in communication with the staff, even working remotely, we are sending emails out to them, letting them know if we have an employer that's looking for something specific. If we have an employer who has a lot of openings at any given time, and when we're in the office, yes, we, we either go communicate with them one-on-one or again, we're sending out email blasts to the staff, letting them know about positions, employers that we have in the area and what they're looking for. But definitely, I won't say that I have a one- to go person that I, that I always go to, but, you know, whoever's available if I have a job that especially like right now, I have an employer in Huntsville that has an urgent need for a caregiver. So working remotely from home, I did shoot out an email this morning to the Huntsville staff, alerting them, to let them know that this employer needs to hire somebody ASAP. And let me know if they have any candidates that they might be able to just send to the employer, but definitely in the office, we'll walk around to the different, um, employment counselors, PSRs, and talk to

them about a position that we may have, that we think might be a good canidates, that they may have good candidates.

New Speaker (00:20:25):
(pause for quick discussion about recruiter's bird.)

Speaker 1 (00:21:15):
Okay. That's fine. Um, no, but that's, that's good because I would, I guess my initial thought would be that, that when you're looking for candidates that you would immediately work with like the, you know, employment counselors, personal service reps, because they're right there, but you actually do utilize this, this database. You are, you're going into WIT you're using these different, is there another program or, or, or that you're using as well software program or anything that you all are using. Okay.

Speaker 3 (00:21:50):
No. We talked about using their PSRs and ECS, but, with like with our office, we're kind of overlap with, uh, different locations that other offices cover as well. I don't know, are you from where you're out of, if you're from...

Speaker 1 (00:22:12):
Yeah. I'm in Houston and like we're, our offices are in near downtown, but, I'm a native Houstonian. Yes.

Speaker 3 (00:22:20):
So like in Conroe, we overlap with some of our positions in the Woodlands, Tomball area, which other offices cover. So we do outreach. Our other counterparts, our other recruiters like in the Cypress station office or in the Willowbrook office. To share that information with their staff, if we have positions that are in those outlying areas, that they might have people that are interested in those positions, especially, in our given situation, Magnolia is usually a difficult location for us, for resident, Conroe residents. They think they feel that that's really too far to go for a job. So unfortunately, sometimes we do have difficulty with jobs that are like in Magnolia. So even going to our ECS and PSRs are not helping because they're getting the same feedback from their customers. So we have to go outside of our office. And sometimes, like I say, we outreach like the Willowbrook office or Magnolia to see if they might have, you know, candidates that would be interested in those locations.

Speaker 1 (00:23:33):
You have to cast a wider net to really get that, to get that?

Speaker 3 (00:23:37):
Yes. Same thing with Huntsville. We have a lot of people in Huntsville that are definitely willing to come to Conroe because they feel that they feel the jobs are a lot better and there's more opportunity in Conroe. So we are always in communication with Huntsville about Conroe positions.

Speaker 1 (00:23:54):
And that communication is it strictly by phone or by email? You're not communicating through WKR solutions or, or WIT right?

Speaker 3 ([00:24:05](#)):

Right. I mean, if we have hiring events, that sort of thing, then it goes through, we can post it on the WRK solutions website.

Speaker 1 ([00:24:12](#)):

Okay. Do you have documents that you had to submit to employers as far as when you are working with these candidates? Do you, do you have to submit any documents that are required.

New Speaker ([00:24:31](#)):

Speaker 3. To the employer? No.

New Speaker ([00:24:36](#)):

Speaker 1. So you don't have to do that. Um, and then what about, um, any compliances with some of the candidates? My assumption is that you possibly may have to work with people who receive snap benefits or they have TANIF. Do you ever did, is that a group that you sometimes work with as well, as far as jobs candidates?

Speaker 3 ([00:25:03](#)):

Sometimes, yes. They will match up to the jobs that we have available, but there's nothing that, there's no paperwork that we have to complete for them. They're working with, they do have an assigned employment counselor or PSR, and those are, they're the ones that take care of any of that paperwork for them. We don't engage in any of that.

Speaker 1 ([00:25:25](#)):

Okay. So there's never any uploading of documents or uploading of any work that you have to send to employers to Workforce Solutions or even, uh, for the candidates? There's nothing.

New Speaker ([00:25:39](#)):

Speaker 3. No,

New Speaker ([00:25:40](#)):

Speaker 1. There's not any upload of documents. Okay. Yep. Okay. You've talked to us about how you pick the candidates for the employer. Are there any, um, universal qualifying questions you ask or is it strictly, just based off of the description, the job description that the employer has?

Speaker 3 ([00:25:59](#)):

It's just based off the job description that the employer provides to us.

Speaker 1 ([00:26:03](#)):

Okay. Can you walk us through the typical interview process? So once you've made contact with candidates, is it, Hey, can you come in? Like you said, you either send it by email, you call them on the phone or you communicate with them through wit. So what happens once they respond?

Speaker 3 ([00:26:22](#)):

Depending on again, depending on what the employer is looking for. If it's a professional position, then we, we may ask them to physically come into the office so that we can see, you know, their presentation. Um, usually those individuals have a resume file with workforce, with work in Texas. So we might discuss that resume they have on file to see if that's the one that they use when they normally go out to a interview with an employer. if we have suggestions on that resume, we advise them that we can take care of, you know, we can discuss it over the phone or they can come in and sit with us and we can do that. One-on-one, again, that's when the office is offices are open. If it's a, if it's a more professional position, we may ask that candidate to come in and meet with us.

Speaker 3 ([00:27:24](#)):

One-on-one to just kind of have a little discussion, um, talk to them in more depth about their experience that they have posted on their resume. We do have individuals sometimes that do not, are not on your 'professional,' but your other positions, we do have individuals that do not have a professional resume posted on Work in Texas. They may just have whatever the Work in Texas website puts together. So we will ask them sometimes to come in and meet with, um, our resource room staff so that we can create a personal resume, not one that's generated by Work in Texas so that they have something that looks more professional for them to use when they go out to interview with the employers or to submit a resume. Because unfortunately, a lot of employers in the database either want the person to apply online or want them to submit a resume. There aren't very many that want them to, there aren't a lot of employers that just want people to walk in and that's without the pandemic. Aa lot of employers just want resume submitted or to apply online. So we want to make sure that they have something that, you know, will catch the employers eye.

Speaker 1 ([00:28:55](#)):

Are people still going into the office? Do you ever have to go in the office now? Even now at this time?

Speaker 3 ([00:29:04](#)):

Not, not right now. There are some staff in the office, but my understanding is that they're seeing people on an appointment basis, depending on what it is that they're needing, but recruiters are right now all remote.

Speaker 1 ([00:29:21](#)):

Okay. And so do you, but do you conduct those services, like you would, if it was in-person via zoom or teams, do you all do those, do you make appointments that way?

Speaker 3 ([00:29:32](#)):

I have not personally done in a teams meetings with anybody. I just talked to him.

Speaker 3 ([00:29:43](#)):

Any candidates that I talked to over the phone, we usually just, um, have the conversation over the phone and I'll have the resume that they have on Work in Texas in front of me. And we'll just be talking about it over the phone and I do have some that email me their resumes, and then I'll look over it and then I'll make a phone call then, and we'll talk about it to see what, if anything, I would suggest that they do differently or I'll send them maybe some samples. I have a lot of job seekers that their experience isn't current. So they, they have chronological resumes set up and we talk about doing maybe functional

resumes. And so they'll do that and then resubmit them, send it to me so that I can look at it. And if I have any suggestions, that sort of thing.

Speaker 1 ([00:30:37](#)):

Okay. And you mentioned resource room staff. So who makes up the resource room staff? Is that like the greeter, the, um, the career office staff members?

Speaker 3 ([00:30:54](#)):

We have people that are, I mean, that's their, that's their that's their function is to monitor the resource we have in Connor. We have two people.

Speaker 1 ([00:31:06](#)):

Okay. And there, and that's just their function and what happens in the resource room. And then how do they do that online now? Because I know we're not in person to be in the resource room. So how are they working that out now?

Speaker 3 ([00:31:21](#)):

Quite honestly, I don't know what has been set up for those individuals. I know that they do like password resets for job seekers. Um, they help them with completing the work in Texas application when they're in the office, they can help them with getting to other employers sites to get the application process started on those sites. We have, um, Oh gosh, I'm trying to think what it's called. We have a, we have a resume app on all the resource room computers and I off the top of my head right now. I haven't been in the resource room in a while and I can't think of what is a resume wizard, I think is what it's called. So, the resource staff will sometimes get them started on that. So that that's one of those that will create a more professional resume for job seekers, as opposed to what's done in work in Texas.

Speaker 1 ([00:32:24](#)):

Yes. And the resource specialists are a part of the team there. Yes. Thank you for sharing that resume wizard because that's something that they hadn't mentioned. So let me get an understanding and correct me if I'm wrong. So basically you're not really conducting the interviews. You are collecting the resumes, get getting the candidates, collecting the resumes, forwarding them over to whoever the contact is for the employer. And they actually do the actual hiring interview.

New Speaker ([00:33:02](#)):

Speaker 3. Yes. Correct.

New Speaker ([00:33:05](#)):

Speaker 1. Okay. So your role is basically to see if they're ready, if they're ready for the employers.

Speaker 3 ([00:33:11](#)):

Yeah. To see if they're qualified, if they meet what the employer's looking for. I mean, we do have some positions that are, they're referred to as suppressed job postings. What that means is, let me, if I may back up for just a minute, there's three levels. There's three levels of posting status and Work in Texas. They, I don't know if it's changed recently, recently with the new work in Texas, but there's a level one

level. One is the jobs put in the database, the job seeker. If they say they're interested, they can see immediately what the contact is for that employer and how to apply for those positions. And it could be anything they could, it could direct them to go to the website. It could direct them to email a resume or applying person, that sort of situation.

Speaker 3 (00:34:06):

Then there's a second level called a suppressed,, job posting on those positions. The job seeker can see the positions, but they don't, they don't have any contact information for that employer. Suppressed postings require that they go through a staff person to get any contact information. And the reason for that is the employer definitely has asked that we do some screening to make sure that they are getting candidates that actually meet the requirements and understand what the position entails. Unfortunately, some of the positions that are in level one job seekers are like, Oh, I could do that. I, you know, that sounds easy enough. I could do it. So they apply with not without actually having the experience or background that the employer's looking for. So there's the suppress postings that require they go through staff.

Speaker 3 (00:35:04):

As of right now, those, so those suppressed positions are going to recruiters, recruiters have to do the screening for all those, those job seekers that are interested in those positions. So for the most part, those are all, we do the inner, I don't want to call it an interview, but we do the assessment over the phone. So if they, if they don't have a resume on file and based on what they do have on file and Work in Texas, it doesn't look like they meet the requirements. We have a discussion with them about updating their work in Texas profile, creating a resume, uploading it to their work site, the website, so that we can verify that information based on what they're providing with regards to their background, their experience, that sort of thing. No we don't run any checks on anything.

Speaker 3 (00:35:59):

We do take the, the job seeker at their word with regards to their experience, their background. Um, so we don't run any type of, of check on. We don't run any check on their work history, background, their skills, their, um, you know, if the employer specifically says that no criminal backgrounds, we don't, we don't run any kinds of checks like that, but we do ask and we take them again. We take them at whatever their response is and then move forward. The third level of job postings is it's well, at this point, I can just say that it's a level three job and those jobs, which are very few, um, the job seeker will never see those jobs, but the staff see them. So if they have a candidate that they feel meets the requirements for that position, then we would initiate the contact with the, with the job seeker to see if they would be interested in, if they meet the actual qualifications that the employer is looking for.

Speaker 3 (00:37:07):

And then at that point, depending on what the employer is requesting, um, we will, uh, move that, that job seeker to that employer. In some cases, those positions re request that the staff person contact the employer and discuss the candidate with them first, before submitting any information to the employer. But those are very, we have very few of those level three jobs. We do have quite a few of the level two, but definitely level one jobs are just, I mean, those are, there's plenty of those in there, but, um, those are the basic three levels of jobs that we have in our database right now.

Speaker 1 (00:37:49):

And again, the reaching out is done always via email it's the system itself is, is wit right. That's the primary system that's being used. Yes. So do you feel within that system, are there any improvements or things that you, do you ever get any feedback from candidates saying this it's hard to work through or any, or do you find it hard to pull information?

Speaker 3 ([00:38:16](#)):

It is a challenging website for right. For right now, there are some, there are some challenges to it. Like I said before, it doesn't always match the right candidates to the jobs that you're looking for. It pulls, on some days it'll pull people that you're, why did it pull this person? They're nowhere near what I'm looking for. So I mean, it has it challenges.

Speaker 2 ([00:38:46](#)):

Just so I just have a quick question, just so we can grasp kind of like how it works for the customer. Like when they go in there and they're filling out their application, are they filling out also like retail jobs or this kind of job they're looking for in their application or not so much

Speaker 3 ([00:39:03](#)):

They can put in what kind of work they're looking for. Unfortunately though, initially it only allows them to put one occupation in there and then after they get it set up, they can go back in there and search for different occupations. But the initial registration, you're only available to put one occupation in there.

Speaker 2 ([00:39:27](#)):

Okay. Just was wondering about that. Thank you.

Speaker 1 ([00:39:30](#)):

And what changes would you like to see? I mean, have you thought about what would make the system, um, operable that would be smoother as far as, you know, the difficulty either with a build location finding, or on your part, is there something that you feel could be changed to make it easier for recruiters to pull candidates or locate information? This is the time?

Speaker 3 ([00:40:07](#)):

Well, it would definitely be a lot easier if it would actually match to candidates that you put that job in, you know, what, what it is that you're looking for, if it would pull from the information that we have inputted as to what we're looking for. Unfortunately, like I mentioned, at the very beginning, it still has glitches where it pulls job seekers that are in no way related to what you're looking for.

Speaker 1 ([00:40:42](#)):

Harder. I mean it's more time consuming, right?

Speaker 2 ([00:40:48](#)):

Yes, it is.Yeah. You're like waiting through and finding the right, the right candidates even after you've searched.

Speaker 3 ([00:40:54](#)):

Right. Especially when, if you run a match off the job posting itself, just running a match you in, when you pull up the job posting, it has at the very bottom that you can search for candidates and you run a match for it. And when you run that match, like I said, it, it it's gotten better, but it's still not, it's still not as, um, precise as it, as it could be. It still pulls, you know, if you're looking for somebody which with a bachelor's degree, it will still still pull people that just have a high school diploma or, or no education listed at all. And so you have to pull those candidates out of there and then search for your candidates that have the education that you're looking for. So in that sense, it can be challenging when you're trying to find candidates for the positions that you have.

Speaker 3 (00:41:53):

Unfortunately, we do have our employers, also some of the employers have the capabilities of using Work in Texas to also search for resumes. And unfortunately, um, I have had feedback from those employers that our system is not very user-friendly. We've had many instances where the system kicks the employer out, and they're having to get their passwords reset. And then sometimes that reset doesn't work. So it gets, it gets a little frustrating for them because they're trying to, you know, search for candidates or put a job in the post in the system. And they're not able to, because they're needing to get a password reset, but, you know, same thing.

Speaker 2 (00:42:42):

Do you know how they're searching? Like the employers or even yourself, are they searching sometimes by skill or by job title? Or I'm just saying, like, they're looking, maybe a restaurant is looking for servers or pizza hut, but then there's also the other positions I'm looking for a marketing assistant or something. Are they searching by keyword or by skill?

Speaker 3 (00:43:02):

I believe that most employers are searching by an occupational code. That's what they're looking for.

Speaker 1 (00:43:09):

Okay. Let me ask you about the employer. So are they using WIT is what you're saying?

New Speaker (00:43:20):

Speaker 3. Yes. Okay.

New Speaker (00:43:23):

Speaker 1. Okay. So that's what they're having difficulty with is WIT yes. Okay. That's because they're uploading to WIT. Okay, and then who reset their password? Who were they having to go through? Is it through WIT or do they contact you...

Speaker 3 (00:43:40):

It's usually the recruiters? Because we have, you know, the business consultant makes the initial contact with the employer and then the recruiters step in once the job has been placed into Work in Texas. So a lot of times, they're in more communication with the recruiter because we're the ones, we're the ones reaching out to them after that initial processing of their job information. But they will reach out, I mean, a business consultant can do it. The recruiters can do it. Actually office staff can do it, but they're not as familiar necessarily with the employer side. So they'll refer it to, to the recruiter requesting their

assistance, you know, to help that employer with NAB, with navigating the system for whatever, you know, it might it be. It's also hard and I'm not sure. We had, we had the old width and, um, you could download resumes quite easily from the old wit and this new work in Texas, uh, not so easy.

Speaker 3 ([00:44:51](#)):

You have to go through several steps to get the resumes. And a lot of times that's what the employer is looking for is they want to see the candidates that, um, have been referred to their job posting, but they run into an issue where they can't pull up those resumes or download those resumes. So they run into that issue. And so they'll reach out to us and we go through a process of trying to download them and we're able to do it, but of course, you know, we work a lot more often in work in Texas and in that area that we know the process a little bit better of what we need to do. So we'll, we'll download it for them and then forward the resumes to them.

Speaker 1 ([00:45:32](#)):

Okay. And at something you said, that's very interesting as the business consultants. So that's actually the initial contact with employers or the business consultants. Is that correct?

New Speaker ([00:45:42](#)):

Speaker 3. It should be, yes.

New Speaker ([00:45:44](#)):

Speaer 1. Okay. So they're probably the ones that are kind of like what I asked you from the beginning and like, okay, who are the employers? How do you get in contact with them? They would have more of an idea of how that, that flows, because like you said, then you're brought on after the client has been secured and then you are, that's when you start working with them.

New Speaker ([00:46:05](#)):

Speaker 3. Right.

Speaker 3 ([00:46:06](#)):

I mean, there are some cases where the employer will just contact the office initially. And, usually the staff refer them to the recruiters, us, and depending on the conversation we have with the employer, if they're brand new to the system, then we hand them off to the business consultant, because we want the business consultant to explain to them all the services that are available through workforce solutions for the employer. So, yeah, if it's a, if it's a first time employer, they definitely get handed off to the business consultant first so that the business consultant can have that discussion with them. And they try to verify if they're registered with Texas workforce commission and all of that. So the ones that get them set up initially.

Speaker 1 ([00:46:56](#)):

Okay. So they have to be registered with Texas workforce Commission. Okay. Well, that makes sense.

Speaker 3 ([00:47:02](#)):

Yeah. Usually we're looking, we're looking for a tax ID number to get them registered, you know, on the Work in Texas website. And that, because that also allows them the opportunity to get set up on Work

in Texas to where they could potentially run their own matches to search for candidates, and also do any updates to their postings or create new postings if they wish to do so.

Speaker 1 (00:47:25):

Okay. Because from my understanding, you all can create postings, right. For them based off of their description, their, what they're looking for, the description that they gave you.

Speaker 3 (00:47:36):

Yes. We have that capability. Yes. But we would, we would prefer to get the actual job description from the employer because their description may be slightly different than what we would find on our list of occupations.

Speaker 1 (00:47:52):

Sure. Do you, you all provide on the job training, cause I know you mentioned it a little bit, like you'll say, Hey, your resume needs to be updated. Is there a such a time point when they'll hire someone, but they still need training and they get that on the job or well, pay for that? Or is it strictly, strictly prior to employment that you provide training?

Speaker 3 (00:48:24):

So there's an on the job training unit out of employer services. So they're usually the ones that outreach employers about setting up a, a program, a contract for on the job training positions that are posted in the database.

Speaker 1 (00:48:44):

Okay.

Speaker 3 (00:48:46):

So we don't, we don't my understanding. We don't provide on the job training after the fact it has to, because there is a contract that the employer has to sign, they have to set up, you know, what the, what the training will consist of and that sort of things of that goes through employer services. The employer has to talk with them first, before we post a job as on the job training where we might cover some of the costs.

Speaker 1 (00:49:18):

I know that you mentioned about like the resumes, it looks like your resume let's look at maybe the way your attire or your interview skills. What do you all do when you are working with a candidate that, you know, still needs a little bit of a polishing? Do you send them to any of the training events or is that something you work with them one-on-one with?

Speaker 3 (00:49:49):

Well of course we do. We do refer them in the office. They do have the classes that they do. And again, right now, all of that is up in the air as to how they're actually going to do those in the office. Cause we haven't done them in a while. Normally if we were in the office, we would suggest that they attend those classes to get, you know, a better understanding of what the employer might be looking for some pointers on how to, to do interviewing and working on their resume, that sort of thing. There are

occasions that we do one-on-one, I mean, I know that I've worked with the veteran representative in our office and I had done some sit down interviews with some of her veterans when going, when they're getting ready to go for an interview, she's asked me to sit and do an interview with some of her veterans.

Speaker 3 ([00:50:48](#)):

So we had done those in the office and then just offered suggestions, after, you know, conducting that little, uh, mini interview to see what they could do differently. So we have done that one, but definitely we would refer them to those classes when they're being offered, um, in, in the office or even online. I mean there's, for us there's a place called, uh, Oh gosh. Um, all I have is ministries in my head. I think they, they work a lot with professionals, but they do also help with just, um, blue collar as well, but it might be interfaith ministry. I can't think of it at the moment, but, we can refer them there to get some assistance also with interviewing skills and that sort of thing. So, yeah. And occasionally our facilitators, we have one that's in the office sometimes, so we can refer them to her as well.

Speaker 1 ([00:52:04](#)):

Okay. So I know you provide the services, the recruiting screening, helping them for you used to work in Texas, database, the screening that is basically what you all do. You're doing all the screening, right?

Speaker 3 ([00:52:20](#)):

Yes.

Speaker 1 ([00:52:24](#)):

And what about any tests that they need to take. Some jobs require testing or do I know I was talking to one of the, um, career office managers and they were talking about how the landscape of, uh, is changing with the interview process that sometimes people are being interviewed by robots. They don't know it they're, they, they put out these different questions. Like how would you put a block and would you put a block in this circle? I mean, so is there, are there any type of testing, like a set assessment testing or the specific jobs?

Speaker 3 ([00:53:02](#)):

Not that I've had recently. Now we did have an employer. It's been a couple of years back. It was Tenaris. They were located in Conroe and they did testing onsite at our location in Conroe, but they administered the test. We would just set up the people to come in and do it. Then afterwards, a couple of months later they were asking them to do a tabe test, but we were not the ones initiating. We were not the ones admitted administering the tests. The PSRs in the office were actually doing those tests for the employer. So as recruiters, no, we were not doing the testing.

Speaker 1 ([00:53:50](#)):

So that's not common. That, that was just particularly with that one.

Speaker 3 ([00:53:56](#)):

Particular employer. Yes. No, it's not something that we normally do.

Speaker 1 ([00:54:00](#)):

No. Okay. And in that case, the employer worked directly with the Workforce Solutions staff, how often does that happen?

New Speaker (00:54:14):
Speaker 3. not very often.

New Speaker (00:54:16):
S[eaker 1. And when they do, is it more through, uh, just the regular, regular communication phone email ,virtually,

Speaker 3 (00:54:27):
Usually they're communicating, they're either communicating with the recruiter or the business consultant that they're wanting to do, something like that. Yeah. And then we go through management to see if that's something that we're able to do in the office, depending on, you know, what's available in the office on any given time of the month. Because sometimes when we were in the office, we would have a lot of traffic coming in of employers wanting to do events in the office and that sort of thing. But, um, if it's something like testing where they might need to use the computer lab for any given amount of time, we would of course go through the office manager first to make sure that that was something they were willing to do. But usually employers wanting to do something like that. They're either outreaching the business consultant or the recruiter requesting that assistance. And then we just move from move forward with whatever's decided by the office manager of how to do that.

Speaker 1 (00:55:25):
Okay. Do you all do the onboarding for new employers or is that the business consultant?

Speaker 3 (00:55:35):
I would think that falls with the business consultant.

Speaker 1 (00:55:39):
Okay. Do you work with vendors?

New Speaker (00:55:47):
Speaker 3. No.

New Speaker (00:55:47):
Speaker 1. You don't work with vendors at all. Okay. Um, and then what employer services have moved to the online virtual space and basically everything right at this point, everything you were doing in office has been moved on, but can you just kind of give us a breakdown of what, what specifically, because it seems like you all, even in office that you worked on online quite a bit, and the only time you're really interfacing with the candidates is when you needed them to come in, right.

Speaker 3 (00:56:20):
For recruiters. Yes. I mean your other staff are seeing people on a daily basis all day long. Recruiters, not necessarily. We try to do everything, like I said, via email, telephone phone calls. Of course we do have employers that walk into the office and of course those, we would see, you know, one-on-one, but for

the most part, everything we do can be done online and over the phone. And that's how we, we conduct our business most of the time.

Speaker 1 ([00:56:57](#)):

So is there anything that you'd like to see, some employer services that you'd like to see online that's currently not or something that you've thought of, or you discussed with other recruiters and you'd say, Hey, that'd be really great if we could put this online.

Speaker 3 ([00:57:22](#)):

Not, not that I can think of all the top of my head now.

Speaker 2 ([00:57:26](#)):

I just wondering real quick, have you had any feedback from the act from job seekers themselves during this now this COVID error, but everything's digital. Lke when they get, when, when you're about to send them to, for their hiring interview, are they conducting that on zoom? Are they having success with all of that or how is that connection happening right now in a COVID world?

Speaker 3 ([00:57:48](#)):

Actually, I'm on a special project right now, with MDW for, some of us or two of our employers that are actually down South and they're doing my understanding is all their interviews are being done via teams, meetings, or zoom. And that's how they're also communicating with their staff that we've hired into those temporary positions. So far. I've not had any negative feedback on those meetings. They seem to be going well for those candidates. And of course they've been hired via their teams, meetings, zoom meetings. So, it seems to be working out really well. Now that you mentioned that I really do, like, I think the employers likes those virtual job fairs that we've been doing because they're not necessarily having to leave their offices for a chunk of the day to go out and, um, you know, interact with the people that are interested in their positions. I can do it over the internet, and continue to be in the office and take care of matters that are coming up, you know, while they're in that virtual job fair. So I, I think that has been really helpful for employers and quite honestly, I think it's been really good for Workforce Solutions as well. I think that,so would you get a better response?

Speaker 2 ([00:59:17](#)):

So would you tell a candidate Hey, we have, you're going to have this job or you're to have, is hiring interview here is the zoom link and what if they have struggles with this? Have you ran into anything like that? Like just to have that interaction happen in a COVID landscape?

Speaker 3 ([00:59:31](#)):

I have not. I have not had, well, I take that back. I had one incident, again, back with that special program, she was having some difficulty getting the link to work, but, um, she eventually, she eventually just was able to get it to, to connect. She was having some connection issues, but, uh, fortunately she did start before the actual time that she was scheduled to try and check it out to make sure that everything was working. And by the time it was closer to the actual time for that meeting to begin. She was, she was able to get it started and she was good. But that's the only one that I've run across that they've had an issue,

Speaker 1 ([01:00:14](#)):

You all are not responsible for the virtual job fairs. Correct. You do attend though, correct?

Speaker 3 (01:00:21):

We do attend, we do attend them, setting them up. Is that what you're talking about? We did one so far since we've gotten the, the, the software to do that. The recruiters as a whole conducted one. I have participated in some of the youth virtual job fairs, but I personally have not been involved in having to set one up on my own. We do have a couple of staff on our, in our division that have attended all those meetings on how to do that and that sort of thing. So they're the ones that are the primary, uh, people to, to take care of those if we're ever put in that position to, to help with putting one together.

Speaker 1 (01:01:09):

Okay. Yeah. Because my understanding is that there's another separate group that does the virtual event.

Speaker 3 (01:01:15):

Yeah. I think we have two people that are in that group of people that help with that when needed. But no, it's not a primary function that we have right now.

Speaker 1 (01:01:27):

And so when you attend, all of the recruiters are attending at the same time, or how does that work or it's just based off of this, the ones that they've set up. Because I know that they set them up for different areas, different regions, different reasons, different entities. So how does that actually work with you and your role?

Speaker 3 (01:01:48):

I've not had to attend all of them, like I said, I attended the one for the youth that we did for our area, Conroe Huntsville, in that job fair, I was actually the moderator. So I was kind of conducting it, not by choice. That's kind of like that got put in that position. And the last minute...

Speaker 3 (01:02:15):

Voluntarily volunteered, I somehow I ended up in one of the main roles, but....

Speaker 3 (01:02:32):

We had just started doing those virtual job fairs. So, so I, I guess I did. Okay. But, yeah, we don't all attend the virtual job fairs when they're going on it, depending on, what the job fair is. our manager may select a few people to help with, with the virtual job fair, but now not all of us are always on those job fairs. No.

Speaker 1 (01:03:02):

Okay. And I think, like I said, that was my understanding. It was a different, I think I actually talked to her a regional manager that was doing that. But as far as the employers,how are they set up now? We have a team member that actually works on all of that with the virtual events. He's just, he's not in the office today, but, um, and he would have a really good breakdown on the virtual events. But just as far as from your recollection the ones that you have attended, um, how many employers make, would you say you have on those virtual events?

Speaker 3 ([01:03:38](#)):

Well, the one that I participated in for the youth at that time, uh, again, it was the very beginning of it. We had, I believe six employers that were in attendance, um, and they each made a presentation about what they, who they were and what they, what positions they were looking for. Um, I know that there have been bigger ones that have been done. I know we did one for veterans. Yes. Um, and my understanding was that there was, I don't know the number, but there were quite a few employers that participated in that one. We as recruiters, unfortunately I was out during the time, but I believe we had 20 plus employers that were on a virtual job fair that we had done. Some of them were actually on the, the job fair the whole time. Others of them posted their information and then job seekers, if they were interested, could forward resumes to those employers that were not able to physically be on the, uh, virtual event, but they had their information somehow posted so that job seekers could see what they were looking for and submit their resumes. So that's been very good.

Speaker 1 ([01:05:00](#)):

And that's just, that's through the virtual, zoom or teams platform. Yes. Either one. So is there anyone else, anything else that you feel that we need that we need to discuss or that we haven't discussed that you have in your conversations with your fellow recruiters that you like to see change?

Speaker 3 ([01:05:21](#)):

Just, more user-friendly Work in Texas, I guess, for some of our employers. I mean, that, that's the key because it is frustrating. I mean, it's frustrating for staff when you're having to, to reenter some information over and over again, but definitely for the employers, if it was a smoother, transition or a smoother website for them to use, I think that would be key for some of our employers. And I know, I know a lot of it is change. We, don't not all of us like change and you get used to something that's been working and then something else comes new and you're like, what was wrong with the old system? Right. But, um, it is a better system. I will say that I do. There are things about Work in Texas that I do. Like, I mean, it's not all bad.

Speaker 3 ([01:06:11](#)):

It's just, it just has some glitches that need to be worked out. And I think once they get that worked out, it would be a lot better. One of which is what we talked about with the matching of the right candidates. Um, but I think that's going to always be an issue. It just, it would just help if it were less of an issue, if it was just a little more concise with what they pull when you're looking for a certain candidate, because it, it can be, um, time consuming and frustrating when you're getting all these people that are nowhere near what you're looking for.

Speaker 1 ([01:06:43](#)):

Right, is there anyone else that you feel we should speak with regarding employer services?

Speaker 3 ([01:06:51](#)):

I mean, y'all are reaching out to business consultants. Yes.

Speaker 1 ([01:06:59](#)):

Well, you know, you add that and you said that today, and so now I'm adding them to the list.

Speaker 3 ([01:07:06](#)):

Yeah. Don't mention my name.

Speaker 1 ([01:07:10](#)):

Well, I won't, I absolutely won't, don't worry, but yeah, that's, that was, I've been, that's why I have it written down. I'm like, this is what I'm going to do next. So yeah.

Speaker 3 ([01:07:21](#)):

I mean, they,, in most cases, they are the initial contact for the employer. Because they, they usually get, you know, the first look at the employer, they're the ones that are going out and trying to solicit some of the employers that haven't used us to use us. So yeah.

Speaker 1 ([01:07:42](#)):

That's what I'm going to do, but thank you so much. I appreciate you, Diane. Thank you for taking the time out to speak with us and were very informative. Um, really good feedback. So thank you very much.

Speaker 3 ([01:07:55](#)):

Thank you. And sorry about the bird.

Speaker 1 ([01:08:01](#)):

But definitely take care of you have any questions or anything, please feel free to email me, you know, any questions or anything that you may have, but thank you so much and have a good weekend. Thank you. You do the same. You'll be safe. Thank you too. Bye. Goodbye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Louatrice Henderson, Recruiter
Workforce Solutions – Southwest

Contractor

BakerRipley

Interview conducted

March 11, 2021

Speaker 1 ([00:05](#)):

As I said in the email HGAC, we've been working with you all for six years and we basically work on the external media part. We've been working with on that for that for six years, we do help with job fairs. We conduct the media interviews, we push, basically market and outreach. I'm sorry, market Workforce Solutions. So what's going on now is that they're looking at the website. And of course, since the onset of COVID-19 last spring, you know, a lot of the services that were available in person have been placed online. So they're looking at how they can improve the website, whether that's for the customer or whether it's for an employer or whether for employee. So they're making an assessment of that, and that's what we're working on.

Speaker 1 ([01:02](#)):

You'll see that just let someone else in the room and that's Abby Vasquez and she's working with another consulting firm that is also working on the same thing, but they're working more so on the technical side, looking at the operations and systems. So that's just one part of the work that we're doing with HGHCC. So just so that you know who all's on the call, she's with Savage. Isabella and I with Outreach Strategists,, Abby's with Savage brands.

Speaker 1 ([01:58](#)):

So just making sure everybody's got their hydration and anything they need. Okay. Awesome. Good. I want to let you know that this is being recorded and it's only being recorded because we use the transcripts, we go back and review them and kiss to pull out information for the executive summary that we have to do. So, again, this is not an assessment of job performance. this is a fact finding information finding. So if I asked you some questions that she may say like, well, gosh, do you know how Workforce Solutions works at all? Just know that I'm asking you that because we really need to get a good understanding of the steps in the processes and operations that are used. Okay. So if you can, just for the record, can you state your name, your position, and what office that you work from?

Speaker 3 ([03:14](#)):

My name is Louatrice Henderson. I'm at the Astrodome office and I'm a recruiter.

Speaker 1 ([03:20](#)):

Thank you so much. On the workforce solutions customer side, how do you contact the customer?

Speaker 3 ([03:31](#)):

Well, there's several ways in which I can contact the customers. I can actually run a query and send them an email, or if the telephone number is valid, I will give them a call. So there's several ways, at least call or email.

Speaker 1 ([03:44](#)):

Okay. Telephone call or email. Do you work directly with the employment counselors, the personal service reps, veteran services and vocational rehabilitation?

Speaker 3 ([03:58](#)):

Yes. I work with all of them because as a recruiter, I have access to several job leads that are submitted and more. So what I tend to do is share that information with the other staff, because they may not be,

you know, they may not know what the current job market is or what the employer is looking for. So I actually share that information with the recruitment, the events, the NCP, the PCs, and the PSR.

Speaker 1 (04:22):

How do they, how do you share this information? Is it via email or do you get, send them an alert via WIT or how, because I know that a large part of this is being done out of WITt, correct.

Speaker 3 (04:32):

I will send them an email. What I do is I create a hot-job. I'll take that information and I kind of condense it to the information that they may need, so they can just say, Hey, look, Walmart is hiring distribution reps. This is the job. This is the location that pay, kind of give them just a little brief summary of that position. So they can just, if they have a customer, just send that customer that information.

Speaker 1 (04:54):

So now you're not going into the offices. So you're basically just, you're not being able to not speaking to them right there. You're sitting, you're setting up the hot-job

Speaker 3 (05:05):

Yes. same, yes. Same thing. You'd have to send them a hot -job list. We have a huddle every Thursday. So by then I've created a list of hot jobs. So I share that with them doing the huddle, but during the week time, anytime there's something hot that comes off, I'll send everybody an email. Hey, look, this employer is looking for this. Do you have any candidates?

Speaker 1 (05:26):

Okay. And that's via email. You told me?

Speaker 3 (05:30):

Yes. When we were in the office, I was go to each desk and say, Hey, this is really hot. You know, you want to work this, this job since we don't have an option right now it's via email. Or I may pick up the phone and call him, call and see, Hey, do you have any customer you're working with as you know, looking for a warehouse position, Hey, I got this opportunity. So even though we're working from home, we're still communicating with the staff.

Speaker 1 (05:52):

Okay. And how do you communicate with a customer, I'm speaking of the candidates, of course, we'll get into the employers,

Speaker 3 (06:05):

Pick up the phone, I'll email them, or I will use my cell phone and give them a call and say, Hey, I've got this opportunity. Are you interested?

Speaker 1 (06:12):

Okay. So there's not a particular app or a website that you all use to communicate with the job seekers.

Speaker 3 (06:18):

Sure. Now through Outlook, you know, we use outlook. I use my outlook, my email address when I have something, which is what we did, we were in office. It was still, you know, Hey, you know, I'll send them an email. Are you interested? And if they respond and pick up the phone and call them,

Speaker 1 (06:33):

Okay. So the job seekers, they, they do have to set up a WIT account though. Correct?

Speaker 3 (06:38):

They do. And what we typically do, sometimes the wit account is incomplete. So therefore, if they respond to the hot-job, or job that I send to them, then we simply call them and assist them in completing that really it's the Wagner Peyser and making sure that that part is complete. So, if they email me their resume, then I upload their resume so they can have a current resume. So again, it's just having conversation with the job seekers that tend to upload the resume because they may not be as familiar with WIT and know how to navigate it, to update the information. So I just make it easy for them and for the employer and from other coworkers who may be looking for the same candidate. So they will have a current resume and Work in Texas.

Speaker 1 (07:26):

Okay. You said something about Wagner Peyser?

Speaker 3 (07:30):

The Wagner Peyser, (Link to learn more: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/results/wagner-peyser) That's a new, I guess when they implemented the new WIT, I think about a year ago, or two years ago, they implemented a Wagner Peyser which is something that everyone really should complete. And sometimes they may have some challenges if there's some basic questions, you know, that they present to the job seeker. And again, that, that information, it's beneficial. So if it's not completed, then we just have them completed.

Speaker 1 (07:55):

You just communicate and say, Hey, finish this. And then you may upload resumes and everything for them. Okay. Can you walk us through how you pick candidates for the employer?

Speaker 3 (08:08):

Sure. What I do is I look at the job description and then call the employer because sometimes you may have a job description and there may be some things that, you know, this is what I want, but this is what I really need. So we pick up, we call them employer to get an idea of exactly what are you looking for in a candidate. And, you know, the job posting may say, I need three years of experience, but engage in conversation and say, well, maybe I'll take someone with two years if they have this. So we call the employer to, to get an accurate idea of what they're looking for. Once we determined, this is what the employer is looking for. Then I send out an email blast based on that conversation to job seekers, as a request that they emailed me a resume because sometimes the Work in Texas resume may not be current.

Speaker 3 (08:54):

So I want a current resume. So if they respond and send me a resume, then I do the comparison. This is what the employer is looking for. This is what you have. And then if there's a good match, then I will email the resume to the employee. After I've went over the job with, went over the job with the job secret. So once I determined that they are a good candidate, then I will email that resume to the employer and say, Hey, can you take a look at this? This may be a good candidate. Kind of do like a little brief summary. John DOE has three years of of experience. You're looking for three years of experience. John DOE has this just kind of, because the purpose is to sell that job seeker to that employer, to still let them know this is a really good candidate. So you just have to make a good match. Right.

Speaker 1 (09:38):

That's really what it is, right. Trying to make that a match for them. So what, um, do you provide on the job training?

Speaker 3 (09:48):

I don't, but there is a employment training and services having department and they do on the job training.

Speaker 1 (09:54):

So when it's determined that that employee needs, that you'd send the recommendation or is it coming from the employer ?

Speaker 3 (10:03):

It's based on when you communicate with the job seeker, they may not be fit for that position that you're recruiting for. There are some instances where the employer will say, Hey, I've got the, you look at for someone with this experience. Well, John DOE doesn't have it. However, we do have an on the job training department and they can actually set it up where you can still hire John DOE and, you know, you can train him and then there's a process, but that's handled through the, on the job training department. So it just, it depends on what that employer is looking for, or that employee may be looking for a candidate with a specific skillset. And we may not be to find that candidate, so you can say, okay, well, you know, we have this department on the job training, what if they come in and you can still train it candidate. But at that point, it's that job seeker, that employer (inaudiable) it's presented to the, on the job training department, because that's what they specialize.

Speaker 1 (10:54):

Okay. And you do that communicate just through emails, just basics ?

Speaker 3 (11:02):

I pick up the phone. Call the contact person at ESD and say, Hey, I've got this employee and they're looking for this and you just kind of share with them, what's going on. And then they take it from there and then they reach out to that employer .

Speaker 1 (11:14):

And what's ESD?

New Speaker (11:16):

Speaker 3. Employment Training and Services.

New Speaker ([11:18](#)):

Speaker 1. What about if somebody needs help with interviewing skills or resume workshop or something?

Speaker 3 ([11:28](#)):

Well, we do offer that the career office do offer that services, but there are other organizations outside of the career office that we would share with them, like we're partnering with job-net job net is a free organization. So if it's, if they need a more, uh, I guess hands-on to really tweak their resume. Unfortunately the career office may not have time to do that. So in a situation like that, I simply share with them, you can job-net too. She sends me a flyer every month. So with the new, with the process, they can get interviewing skills, computer skills, and it's a nonprofit organization. So I share that information with that job seeker because they have the time to actually spend with that job secrets and get that resume, interviewing skills and LinkedIn and all the other options they provide.

New Speaker ([12:18](#)):
Speaker 1. And that's a vendor?

New Speaker ([12:21](#)):
Speaker 3. That's a vendor, really not a vendor, that's just an organization.

Speaker 1 ([12:25](#)):

Okay. But does it have to go through approval process for you all to recommend?

Speaker 3 ([12:30](#)):

I don't think so. It's just like, if someone is this additional skill set, so it's like, okay, you need, you need a resume is like a TSU is offering a resume writing class, Hey, you can go to TSU or, or it's some, it's not like it's, it's just, it's an opportunity for them to get someone, to help them to do their resume. It could be tip-to- show. It, it really doesn't matter. This is just a free service.

Speaker 1 ([12:52](#)):

Do all recruiters know, is this a universal, when there is a service available? Like let's say going to job - net does do all of the recruiters know.

Speaker 3 ([13:04](#)):

We all have different resources that we can share with each other. They may know another organization. I just happened to know that job-net because I know the person that's over it, that's managing it. So I knew about her resources. So there, we have a lot of resources and we do share that when we find out, okay, this company is doing this, or you can do this. So we don't have like a set list. It's just in, when something comes up, we can share that information with each other.

Speaker 1 ([13:28](#)):

Okay. All right. And again, the only systems you're using with that, you're not using WRK solutions, you're just using basic email? Right?

Speaker 3 (13:36):

Well, no, we do. Well, pre-COVID when the job seeker would come into the career offices, we had resume writing classes. We had mocked-interview classes. So the staff was doing that. Because of COVID, that's not an option right now, but I still, we can still provide a service by saying, Hey, we're not doing it, but you can contact this organization and they're doing it. You know, you can go in person there, but once the, you know, we resume and going back into the offices, then we will resume, you know, the same, you know, resume writing interviews skills, what we resume doing that.

Speaker 1 (14:11):

Okay. So what about the virtual events that are on your calendar or that it's on the WRK solutions calendar of different various training opportunities? I'm just wondering, because the thing is, is, like I said, we're trying to see about updating the website. So even if it's, you know after COVID, and maybe there's a, you know, the offices open up, you still, they're still looking to provide to make the website world-class.

Speaker 3 (14:37):

There's some really good websites right now onour system. So again, I'm not familiar with all of the resources, but as of right now, to my understanding, there are resources now that are virtual that a job seeker can participate in. But from my role, you're not a primarily work with employers and I just assist a job seeker when they need assistance. But I'm almost, I know that on WRK Solutions them pretty sure they have those resources available, right. Not virtually for those candidates.

Speaker 1 (15:08):
Okay. Who do you work with? You work with the hiring managers or HR?

Speaker 3 (15:15):

With the hiring managers, the recruiters, you know, once a job is assigned to me, then I become that point of contact. And so it could be the hiring manager. It could be the owner, you know, the goal is to take that job, that they entrusted in us to find the right candidates so that we can fill that position for them in a short period of time.

Speaker 1 (15:32):
And how are the jobs assigned to you?

Speaker 3 (15:35):

Right now we're doing like industry. I'm like the, I guess the medical, the nurses, the LVNs, you know, that's my specialty right now. However, I do recruit outside of my industry because it's not about just my industry. It's about filling that position. So if an employee calls me and say, Lou, I need a warehouse immediately within I'm going to immediately work on it, but I'll notify the assigned recruiter. Because again, the goal is to what fill that position for that.

Speaker 1 (16:02):

Right. So who assigned you like the list, like the you're doing medical, so who makes that decision? Is it the business consultant? I mean, who lets you know, what area you're working in?

Speaker 3 (16:15):

Our manager creates, we have an industry list, and this is something that I guess is, it's a trial thing. They're doing industry lists. So it's already been predetermined that people on our recruiting team, what area they will specialize in. But again, we're not bound to that, because again, I still recruit outside of my medical field because it's like, you need to, you know, you want what? You have an opportunity. I have a candidate let's just make the match.

Speaker 1 (16:39):

Right. And is that list that you receive, where do you get it from? Is it an email list or is it on WIT?

Speaker 3 (16:48):

As a report? What it is is there's an open jobs report and an open jobs report there's a list of all of the industries. So we simply go to that list and all the ones that are healthcare and my industry, then I simply filter that list. And then I start working on those postings, but it's in that list is, they get it from work in Texas. They run a list and they, somehow they do it and they pull all the jobs. And so there's one report.

Speaker 1 (17:11):

Oh, okay. So it's WIT that you access the list for?

Speaker 3 (17:14):

Right. They, they, they run the report and they get the jobs directly from WIT.

Speaker 1 (17:19):

Okay, great. So, so how do you establish your relationship with your employers?

Speaker 3 (17:27):

What I usually do is, again, the first one, I got a job I'm going to call the employer because again, I want to go over the job posting just to make sure that, you know, that nothing was lost in the translation from the time they spoke to someone and the time they put the job board. And so it's important that we have the correct information advertised in Work in Texas, not just my benefit for, for the job seekers as well. So we call employer to kind of go the job description. Y'all see, you're looking for this. Okay. You're looking for this. Okay. This is the salary. Okay. So this is how you want them to apply for the position. Let me confirm that this is the email address. You just want all of the job posting to make sure that that information is correct. And then once we determined that information, correct, then we'll start the recruiting process.

Speaker 1 (18:10):

So do you create the job posting or is it solely up to the employer to create the posting?

Speaker 3 (18:18):

I have created job postings in the past. We typically employer calls, especially if it's something, an employer that's used the system over and over again. It's really, it's sometimes it's the same job posting. They want to repost, but if they had, if they don't have a job description, then yes, I will assist them in creating a job description. I'll also tell them about O-net, which is where they can go and get more

information because it's important for their input because this is their job. They know what they're looking for. So it kind of like you can go to O-net and you can get a sample of a job description and then Work in Texas. Also gives them some like examples of how to, what you can put in your job posting this new WIT does.

Speaker 1 (18:55):

Okay. So if you have to do the posting, is there a template? What system do you use?

Speaker 3 (19:03):

Well, pretty much engaging in conversation with the employer. Okay. You're looking for this. So whatever the employee is saying, then I'm just jotting it down because again, it's still their job posting. So they can tell me that's okay. Are you looking for an office assistant? Well, do they need to have a basic computer skills? I'll say, okay. Yes. Okay. An office assistant, kind of like egging them on, an office assistant normally would have to create memos. Well, this person have to do that. So you kind of just giving them ideas on what an office assistant would do in case they don't have that information. Because an office assistant pretty much is going to do the same thing.

Speaker 1 (19:38):

So once that's done, I mean, so let's say, they say, Hey, Louatrice. Work in Texas. Is there a page that you all do that on in WIT?

Speaker 3 (19:54):

Well, it's not in Work in Texas. There's a job order form that you've complete. And then you submit the job order form to ESD or etc. And they're the group that submit the job postings. If an employer has used the system before, and they've still looking for the same accounting clerk, they've same position. Then at that point, it is something we can just simply copy that job because it's already in Work in Texas. They don't have to recreate that job posting. It's only if it's a new job posting and they've never used the system before.

Speaker 1 (20:27):

And so how does ESD or ATC submit the form? What system you're working on

Speaker 3 (20:32):

This email is WRKobs, that the email address that they use, you fill out the form and you send it to them, and then they in turn will go ahead and, you know, put the information and Work in Texas.

Speaker 2 (20:48):

Is that easy? Is that easily accessible? Are there any changes you'd like to see to that process?

Speaker 3 (20:54):

It's a simple form and, you know, the form is the same, it's basic information. So I don't see any problem with that form. The turnaround is pretty good. And there have been cases when the employer is like, I need someone immediately. And we have the option to actually go in and create a job posting ourselves. So it's only in cases, whereas employers, like I can't wait to two or three days. I can't wait. Can you just go ahead and submit my job order for me today? Then we do have the option to do that.

Speaker 2 (21:28):

Savage: Is that form online is it a PDF?

Speaker 3 (21:30):

Louatrice: It's through WIT. It's in Work in Texas. Well, their form is a, is a PDF file, but to actually go into WIT and just submit that job, you just simply log onto it, create a new job posting plug in the fields. And then, you know, it's an assistant immediately.

New Speaker (21:43):

Speaker 3. Savage: ....but if you have a form, that's a PDF file.

New Speaker (21:47):

Speaker 3. Louatrice: The form that we send to ETC Is it's just a form, it's a template. It's a template. Put it that way.

New Speaker (21:55):

Speaker 2. Abby: I did want to ask one question going back earlier, when you had asked about, you'd mentioned about the hot-jobs. I know that they've got a hot-drop section on the WRKsolutions. Are you feeding that to someone who's posting it? Oh, we can't hear you. Your volume is gone. Did you plug in with headsets? You can't hear. Okay. Cause we can't hear you. (A pause in the interview because of tech issues)

Speaker 1 (25:40):

Let me ask you this. So are there any services being, like you said, you like working from home? Is there anything that any services you'd like to see be more accessible online or on this platform or the WRK solutions platform? Is there anything that you've noticed that, Hey, you know what, it'd be really great if I didn't have to click over and go to this other site for this, but it could be right here on WRK solutions?

Speaker 4 (26:08):

No, the only thing that I could say that would be beneficial, if we had on Work in Texas, the job seekers information was actually current. So that's something that I think we were doing. We just have to make sure that anytime we engage in a conversation with a job seeker to just check WIT, to make sure that their profile is updated, Hey, by the way, is this still your current telephone number, is still your email address? That's something we would have to do as we communicate with the job seekers to verify that their information is current. That would be beneficial, beneficial for the, but other than that, you know, we're making it work.

Speaker 1 (26:49):

You are in Southwest, right? So, when your on WIT, do you pull down the job descriptions for your area? Cause I'm sure you're not trying. You're not the person who's recruiting for Pasadena?

New Speaker (27:13):

Speaker 3. Louatrice: Actually with the industry I'm actually recruiting for I'm stationed at Astrodome, but I recruit for Pasadena. I recruit for Southwest for a (inaudible) Texas city because it's industry based right now. So if I have a LVN and Pasadena, it's still assigned to me. And so this report--we have an open

job support and we have a recruitment report and then the recruitment report is broken down by the job seekers information and it's broken down by the occupations, in the zip code where they live. So when I'm looking for a candidate and Pasadena, I just go to the report, I filter it. I'm looking for those candidates that live in Pasadena or Southeast. So I can fill to the report that they create to define the candidates.

Speaker 1 ([27:56](#)):

You're the first recruiter that I've spoken with where you're working specifically on industry-based. No one else has mentioned that.

New Speaker ([28:06](#)):

Speaker 3. Louatrice: This is a trial. I think that the other contractors are not doing the industry base at this time. Baker, Ripley recruiters are doing the industry based at this time, to my knowledge.

Speaker 1 ([28:18](#)):

Okay. Makes sense. Okay. Is there anything else that I'm leaving out of what you do on a day-to-day basis in and out for employers? Is there anything else that I've missed?

New Speaker ([28:33](#)):

Speaker 3. Louatrice: No. Just again, just trying to make, you know, making sure that the floor, which is on a one employee, uh, uh, employer to make sure that they're happy. Job-seekers happy. My coworkers, I happened, we're all just going, we all shooting towards one single goal. And that is to find the ideal candidate for the employers, because it's all about perception, you know, because we do a great job. Then these employers will tell other employees, Hey, you know, I needed a accounting position and those folks, I work more solutions. They did this for me. So it's like branding, you know, like you just try to sit, let them know we're still here. And I was, Thursdays are provided to you at no cost. We can help you and free your time up just working collectively as a group. Really.

Speaker 1 ([29:14](#)):

And you don't do the onboarding for employers, correct?

New Speaker ([29:18](#)):

Speaker 3. Louatrice: No, we're just pro we provide them with the, the candidate and at that point then they take it from there and then they do the onboarding. You know, like the pre -COVID, one air, more cars, a lot of folks, we would also open up the career offices for employers to come to our career office and to do their onboarding, just making it convenient for them. If they have, if they want to onboard 50 candidates in Astrodome has the capacity. And we've done it before too. Like, Hey, use our services. You know, they come in, they use the services, they onboard the candidates and their content.

New Speaker ([29:52](#)):

Speaker 1. Abby, do you have any additional questions?

New Speaker ([29:57](#)):

Speaker 2. Yeah, one thing I was curious about, when you're providing candidates to the employers and maybe some of the candidates that you sent them, don't quite fit. Do the employers give you feedback so that you can then refine your search and provide better fitting candidates?

New Speaker (30:15):

Speaker 3. Louatrice: Some do, some of them were good and some of them don't like that. I was working with this guy again. I have the medical field, but I work outside of it. So I was working with certified staffing. They're looking for auction drivers. They're looking for recycled sorters. So I actually sought it, found 23 candidates. I created a spreadsheet. I sent them the employee, the job seekers name, email address, telephone number, and another column. It says, please provide feedback. So what she did is she took that spreadsheet. She did, she tried to call those candidates and she did say she provided me with feedback. Those that didn't answer those as she scheduled interviews for. So some employers give us feedback and then some employers they don't. That's a part of our role is to once we schedule and present a candidate to the employer, we follow up with that employer and say, by the way I sent you, John Doe's resume, was a good candidate. Okay. Then if they say, well, no, I'm looking for this. Then we go back and tweak the search and again, start the process all over again.

New Speaker (31:15):

Speaker 2. Abby: And so would you perhaps tweak the job posting as well?

New Speaker (31:20):

Speaker 3. Louatrice: What if they say, okay, I've changed my mind. You know what, maybe since you have, I had, I didn't find anybody with three years of experience, you know, let me, it might take someone two years then. Yes. At that point we will go in to work in Texas and I will actually modify the job posting. And I'll put a note on it as well. I Spoke with John spoke with John DOE, then flora. He said, at this time he will consider someone with whatever. Then I put a note on that job posting, because anyone that was referred prior to that note, they'll know that this personnel they're accepting someone with two years of experience. They are still a qualified candidate. So it doesn't look like that's a bad, that's a poor referral or reflection on the ECS. So just making sure it's current up to date. And some employers, they will give us feedback. Hey, I liked Dan, do I hired him? And when they do that, then we go into Work in Texas and we post at hired.

Speaker 2 (32:17):

Isabella, do you have any questions?

Speaker 5 (32:21):

Well, I was just thinking if everything was virtual, we kind of brought it up before about like, if I'm a candidate needed some work supplies or something like that, how that's been handled. And I was just wondering,

New Speaker (32:32):

Speaker 3. Louatrice: Well they're still doing it, what they do now at STM is that's how they use the Appointee. If someone needs to us some supportive services right there, the Al corrupts is not opened back up yet. But that is in the plans is that once they open up, it'd be it, you know, they will job sick and need some work boots. They call, they get Appointee and they schedule a time. And when they come, there's a designated area, I know at Astrodome, where they will go in and they will provide them with

the services. You know, they have some plexiglass there, so they will be, they're still processing them. But again, there'll be to do then I think some of the things that even more automated now because I think they can do the online application, everything. Now the job search can be sensitive. I think facts. And this is something that I don't actually do. I just knew about it because that's what the piece ECS and PSRs do. So I think they kind of automated a lot of the process, but they use Appointee. So the job seeker can schedule an appointment to use a computer for a couple hours.

Speaker 1 (33:30):
Right. That's for the career office.

New Speaker (33:31):
Speaker 2. Once the career office is open back up, that's part of the reopening process.

Speaker 1 (33:38):
Well, I think that's all that I have today. Any other questions? Abby, anything else you have.

Speaker 6 (33:48):
No, I can't think of anything else. I think just if anything comes up that might make your time working virtually and from home, you know, easier that could be incorporated into WRKsolutions or some other portal. You know, if you think of it later, just let us know because we we'd love to make sure that what we build is, is working best for you. It gives you all the tools that you need.

New Speaker (34:12):
Speaker 3. Now, the new, they just did another upgrade on, on the WIT, the editor. To me, it's not, it's more user friendly than other versions. This from a personal use, it's more user friendly than the other version that they had. The only thing that I noticed that right now, we're trying to find jobs for the youth and the old, old WIT before the upgrade, we would name the job posting as youth 2021, youth 2019, and on the old old WIT we could just go and say, okay, I want to find all the jobs that I've submitted in the past that says youth 2019. Now hat, I haven't been able to figure it out on this new WIT if I can go and find all those jobs that've submitted, you know, with a job title says youth 2020, because those are the same jobs that we need to provide to the youth again this year. And I don't think that, I don't know if this current WIT has that Capac is capable of just finding a job by the job title, because it's by the employers. But I do like this current version of WIT. I think it's user-friendly to me and it's easier to navigate. So I whatever changes they made. I think it was on the 16th, but it's, I like it.

Speaker 1 (35:21):
I know they're having trainings this week on WIT too. For the changes, there were some trainings going on that I know that some of the recruiters were going or attending.

New Speaker (35:33):
Speaker 3. It's easy. You just started using it. It's I found it to be easy to navigate.

Speaker 1 (35:39):

Well, that's good.So that's what we want to do. It's all about trying to make this process easier. And then even like we said, even when the offices do open up, do you know that may just be a timeframe that people are comfortable still working online as opposed to in person, you know.

Speaker 4 ([35:58](#)):

Speaker 3. I just started some of the thing. And then this is also what the jobs the employers are saying. I don't know if there's a way, like when I S uh, set up, do a query and work in Texas, and I want to narrow my search. Only one folks that live in Houston, zip code 77 to zero. When you do that query, it's still retrieves folk. This people that live in Lubbock, because it says Texas. So I haven't quite figured out a way to just narrow my search, where I don't want to say to someone that lives in Dallas. I only want to pull someone who lives in Houston, zip code 77, two five. So I'm still working with trying to create a query directly and what that gives me what I need so that I don't have to go through every single resumes. Okay. You don't qualify because you live 30 miles away. I just need someone who's 20 miles or 20 minutes from this place. So again, I don't know if they can fix it where the search it's really a narrow search when you get what you want.

Speaker 1 ([36:52](#)):

Someone else express that too.

Speaker 4 ([36:56](#)):

Yeah. If not, I mean, I can still go through, but it would just take less time if I could find too much search, even though you got the advanced search options to do it sometimes, which doesn't give you that information, you still get a lot of information that may not be necessary.

Speaker 1 ([37:15](#)):

Okay. So I think we're, I think we're just looking at ways. Am I right? Correct. Abby , for the WRK solutions website, right.

New Speaker ([37:25](#)):

Speaker 2. I just want to make sure that we're clear that we're working on the Workforce Solutions. Okay.

New Speaker ([37:32](#)):

Speaker 3. It's it's still a good system. Again, you make it work. It's more user friendly. Not to me, I think, than it was with the other version that they had. I mean, it was still easy. It's just simple, you just click here, you get to what, you know, it's quick, quicker to navigate through it.

Speaker 1 ([37:53](#)):

Okay. So any nothing you could think of as opposed to with the WRKsolutions website as of right now?

Speaker 4 ([38:01](#)):

No, I actually, I, I don't see any issues with it.

Speaker 1 ([38:06](#)):

Okay. All right. That works well, thank you so much. So we really appreciate, appreciate your taking the time out of your day. I know you've got a lot of work to do so we really appreciate it. Thank you so much. Have a good afternoon. Enjoy the rest of your day. Bye bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Lissette Peraza, Leedo Manufacturing

Interview conducted

March 26, 2021

Speaker 1 (00:00):

That's great. So for the record, could you just go ahead and state your name, the name of your business, and how many employers employees do you have?

Speaker 2 (00:12):

So my name is Lissette Peraza I'm the human resources manager at Leedo manufacturing, and we have total company of about 600 employees.

Speaker 1 (00:22):

Wow. Okay. All right. And how long have you been using Workforce Solutions? Employer services?

Speaker 2 (00:28):

It's going to be over a year that we have partnering together, we are always getting the hell with the new sources. They always referring to us, actually, we do started referrals this week. So it's been over a year that we have been working really, really closely.

Speaker 1 (00:47):

Okay. And what industries do you serve?

New Speaker (00:51):

Speaker 2. Manufacturing.

New Speaker (00:54):

Speaker 1. You said 600, a little over 600. And can you describe for us your hiring practices or how many different positions do you have?

Speaker 2 (01:04):

We are a cabinetry company, so we are like a cabinetry. Our facilities are anywhere from shipping loaders, maturely handlers, cabinet assemblers, forklift driver operators, machine operators, um, it's everything related with out- production. Those are the main positions that we do have. So currently we advertise every time that we have---we keep our posting open for all the positions through Texas Workforce Solutions. So they asked for kind of all-date in a monthly basis for them to keep updated the recruiting, the crew. So all their done that we have advertisements everywhere and the building Indeed, Kronos on our websites. So we do have a lot outgoing, open positions that we have that---the main positions that we are recruiting for, we always have them open just to keep that flow coming. We use the newspaper (inaudiable) chron.com (?), So we use several platforms as well to advertise our openings.

Speaker 1 (02:07):

Okay. Well, I guess you just answered my next question, which was what other employment posting sites or platforms do you use? So you just said Indeed. I think you said Chron.com is a rep as well.

Speaker 2 (02:17):

So, um, yes, we use primarily Indeed we use sometimes LinkedIn as well for our more admin positions. We have all of them posted in our website. Of course we use the newspaper as well, the local ones, that help us a lot. On top of that, we do have a referral program, that help our employees to get an incentive when they recommend employees to our company as well.

Speaker 1 ():

Okay. And how did you find out about workforce solutions and decide to utilize them for your employee staffing needs?

Speaker 2 ():

Oh, wow. It was that long ago that I can remember. I think it was, Ricardo, the one that offered the help he contact me on, I wanted to get a little bit more details about it that was before COVID. So, we were able to meet here in my location. We did have the consultant, we did have the recruiters come on board, so we kind of build up that relationship. They walk it through the OJT program. We saw benefits, you know, getting referrals from them. We always looking for talent, you know, improve our workforce. So we sought a possibility to partner it up and get some candidates from them. We started yeah a month ago.

Speaker 1 ():

So it wasn't a situation where you just, you knew, did you know about workforce solutions or did they approach you? How do you remember how that interaction happened?

Speaker 2 ():

I knew about Texas Workfroce Solutions, I don't know, from the beginning of my career. I used to live back in Florida. So in Florida I had that relationship with Workforce Solution as well. So I tried to see even this state. It was different. Ricardo wasn't one approach to me. So I was the one interested in knowing more about the program. So I invite(inaudiable) for them to (come inside (?)) to explain a little bit more details about it. And Ricardo he was consultant at that time. He was the one that offered all the services on Texas Workforce Solutions had at a time.

Speaker 1 ():

Okay. You mentioned you met with the recruiter consultants. So when you make interactions with Workforce Solutions, who are you primarily working with or speaking with now?

Speaker 2 ():

Well, now it's more with their recruiter used to be Kathy now it's Maria. So they are the ones that send me a pre-screen resumes, send me the candidates that I might be interested in based on their background. And once the person is hired, I get back to back with the coach because they have assign a coach once they start with us coach from Texas Workforce Solutions. So after they hire, it's more interaction about performance feedback with their coach from Texas Workforce Solutions.

Speaker 1 ():

Okay. So a coach is a coach for the employer, or, I mean, for the candidate, or is this the consultant that you're working with...

Speaker 2 ([05:34](#)):

Once the referral from Texas Workforce Solution, let's say,Texas Workforce Solutions, refer me candidates. After they hired Texas Workforce Solutions assigns them a coach to follow up during the first 30, 60, 90 days, depends of the position on the training that they need to, but they are assigned a coach from Texas Workforce Solution to follow up during the first month of employment.

Speaker 1 ([06:05](#)):

And so does that mean they're employed with you on a contract on like a temporary basis just to see how they work out and then they transitioned to full-time now

Speaker 2 ([06:14](#)):

Because they want their direct hires, but Texas Workforce Solutions support their referrals with kind of, um, they provide-- if the person needs uniforms, they help them to get those. If they need boots, if they need transportation, they provide like a gas car. So it's always trying to have the now, during this first--- their first month that they have to adopt for a new job, so trying to reincorporate them.

Speaker 1 ([06:43](#)):

So are your hires basically, are they people that have been recipients of either to any type of financial services from the state, like SNAP or?

Speaker 2 ([06:53](#)):

Those are the referrals that I get from Texas Workforce Solutions.

Speaker 1 ([06:56](#)):

Oh, okay. Cause I was like the only ones that I know that have, you know, a monitoring, like a case manager that continues to be with them are those that have received SNAP or TAMF. So you're working with okay. What about, do you work with any of the veteran services? Not at this moment. Okay....

Speaker 2 ([07:17](#)):

We used to---with COVID everything have been modified, so what can I tell you?

Speaker 1 ([07:23](#)):

What about vocational rehabilitation? Have you worked with them with some clients?

New Speaker ([07:28](#)):
Speaker 2. No.

New Speaker ([07:28](#)):
Speaker 1. Veterans, maybe. Okay. So anytime you have a position, it always gets posted with Texas Workforce Solutions or WIT, do you use the WIT, work in Texas?

Speaker 2 ([07:41](#)):

They manage that from me. I send them the open positions and they post it, they send me the resumes coming through, so they do that for me.

Speaker 1 (07:51):

Okay. And so when I think that I know is with all of the businesses that do, business conducted business with workforce solutions, is it, they have to register through the wit program, which has Work in Texas. And there are requirements, like making sure you have your tax ID number and all of that gets up. So was that the first process that you did?

Speaker 2 (08:14):

Yes. We filled out everything online for us and we create our own account and everything.

Speaker 1 (08:19):

Okay. Is there, are there any submissions that you have to make because like, are there any documentations that you submit due to the hires that you have?

Speaker 2 (08:36):

So I have to kind of, um, update or every time that I have a job that expire, I'm not sure if it's 30 days or 60 days, something like that. And I do have to sign again, um, as a condition of it's still active, this is still the amount of positions that I do have. So it's, um, I have to fill out on an eligibility questioner that has old information from the company, you know, the number, the address and everything you're going to get. So every time that I have a job that expires, I have to updated with new documentation. I have to sign again. I have to just fill it out, everything again. I think It's 16 days. I believe so.

Speaker 1 (09:28):

Okay. Um, are there any, what systems do you use to do that update? Is that electronic or is that...?

Speaker 2 (09:34):

Right now it is, it used to be paper right now. It is electronic, through docs or through sign e-sign I think.

Speaker 1 (09:43):

Oh, through w-sign you said? Okay. And where does, so who are you sending that document to? Is it to Worj for Solutions?

New Speaker (09:49):

Speaker 2. Workforce Solutions.

New Speaker (09:52):

Speaker 1. Okay. And what about, do you have any employee documents that you have to complete concerning the employee? Not the position, but like the employee, like you said, some of them are with you, you decide they have that coach for 30, 60, 90 days. So is there something that you like there, their time sheet or, or you have to share their hours or a submissive?

Speaker 2 (10:13):

There is a process when they complete the training hours, we have to complete a progress report. The supervisor has to discuss it with the coach and the presence of the employee, given the feedback on raid their performance. So once that is complete, I receive an email from Alexandra. I'm going to tell you

really quick what her title is because I have received so many emails. Here. Okay. So Alexandra is the contact from Texas Workforce Solution. She's from the financial compliance department. Okay. So once they have completed these progress report, I'm completed older training hours assigned for the position that they are. We receive a request from Alex saying, I need the pay stub, confirming the amount of hours and on the wages that they work. So it's part of the process of the OJT program, where we can get reimbursed for half of the salary for X amount of hours, depending on what the position is.

Speaker 1 ([11:24](#)):

Okay. Okay. Depending on the position and you don't have to do that for every employee, right. It's only the ones that are receiving. I think that applies to TANF.

Speaker 2 ([11:34](#)):

There. This is only applicable for the employees eligible for the OJT problem, which is on the job training, that's it. Yes.

Speaker 1 ([11:44](#)):

Okay. So what sections of the Workforce Solutions website do you utilize?

Speaker 2 ([12:02](#)):

So the Workforce Solution website, I have never been there. So I didn't know that you had a website that I could utilize.

Speaker 1 ([12:11](#)):

Okay. So you mainly work with them work with Work in Texas. Is that correct? The work in Texas one?

New Speaker ([12:16](#)):

Speaker 2. Yes.

New Speaker ([12:17](#)):

Speaker 1. Okay. So when you're mentioning, Alexandra she's, she works with Workforce Solutions, but you're not, when you mentioned Work in Texas, Isabella, correct me if I'm wrong. and I think it was a combination of Workforce Solutions and Work in Texas, but that is primarily the website you're using is Work in Texas, which we call WIT.

New Speaker ([12:45](#)):

Speaker 2. Yes.

New Speaker ([12:47](#)):

Speaker 3. Yeah. I was thinking if she doesn't go to the website and you guys don't utilize it yet, maybe is there something that you would, you know, I'm just saying there's something I'm with that maybe they do like, or something that could be used that can be beneficial on the website themselves for the Workforce Solutions website. And there's a lot of resources on it and tools and training, different things. And so we're just thinking how businesses could find it useful in what way?

New Speaker ([13:14](#)):

Speaker 2. Absolutely.

Speaker 1 (13:16):

So what do you like? So, but you've never actually been on the Workforce Solutions website to know whether you it's beneficial or not....

Speaker 2 (13:27):

Would love to take a look at it.

Speaker 1 (13:29):

Yeah. It's Workforce Solutions. That's it. And that kind of lists the trainings, everything that's available, what's available to the employer, it lists all of that and get information for you. Okay. So when you think about Workforce Solutions, like again, like I said, you're not, you're not, this is surprising cause you're not really using their website. So like you said, most of that is done through your consultant, but it seems like you're working primarily with the recruiter. That's who you have the most contact with.

New Speaker (14:05):

Speaker 2. That's right.

New Speaker (14:05):

Speaker 1. How often during the month would you say that you speak with the recruiter?

New Speaker (14:09):

Speaker 2. Oh, no. On a weekly basis.

Speaker 2 (14:11):

We work back to back. Actually, when I do have Yelp fairs, I let them know in advance. I shared the flyer with them. They recruit for the job fair, send out the invitation to the local areas. So yeah, I have a pretty close relationship with Texas Workforce Solutions.

Speaker 1 (14:32):

Okay. And that is the recruiter who's in the office. It's primarily about candidates. Okay. That's good to know because we were under a different impression as far as the business consultants, but I think initially the business consultants, was the one who just signed you up and then they released you ---- Weren't talking to them daily. Um, it's more of the recruiter that's working with you.

Speaker 2 (14:56):

Trust me. It is not easy. I have to build that relationship a little by little. There's just a few employers that are that are that close to Texas Workforce Solution. They have to build that relationship and they have to be there when they have a need or a question. So it's, it's a little of building that trust and that bond.

Speaker 1 (15:20):

Okay. So that's more of that personal connect. Okay. So are there any other things, any other programs that you have to use as far as reporting and that Workforce Solutions does for you? Is there any other...

New Speaker (15:35):

Speaker 2. No,

New Speaker (15:37):

Speaker 1. All right. So that's good that we will move past that. But, um, so with your hiring, so the first time you told me is that you post the position, you post it through us, through Workforce Solutions, but you also post it on indeed. any other, LinkedIn, if it's a higher position, you're looking for people on LinkedIn. So, so from that, when they send you a candidate, what happens? Just break down. What happens after they refer you, that candidate?

Speaker 2 (16:05):

They go through the interview process as any other candidate, they get pre-screen, if they're accepted, and the, the hiring amount of your wants to make an offer. It's okay with that. We extend an offer. If the person, um, accept, then we go through the preemployment checks, they have to pass drug tests, physical check, background check. Once they clear all the preemployment checks, then they're invited for an orientation class orientation class from our side and---that day, the coach, will be given the onboarding from Texas Workforce Solution side. So that's another back-to-back class that we have, on partnering with them.

Speaker 1 (16:50):

Okay. So it's workforce solutions is doing the onboarding process?

Speaker 2 (16:53):

They do the onboarding process for the qualified candidates. Yes.

Speaker 1 (16:58):

Okay. And is that your own onboarding for your company or is that something....

Speaker 2 (17:03):

No. I do the onboarding for everybody regardless, what program and what sources they come from right. After I do my onboarding part, then Texas Workforce Solution will provide the onboarding for those candidates qualify for on the job training program.

Speaker 1 (17:23):

Okay. Okay. And who does the employee preemployment checks?

New Speaker (17:31):

Speaker 2. We do. Okay.

Speaker 2 (17:36):

As companies are required for, before implement.

Speaker 1 (17:44):

Okay. All right. The job postings and descriptions. Do you do that yourself or do you go ahead and use your recruiter to go ahead and use a template to post ...

Speaker 2 (18:03):

All the job description for any job openings that we do have.

Speaker 1 (18:07):

Okay. So they don't do anything. They don't use any triplets. Okay. Anything and most of your basic communication with your recruiter is done via phone zoom or email...?

Speaker 2 (18:18):

Email, and phone. Both kind of variety.

Speaker 1 (18:22):

Okay. But there's no other systems that you all use that you communicate in like a, you don't have a shared file or anything like that together or no.

New Speaker (18:31):

Speaker 2. No.

New Speaker (18:31):

Speaker 1. Okay. All right. I think that, honestly, I think there's, is there anything else you'd like to, is there some something you'd like to tell us about the services? What would you like to see improved or anything that you find that it's maybe not as easily accessible to you as you would like?

Speaker 2 (18:49):

No, not, not for me, for me, everything it's a fairly clean process, so I don't have any problem with that. Um, my only concern was, and I had a conversation earlier this year with Texas Workforce as well. It's about the pre-screening that they have in place, they need the candidate to fill out a link.

New Speaker (19:13):

You know, they go click a link and they have to complete, the financial aid application. I'll say. So getting that information from the candidates sometimes really, really delays the process of getting them on board. So, it's something that used to be super easy because I used to have here on site once a week, a Texas Workforce Solutions representative. So that day I will be dedicated only to interviews on this person here, we'll have them out to fill out application and everything. So it was kind of spitting the process now that everything is online, they just need to send the link. But sometimes the candidates are not savvy on the computer side or to have a computer from the cell phone. It's a little bit difficult. So that's the only glitch that I have seen in my experience with my candidates that really delays the onboarding process.

Speaker 1 (20:15):

And it's more so not the actual site. You think it's more so on the user, like you said, the employee, the candidate may not have a computer access to technology may not have internet services, so..

New Speaker ([20:31](20:31)):

Speaker 2. That's right.

New Speaker ([20:32](20:32)):

Speaker 1. So that's more of a, like you said, previously y'all were in the office, they were there with you. They would come in, what was it? They would come in once a week?

New Speaker ([20:41](20:41)):

Speaker 2. Once a week.

New Speaker ([20:44](20:44)):

Speaker 1. ...actually work that process with you and just say, okay. So once they spoke with then the candidate would come over...

Speaker 2 ([20:48](20:48)):

The day after we did all the interviews for the day, I was able to see , this person qualified, this don't qualify. So it was kind of a summary. We pulled information right away. Right now, it''s they have to send a link and they have to wait for the candidates to filled out. So it's a little, either delays a little bit more, even we'll lose candidates in that process, just because of the reasons that we mentioned.

Speaker 1 ([21:13](21:13)):

Okay. Have you lost candidates because of that?

New Speaker ([21:16](21:16)):

Speaker 2. Yes.

New Speaker ([21:16](21:16)):

Speaker 1. Or is it a rolling? Okay. You lost candidates, so it's a little bit more tedious. Um, so thinking of a way in which this can be done quickly. Because one thing I do know is that they are going for that financial services. They are having to go on Workforce Solutions website to get to the application to process that. And like you said, now it's a link that's being sent to them. Okay. Any other comments that you have thank you for being so transparent. I appreciate it.

Speaker 2 ([21:47](21:47)):

No problem.

Speaker 1 ([21:50](21:50)):

Anything else that you can think of or that's it? Not that bad. Okay. Well, thank you so much. I appreciate your time. And please enjoy your weekend. If you have any future questions or anything, please feel free to just reach out and contact me as well.

Speaker 2 ([22:06](22:06)):

Absolutely. Have a good weekend

Speaker 1 ([22:08](#)):

You too. Bye-bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Nicholas Morgan, Adaptive Construction Solutions

Interview conducted

March 29, 2021

Speaker 1 ([00:02](#)):

We are a firm that's been working with, Houston, Galveston area council for the last six years. And we do work with them on the external reach communications. But we're also working with them now, we're putting together an RFP for them along with another comms team, so we're working together on that. Just making sure, you know, after, with COVID making sure that all of the services that were normally available in person are either transferable online or maybe those services that are not online, maybe that could go online and make the process easier. So, so that's really, and I know, and it may be different for you because I've done one of these interviews before with another employer and they don't really utilize Workforce Solutions like work solutions.dot com.

Speaker 1 ([01:02](#)):

They're not really using WRKsolutions too much. So if the questions don't apply, then that's fine. Just let me know that they don't really apply to you. But one of the first things that we have to do is like, we're trying to understand the relationship. So if I ask you about like the services that are provided, how you communicate with your business consultant, or either the recruiter from Workforce Solutions, that's just a process for us to understand how everything flows. So great. This is being recorded and it's being recorded because we go back and we review the notes and, and what was said. And so when we do our executive summary, then we're able to just have, give them a really complete overview of what we found, what we discovered.

New Speaker ([01:57](#)):
Speaker 2. Okay.

New Speaker ([01:59](#)):
Speaker 1. So if you can just go ahead and state your name and the company that you work with and your position,

Speaker 2 ([02:07](#)):
Nicholas Morgan, president of adaptive construction solutions.

Speaker 1 ([02:11](#)):
Okay. Thank you. So how long have you been using Workforce Solutions' Employer services?

Speaker 2 ([02:17](#)):
It will be five years in October, November, so four and a half years.

Speaker 1 ([02:26](#)):
Okay. And what industry do you represent?

Speaker 2 ([02:31](#)):
Largely construction, but some others as well.

Speaker 1 (02:34):

Okay. And how many employees do you have?

New Speaker (02:38):

Speaker 2. 21.

New Speaker (02:40):

Speaker 1. So describe your hiring practices and how workforce solutions plays a role in that?

Speaker 2 (02:46):

We are a bit different. We're actually a vendor in the workforce system. But we're an employer partner as well. And then we also represent a consortium of employers. Oh. So we partner with Workforce Solutions and utilizes their services daily basis for our consortium. So, you know, we directly represent their interests, all these companies, to Workforce Solutions. So we act as a workforce intermediary. So, these are, I can share not just my observations, but the greater observations of 20 plus companies as a utilize the resources and those resources have hired approximately--- just under, I happened to know this specifically because--- for a 48 month window, it was, 454 people, we're probably hitting right at 500 individuals that were supported by Workforce Solutions. So these are individuals that we either hired, or our partners hired, um, during the past four and a half years that were a majority of them were reverse, referred over to Workforce Solutions for resources and assistance.

Speaker 1 (04:18):

Okay. So were they on SNAP or TANIF where they receiptant?

Speaker 2 (04:26):

Exactly, more often than not there recently separated veterans. So that's a veteran who left the military in the last 48 months. That would be probably 60% of that category. Okay. But a lot of them were either SNAP, TANIF, or somebody in their household was on disability, or had certain skill deficiency or came from certain census tracks, all of the above.

Speaker 1 (04:54):

So you also work at vocational rehabilitation? We do.

New Speaker (04:57):

Speaker 2. I want to say that's great that I get a chance to get a different viewpoint for, since you were working with the consortium, so that that's helpful. And you said there was 20 plus companies that you're involved with that as well. Can you break down? So you said you're also a vendor and an employee partner. So what is the role of the vendor?

Speaker 2 (05:23):

To deliver training services to individuals that are reversed, referred to the workforce system.

Speaker 1 (05:32):

Okay. So you also, so you participate in OJT or

Speaker 2 (05:37):

OJT, for all these individuals participate largely most of them and OJT, so we help put it all together for the employer, so we kinda help, you know, move the ball through. I mean, there's been challenges over the years, and then there's been a ton of successes, with working with our partners at workforce solutions. But, you know, it's one of those things we have to kind of continue to refocus in and see, you know, under this scenario, how can we make it better? It's been a struggle at times, but, uh, we appreciate everyone's effort for sure.

Speaker 1 (06:15):

So talk to me, I guess, a little bit about those challenges and was this, was this pre COVID or this...

Speaker 2 (06:22):

Pre and during. I mean, it's kind of, you know, we understand that, you know, um, the workforce system, you know, I mean, it's the largest workforce board in the country is 7.2 million residents. You know, I don't know how many tens of thousands of businesses here in Houston, you know, where based on capacity sometimes where employers are put on the back burner, and that makes sense, other projects, so it's not a consistent experience.

Speaker 1 (06:56):

Oh, okay. And do you find that, so prior to COVID, were you able to meet directly in and who do you work with primarily? Is it the recruiter or is it ....

Speaker 2 (07:09):

ETC, etc. And I'm very familiar with outreach specialists with your firm, you know, worked with Tim, right? Your videographer.

Speaker 1 (07:22):

Yeah. Yeah. Tim is, uh, we're currently working on a workforce solutions TV, so he's on that side of it. Okay. Now I'm in, um, I'm taking then I I'm taking this part of it. So now the multiple projects going on with workforce solutions at Tim Lankford.

Speaker 2 (07:40):

I mean the Gulf coast workforce board is fantastic. ETC makes a great effort. It's a way better process than most places that we've experienced around the country. You know, we're, we're trying to figure out is how do we, uh, you know, duplicate or come up with a consistent, uh, experience when we work with them. Um, and, and, you know, and I understand you know, just because of our place in the industry, it kind of understand things change also based on resources, you know, have these wheel a core programs, funding changes, and there's different things like that. Or all of a sudden auditors are focusing on this or versus that. So, I mean, I, I completely get it. We really appreciate everything that's being done, uh, to help streamline it. Um, but those are just some of the, you know, uh, challenges has really been trying to create that consistent experience for our employer partners, where we can manage expectations.

Speaker 1 (08:42):

And so when we talk about that, and can you talk about that consistency? And like you said, employer expectations, where do you see the largest gap that's coming in? I mean, is it, like you said, capacity wise is the employer is like, I need this many employees, or at least viable candidates. And there's a gap in that, you know, and is that where that's coming from? Sorry excuse me....

Speaker 2 (09:05):

No, that's okay. Everybody that dogs at home is I have seven kids. So it's usually bloody murder and screaming on top of their lungs. Um, no, so, I would say, you know, and, and you know, of course, if an employer says, I need 50 people, you know, everything changes, right. But even where we can just try to get a handful of people, let's say they have again, we're not to get too much into WEOA, but an easier eligibility process for some of them that are determined, eligible on some easy basis that are all that information is provided. It's getting like, uh, the talent team or some of the team to, to have the similar experience, no matter which person is on their team, working with either our employer or the participants, right? So, um, even, even the different individuals on the teams, it's very different.

Speaker 2 (10:07):

This person moves a lot faster or is better at engaging the individuals that are reverse referred over this one. It's always getting, hearing the whole story that they tried, but nobody called them back. And, and we've always said, look, if you just notify us, we'll get them on the phone with you within an hour to help schedule those, you know, case management phone calls or whatever calls, eligibility calls. Um, so it's just, and I know there's been some changes on the team just recently. So, uh, that should, we believe iron a lot of that out, but that's just been a long-term consistent issue that came up is, you know, um, you know, for instance, one way that we've always felt that it could be more effective is if, you know, if you have an employer that's used to working with a certain person, unless that person has been reassigned to something else, right. If you can let employers, even outside of our program, right. Just completely across the board employers that they get used to working with a specific recruiter or a specific team members can that 90% of the time can that be duplicated in the sense that, okay, there's just a big, a work overload right now for this person. We gotta reassign some folks. I get that. But, but you know, 90% of the time probably that same person could handle that employer. So that, that employer doesn't have a different experience constantly. Just a little frustrated, right?

Speaker 1 (11:34):

Yeah. Right. So just consistency with like, okay. If I started out with Dan and Dan and I have developed a relationship and, you know, I trust Dan's judgment, I trust where he is, what he's doing for me. And then all of a sudden it's like, okay, well now we're going to change you to Steve or somebody like that. You're, you're saying, like making those types of switches... Instead of...

Speaker 2 (11:55):

You know, it may be two people that that employer needs to work with because one does recruiting and one does, you know, OJT for instance, understood, but I don't need three different people that do OJT. Right. Okay...and three different recruiters is, is, you know, that, that gets really confusing. And of course, you know, people move on. I mean, that happens. But with the exception of that, um, you know, you know can you duplicate that experience? So, you know, you go to a barbershop, you love to go see you're saying the same barber, right. And, and even when you go see that barber, you want that same experience to be similar. You don't want one day to be offered a cup of coffee and the next time not.

And so, you know, I think from an employer, getting like a really, you know, duplicating that employer experience is really critical for getting them to come back for services.

Speaker 1 (12:51):
Okay. I hear you. Okay.

Speaker 2 (12:55):
We struggled with that too, right. Internally. Right. So, I mean, it's, it's every organization, um, that's really important. And sometimes again, it changes cause it had to change cause something new policy procedure, but as much as you can control it to stay the same. Uh, it's always great.

Speaker 1 (13:12):
Let's try to do that. Right. What about as far as any type of submissions that have to be made on your part or or individual employees that you work with? So because you are working with those who receive stamps, uh, TANIF or SNAP, and then you're also working with veterans services. So with that comes....are you doing a lot of work and Work in Texas?

Speaker 2 (13:37):
Yeah. So everyone gets enrolled in Work in Texas. If they're being reversed, referred by our employer or us to the workforce system as a first step before they get referred, just so we can kind of streamline it and make sure that they're not just having that conversation okay. Before we have our schedule, our next call, you need to, you know, you need to enroll in work in Texas so we can cut to the chase a little bit. So, we help with that piece. Um, you know, so when you're talking about like individual services, one of, like OJT, uh, sometimes, um, like an employer or a larger employer may have 15 different OJT contracts and they have a supervisor that, provides a certain level of supervision over all of those 15 or majority of them, uh, were instead of trying to schedule them on 10 different days in a month. Uh, those employers really appreciate it when we, Hey, well, let's get through eight of them at a time, and that way we're not being disruptive to delivering service, to our work environment. I mean, if they gotta go back personnel files and open up notes and stuff every other day, because of the different counselors, trying to schedule a different time to do a OJT performance evaluation.

Speaker 1 (15:04):
And so who does that? So as an employment counselor, doing that on the PSR, doing that directly.

Speaker 2 (15:10):
Yeah. I believe it's an employment counselor, I believe, it's part of the talent team, and I know they're being better at it. I noticed like last couple of weeks ago, we were able to get a bunch of them scheduled for a particular company.

Speaker 1 (15:25):
Okay. So for you, you are really, you're actually connecting with upwards of two to three people on the Workforce Solutions team. Well, actually more,

Speaker 2 (15:40):

....well I'm from the Etc team probably, um, a dozen but you know, it's, again, you know, we expect that for us. What are we hearing back from our employers right now, keep in mind. We also, benefit from the same. We use the same services for ourselves too, right. So we're speaking on it on our own behalf. And then we're speaking on the half of these, a, um, you know, dozen and a half to 20 employers. Uh, and those are some of the comments that we are regularly hearing back is, you know, can we make this a, they're not trying to shorten the process. They're just saying, can we be a little bit more efficient about it? The way, and then also make sure that we, you know, can we limit the number of people, they get these emails and they're like, who's this who's at. And, and, uh, before, you know, a lot of that stuff would come through our office and then, uh, there was a greater need to have a, and we were fine with it, a direct relationship with the employer. And I think just recently, we've kind of found a little meet in the middle, which is, Hey, just CC us on everything and we'll circle back around. And when the, when we think that they may be confused by that email, let's, let's explain it to them. Right.

Speaker 1 (16:56):
Okay. So you're like the middle person, so you'll just kind of like, you know, Hey, let me give it to me...

Speaker 2 (17:03):
Large employers for our services, we're funded organization as well. And, and so, you know, we just act as an intermediary there to help support these partners.

Speaker 1 (17:13):
Okay. So as far as your employment postings, as well as the employers that you work with, um, is workforce solutions, the only company you're working with as far as that, or do you post on other sites?

Speaker 2 (17:31):
Yeah, we post on other sites. Absolutely. Uh, zip recruiter, Indeed. Um, sometimes LinkedIn, um, they go onto some other social media websites as well, but we do a lot of resume mining to find candidates. We don't really get too many referrals, unfortunately we've always wanted more referrals. And typically when they're referral, we try to get them all the way through the interview process just to make sure that the recruiter can get some feedback. You know, we don't look at the resume and say, no, uh, well at least have a conversation with the person.

Speaker 1 (18:12):
Okay. Okay. Well, that's good. What are some of the positions that you've posted? I know it's probably a little bit more extensive from what you're saying, but I mean, cause I know you, there's a variety of, uh, positions since you probably have, and then looking at the bigger picture from the consortium that that's probably, you know, I can't imagine, I'm just thinking about the number of....

Speaker 2 (18:35):
Here in Houston service techs, you know, to do working on equipment, right. Civil construction labor, which is a position to do more skilled labor that's related to civil construction all the way up to equipment operators. We have an HR position, that's currently posted for example, that we're hiring three or four people internally for those are career development technicians. So it's very similar to a workforce role. Um, we have done everything of course, across from iron workers to pipe fitters and everything in between that you can think of, telecommunication tower technicians is another big one

that we do a lot of, here and there. I mean, I say a lot of, I mean, it's just, um, regularly posted. It's not at the moment.

Speaker 1 (19:28):

Okay. And do you create the job postings or descriptions or do you work directly with the Workforce Solutions...?

Speaker 2 (19:38):

Uh, no. Largely we've created them in the past, but, uh, yeah, maybe that's something that we should, uh, look at for some newer roles, you know? I mean, a lot of them keep in mind are, are also tied to the apprenticeship offering. Right. So they're pretty well built out by the time we're posting them.

Speaker 1 (20:03):

Okay. And how are you informed initially about Workforce Solutions and the employment services they offer?

Speaker 2 (20:10):

Susan Dickson met her four and a half years ago and she's been fantastic.

Speaker 1 (20:17):

Okay. All right. And who at Workforce Solutions do you, um, interface with the most, you would say the most out of this, like your recruiter, business consultant or...?

Speaker 2 (20:32):

So for me or for our organization?

Speaker 1 (20:35):

Well, I guess if you could tell me both, since we have a breakdown there...

Speaker 2 (20:37):

For me, it would have largely been prior to Crosby moving over would have been Crosby, now it's Megan and know it's Ken again, which, you know, we, we worked with Ken,

New Speaker (20:48):

Speaker 2. Um, when he was, uh, when he was there before he left for the past year, I guess. So we were happy to see that Ken is back

Speaker 1 (20:57):

And he is a what's his title. Do you know? He's good recruiter?

Speaker 3 (21:01):

Speaker 2. No, he's the manager of the talent division. I'm messing up that title. Let me look it up. Ken's awesome. I'm a huge fan.

Speaker 1 (21:25):

What is his title? What's his last name.

New Speaker (21:34):

Speaker 2. Espella.

New Speaker (21:36):

Speaker 1. Okay. Okay. And as far as, as what influenced your decision, so you met Susan Dickson, but really what was it that made you say, okay, this would be the best thing for us is to partner with them with Workforce Solutions.

New Speaker (22:02):

Speaker 2. For what they could do for our business partners. Number one, you know, our employers that we work with, and of course, what they could do for the, uh, the veterans and young adults who come through our program, to help support them. I mean, again, it's been a fantastic, you know, and, and every way that we could describe, um, I was just, you know, there's been those, those small challenges. So, you know, I would, I would just recommend, you know, going forward again is, is how can you duplicate customer experience and also build those relationships.

Speaker 1 (22:46):

And you're not talking about operations wise as far as like system-wise, so you're not, it's not the feedback coming about, like, Oh, we're not able to like WIRK solutions, or we're not able to reach these people, our, our, our Work in Texas, isn't working for us, you know, it's not easy to navigate, you're not talking on that aspect of it, right.

New Speaker (23:09):

Speaker 2. Work in Texas, I mean, it's easy enough to navigate from a perspective of getting somebody enrolled from a recruiting platform is really, unfortunately never resulted in anything significant. So less than probably 2% of our job placements that were, um, you know, met, there were customers that ended up being customers of the workforces were initially accessed through Work in Texas. They were enrolled in the Work in Texas, but they weren't already in there and we had to go, we found them, or one of our community-based or other partners identified them and referred them over to us.

Speaker 1 (23:51):

Okay. And then, as far as what you're doing, do you actually interface with WRKsolutions at all?

New Speaker (23:59):

Speaker 2. The website is great. Um, and I can almost always find what I need to find. And especially if I can't find it there's a lot, I can find that I didn't think I would be able to find, but finding it through Google. Like, if I'm, again, this is things that employers generally wouldn't look for, but things like, WIOA plans and, and other elements that are really helpful for us doing research and stuff. A lot of times I would have expected to find it somewhere else, but I'm finding it on Wrksolutions. So it's been great.

Speaker 1 (24:39):

Okay. So any suggestions that you might have for any changes or anything to the website to make it easier?

New Speaker (24:47):

Speaker 2. Um, it's, it's better than pretty much any of the others I have looked at over the years. I can't, I mean, try to maybe put some more like employer testimonials type videos or content in there from employers. I think that would be from a marketing perspective that might be valuable to integrate a series of employer interviews, like how the solutions have really helped.

Speaker 1 (25:22):

That's good. And what about the training, like the videos for training, and you mentioned young people it's, they do have the youth services for employment, and a lot of times with that comes like, you know, they need resume training or interview skills. I mean, so have you looked at all of that that comes through on the Workforce Solutions as far as I'm registering for those different types of events?

New Speaker (25:45):

Speaker 2. Um, I think my team has, I haven't, I've heard about it, so I think one of, one or two of my team members have mentioned that even to me, so, um, that means they probably have been using it at some level, for sure, but, um, I couldn't I'm, most of my time is more focused on the employer components and our employers, and then our systematic approach of working with the workforce system. Uh, so, but I could, I could ask them if they've used it, if not, they need to.

Speaker 1 (26:17):

Okay. Okay. And then financial aid services. Do you also work with the financial aid services or is it just basically the referral for the employee candidate that's needing that additional assistance?

New Speaker (26:32):

Speaker 2. Uh, yeah, so, uh, you know, in the past, um, we were more involved and then I think so they moved to the online platform to help with that. Um, um, I think in a lot of ways it's helped streamline some things, but then if there's not somebody there to kind of help remind somebody of what their situation is, then sometimes it's not captured. So for instance, um, you know, we have a grant from department of labor, uh, veterans, uh, which is a veteran employment and training services for homeless veteran reintegration program. Uh, veterans often don't think they meet the federal definition of homelessness, but they are, you're sleeping in a car you're homeless, right? So sometimes when you're filling out an application, if it's being done through even a zoom or something else, it can be caught. Those, those things like, Hey, you know, where are you staying? But if somebody is just doing it online by themselves, they're just checking the box. No, no, no, no. Versus having a conversation, you know, that's related to that question. That makes sense. So I think you lose some of that, uh, human element of the case management that helps discover or identify those barriers to employment. Does that make sense?

Speaker 1 (27:55):

It does. It does because yeah, you're like, you're right. They may not fully understand. And as opposed to before they're maybe in the office with them, or would you have, or would they come to your sites?

New Speaker (28:07):

Speaker 2. So they would always still go meet with the counselors and do the questionnaire with the counselors, but it was, you know, you know, we're screening them for other services before they got to that point. So we've largely identified it. So we would bring that up to the counselor that, Hey, during, make sure that you, you may want to discuss a little further his, their living situation, for instance. Right. Um, and because, I mean, also even, even as HVRP grantee, no DOL requires us to make an attempt to co-enroll that person into the workforce board anyway. So, you know, we're supposed to notify them, Hey, here's an individual that we believe may be eligible for financial aid assistance, for, you know, whatever services everyone in the end thinks is appropriate, but, that's always been helpful that we could kind of let them know, and then they're having that conversation with them and they know how to approach it. Right, those FAS are pretty long. I mean, we understand, so people just kinda start like anyone else, and myself included, you just start trying to get through it. And, they're doing themselves a disservice when it's, when they're, when they're just trying to get through it. You know, when you have a case manager there, then you can dive in deeper.

Speaker 1 ([29:27](#)):

Right, right. Do you think it would be helpful to have like a live chat available? I mean, I know they're doing this through zoom, but again, you mentioned some things, what it would, if the employment counselor doesn't mention this, or they're focused in that particular area, and then some things can fall through the crack. I mean, would it be helpful to have maybe an FAQ or .....

New Speaker ([29:50](#)):

Speaker 2. I think a lot of it now, and then I could be wrong. I know, I know they were thinking about flipping back to doing it in Zoom, but they had moved to just a purely like an online portal that they could just go and enter the data, answer the FAA. So they're not talking to anyone live through zoom or any other platform. I think they flipped back. I know with other workforce boards, they've been doing it, the form online form for awhile. I just think that's maybe one of the magical ingredients it was happening locally was able to always do it either through virtual or in person or over the phone. And then, I'm hoping that that's, they indeed did move back to that or we'll go back to it.

New Speaker ([30:39](#)):

Speaker 1. Yeah. Because that's not working with just the completely, maybe automated or there's no human contact. Right. Okay. Okay. Um, and again, I think I asked you this previously, but,, just as far as any documentation that you know of, is there anything that you're having to submit? Like I know weekly TANIF has to have, uh, their weekly documents for their hours. So who does that? Who's filling out that information and how do you submit that information?

New Speaker ([31:08](#)):

Speaker 2. Uh, employers provided now, uh, directly to them and through us, same time. I mean, they do the progress reports. Uh, that's never been a problem historically. We've never had a real issue with submitting hours. I think that's been one of the things that have gone the most smoothly.

Speaker 1 ([31:29](#)):

How do you do that? Is it usually through email or is it like a DocuSign or how do you do it?

New Speaker ([31:33](#)):

Speaker 2. I think we do, uh, encrypted email, password protected, those pay stubs and its pay stubs get forwarded over through a encrypted email.

Speaker 1 ([31:44](#)):

Okay. And is there any, as far as any veteran's services or any department of veteran affairs or our official documents that you do you upload those directly to submit them directly to those that entity or is it coming through Workforce Solutions in anyway?

New Speaker ([31:58](#)):

Speaker 2. Uh, some of that is going directly from the participant to Workforce Solutions. Then we provide some information as well, I mean that, that case management, those, those elements I'm gonna have to go ask the team exactly transmitted, but I know it's done through password protected PDF generally. Um, that is how we, we send it over to ETC.

Speaker 1 ([32:30](#)):

Just one more, two more questions. As far as your onboarding process, so in screening, is Workforce Solutions doing that screening and onboarding for you, or is that something you kind of do in-house?

New Speaker ([32:58](#)):

Speaker 2. We do it, depending on the employer and the situation and everything, or if it's even for us, it's done in partnership or we do it, um, it just kind of depends on the scenario more times than not. We do a lot of the initial screening. And then once we really, uh, everyone believes that, this is somebody that the employer, is really interested. The employers interviewed them as well as interested in it, but we all understand that they're not, they don't have the skills to meet with the employer needs, but they, they have, they think they're going to be a good team member. Otherwise, if they got access to like OJT experience, um, then, then they get reversed. You referred over to the workforce system, right. Which helps, you know, make sure that we don't inudate them with just all these candidates and then we're not placing them. Right. They're not getting hired. So, instead, you know, that's why timing is really critical because, they've already gone through this week long recruiting process and screening and interviews, and now it's getting them onboarded approved and onboarded with the employer and approved for workforce, I should say, so they can be onboarded.

Speaker 1 ([34:10](#)):

Okay. What services or content has helped you the most as an employer?

New Speaker ([34:35](#)):

Speaker 2. What services has helped the most, probably a OJT that's been critical, and then, you know, the access to financial aid to do the skill training. I mean, those are, but I, I don't want to at all, undermine the value of like the career counseling and coaching that's been very valuable too. So once everyone is there, you know, to have that career coach following up with the person to see if there's anything else that could be any additional assistance that can make sure that they're showing up to work every day, that's, that's been very, very valuable, working really well.

Speaker 1 ([35:19](#)):

They're the ones that have to manage, especially when you're dealing with TANF candidate or the SNAP candidate. And I'm not really, for certain...

New Speaker (35:28):

Speaker 2. We don't have a lot of TANF in SNAP. There's some but majority. Most of them are dislocated workers and veterans, they're usually adult, um, income criteria, but the majority of them are dislocated workers, probably 75%. So, that career counselor that has checking up with them every few weeks, that's been very valuable. Um, and we've always heard positive feedback from the, uh, the participants, it's probably the thing that's worked. The smoothest is once a are placed. Is that ongoing out, you know, connection and contact that's going on? That's been very valuable.

Speaker 1 (36:16):

Okay. Is there anything else that you can provide any other concerns with services that you want to add?

New Speaker (36:23):

Speaker 2. No. I mean, there's a couple of folks over there. Joanna, right. Um, Joanna think. I don't want to miss it. I'm going to send you an email. Some of the rising stars, you know, some of the people who've have done great work for our employers, if it wasn't Monday, I would remember all their names, but the team definitely are always quick to remind me who over there it's really kind of, helped out, uh, you know, down at the ground level. So, uh, I'll share those names if it's, if it's helpful.

Speaker 1 (36:59):

And what office is she located in?

New Speaker (37:01):

Speaker 2. ETC.

New Speaker (37:03):

Speaker 1 Okay. Now that's, I think that we need to, that's probably an area now that we need to interview as well, because like I said, we're brought on where, you know, and we really, we really haven't, we've been having to break down the whole system from the career offices to the recruiters, to the employees and just everybody's role. So now that you're giving me like, and this is another role that I want to definitely make sure that we, that we're well versed in.

New Speaker (37:29):

Speaker 2. Well, I mean, APC is going to have some of the, you know, biggest relationship with employers, right. Versus the career offices. I mean, the career officers are there definitely to serve employers as well, but from a recruitment aspect. And then a lot of the other services that are there to be delivered, you know, whether it's grant associates or ATC, you know, w we don't really hear much. I don't hear at all from grants associates that I guess that's been kind of scratching my head all these years is I know they exist, but it's like, I don't understand why we never hear about them, because I know a lot of the roles that they do is like, this is a line. This would be a great partnership, you know, cause they're out there to find new employers, right. And we're always bringing new employers to the tables.

New Speaker (38:19):

Speaker 2. So it's like, why don't we work closer together? But, you know, and I think that's probably a, a dysfunction that, you know, if you have a, um, I mean, and I might have this wrong with what grant associate's responsibilities are, but if it is indeed to go find employers to leverage the workforce system, um, you know, I think that they should be out there with anyone who is partnering with the workforce system and, and kind of leading that, Hey, you know, what employers are you working with? How can we help, you know, get them to the finish line, meaning utilize WIRK solutions, resources, right, crickets across the board. I occasionally cross them at an event or something and they smile and nod, but yeah, I've always been disappointed that they don't try to even engage our partners. Or does that mean some of these associations that we're part of? I mean, you have access to hundreds of hundreds of employers never heard of really what workforce solutions can potentially do. Right. They never voiced, Hey, can we, can we have an opportunity to talk to these companies or anything along those lines? So...

Speaker 1 (39:38):
And those are the grant associates. You're saying, that's the title?

New Speaker (39:42):

Speaker 2. No, that's the name of the company? So employer services is divided into two contracts. ETC, which has recruiting. And it has like the talent management portion of the portfolio for workforce solutions. And then you have Grants Associates, which is another contractor. Their job is to get more employers to utilize the services. So I think they have to do like 28,000 businesses to a year to post the job posting and Work in Texas through that that's here in the port area, I think is the requirement. I don't know something like that. So I think their main goal is to like put out there the PR that, Hey, we do business solutions, right. That Workforce Solutions. I just always surprised that we don't ever hear from them, see them or engage with them. I mean, we've tried to a little bit.

Speaker 1 (40:42):
Okay. Well, that's interesting. You've added an extra layer here. I would definitely want to look into, and check that out, but thank you for your time. Thank you for this information. It's very useful. And like I said, I will be following up on a few things. If there's anything that you think of or anyone that you want me to talk to or information you want to send, just please don't hesitate.

Speaker 3 (41:08):
Sure. Those names of the real stars have been helpful across the entire workforce platform. And if you have any follow-up questions for me, an email.

Speaker 1 (41:20):
I will thank you so much. I appreciate your time Nicholas, and have a great week.

Speaker 3 (41:27):
[inaudible] you have a good week as well. Take care. Thanks. All right. Bye. Bye.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Shawn Mathew, Apache Industrial Services[*]

Interview conducted

March 31, 2021

*This Interview was not recorded. Notes below were taken during the interview.

Said works with Maximus.

Industry: Construction.

60-70 candidates so far through WFS, for the apprenticeship program.
Monday the program is starting another class. With 11 more in that class.
OJT program

How long have you work with WFS?
Worked with WFS. June and July.

What made you seek out WFS?
Mainly because we started a new apprenticeship program.
Works with WFS based in Houston.
Houston is the launch place for apprenticeship program, they needed recruiting and WFS provided this.
WForce Board putting them in touch with the Houston relationship.

However, if hadn't been put in touch with Houston, said they would have sought out WFS themselves.

What is the Hiring practices and role of WFS?
Recruiting is the biggest role.
Goal to hire 15 apprentices a month.
WFS recruiters, do prescreening and have brought candidates to our attention and back and forth, WE have also found candidates and told WFS about it.

What is the candidate don't have skills?
Start to finish.
We will train from scratch.
WFS Will Ask about Drug Test.
The biggest barrier is the drug test, if they don't pass you are out.

What other employment posting sites do you use besides WFS?
The Apache website and WFS/Work in Texas.

How often have you used WFS for your needs?
Constantly. We lean on them heavily. Essential would like 100%

What are some positions you have posting?
Scaffolding, and painting and insulations.

Do you create a job posting or does WFS do that for you?

I believe we do.

How are you informed about candidates?

Recruiter.

How often do you interact with your contact at WFS?
Once a month.
Apache daily.
Constant contact.
Is cc'd on emails

Are there any other departments you react with?
Yes we do. Support services, gas cards, tools and boots.

After you are referred to a candidate?
The first step we call them in for interview. And if interview goes well. Then paperwork, drug test, etc. After it's start date. Orientation type setting on first days. Recruiter comes in and on boards them for OJT.

Case management.
OJT candidates have to do check-ins, progress report, etc. 30 days—ish

Who does prescreen checks?
WFS

How do you know if they need training?
OJT program brings that training, needs.

What does on-boarding look like.
On boarding first day.
30 day check in. That could trigger a reimbursement.
Go through classes, have they been done if not why.
Then the next step is sending them paystubs.
And from there they send them the reimbursement.

What documents do you use?
Everything is paper or email.

Who does the onboarding, Apache or WFS.
In combination.
We have an entire day lay out.
We have our own onboarding.

What candidate pool do you like to work from?
We will hire anyone. Pro-veteran friendly.
We attempted to do a veteran class and were unsuccessful.
We always have 15 seats open.
Wishlist is to have periodic all veteran classes.

Any documents required to fill out
Internally. Through Department of labor
We required to put employee information in the rapids system.
Training and apprenticeship and documents are sent to our benefits.

Have you been on the website for Workforce Solutions?
Not lately.

Are there any services or content that has helped you?

I haven't relied on it.

Your communication programs and tools are?
Phone, email, Zoom.

Is there anything you would like to recommend?
Has been wonderful experience.
Recruiting, while we offer 15 seats, we have never been able to fill it.
Drug testing is biggest challenge
Labor intensive work.
Unemployment pays better than an actual job
Apache construction said they offer benefits.
No skills needed to apply, anyone can get this job

Speaks to Susan and Crosby

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Subject

Kevin Rodney, Operation Administrator

Workforce Solutions – Financial Aid Office

Contractor

H-GAC

Interview conducted

April 14, 2021

Speaker 1 (00:03):

All right, we're recording. First off. I just want to have you say and spell your name for me.

Speaker 2 (00:07):

Kevin, Rodney, K E V I N R O D N E Y.

Speaker 1 (00:11):

Thank you. And your position?

Speaker 2 (00:14):

I'm Operations Administrator at the board.

Speaker 1 (00:16):

Okay. So are you like below Dorian?

New Speaker (00:19):

Speaker 2. Yes, I report to Dorian.

New Speaker (00:20):

Speaker 1. Gotcha. Okay. So the first question, really, I'm trying to get a general overview of the financial aid services. Could you tell me about the structure of the financial aid services office? The management, like the management kind of structure is what I'm talking about.

Speaker 2 (00:37):

So when, when you say financial services office, that confuses me a little bit because all of those services are really just integrated into everything that we do and provide a service to customers and financial aid, just being one of those services that an eligible customer could received.

Speaker 1 (00:54):

Right. But isn't there like a separate sort of office or contractor that handles....

Speaker 2 (01:00):

Okay. So yes. So, the way it works, I'm going to just describe it from a customer perspective

Speaker 2 (01:09):

How their application is processed. So a customer who's pressing and financial aid for workforce solutions would go, we have two types. We have number of types of financial life with childcare. If a customer is interested in financial aid for childcare, they will go onto our website and complete financial aid application. Then that application would be electronically submitted to financial aid support center, which is the group I think that you're describing.

New Speaker (01:35):

That group will then be tasked with, um, reviewing the eligibility documentation along with what's the person put on the application and then making an eligibility determination based on income. And, if

they work in the required number of hours and are going to school for the required number of hours and so on and so forth. So that's from a childcare perspective now from a support service and from a training and education perspective, if a customer was interested in going to school, they would, they could complete the application online and submit it, but they would still need to still meet with someone in the career office who would do an assessment on that customer to see if this, the training that they're, asking for, is it suitable? Is it something we can support? You know, whether or not they, you know, have the skills necessary to actually complete the training. And so then those applications would go to the support center, financial aid support center and they would make the eligibility determination again, it's all based on, on income and the types of documentation submitted along what it is that you're looking to get help with.

Speaker 1 (02:57):

Does anybody in the financial aid support center, interact directly with customers or is that all done through the career office as the middleman, I guess?

Speaker 2 (03:10):

Well, for scholarships probably no, that most of the interaction between the support center, I mean, between the customer would be with the career office. Now, I wouldn't say they couldn't speak with a customer, because if you make an eligibility determination and you're missing something minor, I would expect them to pick up the phone and reach out to the customer, say, Hey, got your application. We trying to, you know, processing eligibility, we still missing X, Y, and Z. So I would expect that to happen.

Speaker 1 (03:45):

Okay. But it's not like a normal or like on every day or even, you know, like a constant part of their jobs is interacting with customer.

Speaker 2 (03:52):

No, it, it, it probably should be more part of their job than what it is. I think oftentimes the support center would like to make eligibility determinations just by what they receive. And, and sometimes it requires you to talk to the customer to get them, to get some more answers to, okay, we're missing this why? And cause customer may have a legitimate reason why they didn't submit X. Right. And so they should be probably more conversations than what currently occurs.

Speaker 1 (04:22):

Okay. So just in general, who is eligible to receive financial aid from workforces?

Speaker 2 (04:30):

Um, so we have some customers that come to us because they were outreached, by health and human services in the last year. Um, your TANF choice customers or your SNAP customers, right? Those that there's food stamps. And so when they come to us and they agree to participate with us, then they become eligible to receive financial aid as part of their participation with us. And then you have another group that are eligible and we primarily make them eligible through the workforce innovation opportunity, investment act, which is WLA. And, um, and that's where you have to be, you know, for adult, you have to be economically eligible. If you qualify as a dislocated worker, then, the income part is not factored in, but it has to do with you having lost your job. And you're now unemployed. And, and so then you would, you would be able to bless the dislocated worker. We have some, some customers that

were impacted, they were trade impacted, which is trade, adjustment assistance. And so that's where, you know, foreign jobs were shipped off overseas. And so, um, we have a group of customers that eligible through TAA and as long as they're on the petition, they're eligible under TAA to receive financial assistance.

Speaker 1 (06:09):

Okay. And that, way back in the beginning, very, very beginning of my adult working life. Um, I worked for Amoco oil before BB came in and merged with it and I lost my job because they were layoffs. And it was a fairly large group of folks that lost their jobs. Is there, is that only available to somebody, to somebody who is like a part of a mass layoff or is that available to anybody who is just, you know, they just were laid off from their job. Which one are you talking about? The, the, um, the extra assistance that you were just describing, not the foreign trade assistance, the dislocated worker..

Speaker 2 (07:00):

Yeah. It doesn't have to be a mass layoff. It could be, in some instances, um, you know, if and I hate to use you as the example, Isabella, but if you laid Isabella off, right. And she's the only person that you laid off, she could quite possibly qualify for unemployment insurance and that would make her eligible, under dislocated work.

Speaker 1 (07:24):

Got it. So anybody who's eligible for unemployment insurance or the TWC is automatically eligible for...

Speaker 2 (07:31):

I wouldn't say automatically. Um, I wouldn't say automatically because, um, a lot of it has to do with...How would I describe it. If you were profiled by unemployment insurance, then I would S my answer to you would be yes. But if you wasn't profiled, then there's a few other criteria that you would have to meet outside of just the lay off. We'd have to show, that, um, I can't, I can't think, um...

Speaker 3 (08:13):

There's something to do with getting another job or something like that.

Speaker 2 (08:16):

It did, it has something to do with you looking for employment. And, if you gotta be looking for employment that pay at least a certain amount, based upon what you were previously making and sign before.

Speaker 1 (08:32):

Okay. So, after a candidate filled out the financial application form online. Where does it go after that? Does it go to like an eligibility specialist in the office directly? Or is it manually input it into another system or does it go into, the financial aid, whatever software you all use?

Speaker 2 (08:57):

It goes directly to the support center via DocuWare. Okay. There's, there's an API between the system that the, between the platform that the application is built into DocuWare, where it goes directly to

DocuWare, and then the folks at the support center will then look at it, review it, and then either making those ability, determination or not.

Speaker 1 (09:22):

Okay. And on that eligibility determination is there, is that made, just say, is there like an eligibility specialist title? Or they make it, and then does it need to still be signed off by somebody above them before it goes before?

Speaker 2 (09:42):

It is, I think a job title is all financial aid support specialist, I think is what their titles are. Okay.

Speaker 2 (09:53):

So their department is broken out into various groups, right. They have an intake group that, that looks at the applications when they first come in and, and check to see if everything that we need from the customer is, well, I won't say everything, but the most of what we need from the customer is, is there, right? And if it's not, then they'll make an attempt to reach out to the customer and say, Hey, we're missing X, Y, and Z, please, please send it. Then from there, it goes to the eligibility team who would then make the eligibility determination. And once that elgibility determination is made. It goes to a fulfillment team who authorize the childcare and communicates to the, to the provider and say, Hey, you know, Isabella is eligible for childcare. This is the number, and so on and so forth. And then that team would also, if it's from a scholarship perspective would work to you know, get the person, um, the scholarship dollars that they were looking for.

Speaker 1 (11:00):

And so there's the money for the scholarship dollars that, that goes to the institution? Because that goes into screening provider or whatever directors.

New Speaker (11:11):

Speaker 2. Yes.

New Speaker (11:11):

Speaker 1. So, the steps that it goes through once the application is submitted, as the, the intake group reviews, it, then passes it onto the ability team, and then passes on to the fulfillment team.

Speaker 2 (11:25):

Fulfillment team. But, our stuff is a little complicated, but, you know, if the scholarships, then we have to communicate that to the career office as well, too. Because they are who are primarily interfacing with that customer. Right. Okay. So they'll communicates to the current office that, Hey, we've made it, we've determined, this person eligible and, you can now work with the customer to come and get their voucher, it's a voucher that the customer gets that pays the vendor.

Speaker 1 (12:01):

Okay. And so, just to make, make sure that I understand it is that we'll go to the employment counselor or the PSR?

New Speaker ([12:11](#)):

Speaker 2. That would be the Personal service representative personal service.

New Speaker ([12:13](#)):

Speaker 1. Perfect. That's, that's what I'm looking for. That, that step-by-step thank you for clarifying that. Is there a way to, on the website for applicants to upload the documents requested?

Speaker 2 ([12:32](#)):

Yes. There is a way for them to upload their documents. And then that review team that I described to you, if they're missing something, they communicate to the customer was missing and direct customer back to the application to upload those documents. So it comes back into that same system.

Speaker 1 ([12:51](#)):

Okay, perfect. Does a new candidate have to sign up for financial aid in order to receive on the job training or apprenticeships or...?

Speaker 2 ([13:09](#)):

They would complete the financial aid application and right. Our current process went on a job training, anything, talent development wise, on the job training, um, apprenticeships, pre apprenticeships, incumbent worker and that sort of thing. Our employer service division primarily works, um, with those particular customers and refers them to complete an application. And it's all sort of self-contained at Employer service for those activities.

Speaker 1 ([13:37](#)):

Okay. Okay. So that employer services, so the recruiting team of employer services...?

Speaker 2 ([13:45](#)):

It would be the recruiting team at employer service, that's employed by employment and training centers.

Speaker 1 ([13:52](#)):

Right, right, right. There's a Gordon in- company or something.

Speaker 2 ([13:59](#)):

There's Grant, who has the business consultants and then there's employment and training centers that have a recruiters and they enter the job postings and all that other good stuff.

Speaker 1 ([14:09](#)):

Got it. Okay. All right. Is it mainly DocuWare that tracks folks who apply for financial assistance or is there another system that then DocuWare then feeds into?

Speaker 2 ([14:26](#)):

No DocuWare doesn't feed anything. DocuWare is our document management system. That's our file on the customer--electronic, the data from those applications and from the information the customer

submits is entered into a TWIST, which is the state's system for data. and for case management and it's entered in Twist.

Speaker 1 (14:53):

Is that an automatic entry into Twist or is that something that you have to do manually?

Speaker 2 (14:58):

Manual? It would be nice if it uploaded directly.

Speaker 1 (15:05):

Well, I think, you know, one of the things that we're trying to do is to streamline that process, both for the customer and for staff so that you don't have to... But we need to be aware of it all in order to, for the vendor to understand like, okay, so we want somehow this electronic information from DocuWare to interface with the state's database on Twist. So that, that was very helpful. I really appreciate you explaining that to me. Um, because I think that's one of the key things that we're trying to do is to populate other systems, you know, through what you already have instead of having to duplicate the effort over and over and over again, into different systems. Is there a, is there a reporting process that you guys have to do, that the financial aid office has to do to the board, to, you know, you or Dorian or, or Mike Temple?

Speaker 2 (16:06):

Yeah. So currently there's a meeting that occurs every Tuesday morning with the support center where they report, their productivity. Number of applications they receive, number applications that, they process, number of applications they denied, processing times, fulfillment times, and so on and so forth. And then from a childcare perspective, they report on the number of kids in care, the number of families, that they've approved. Kids in care numbers is a very, very important number because it's a number that, that TWC looks at us against too

Speaker 1 (16:51):

True. And I'm sure that helps you to determine whether there's a wait list or not, depending on the providers and things like that. So how is that information tracked? Is that something that they've pulled from Twist? Is that something that the vendor has there? I mean, the contractor has their own system. If they track it down...

Speaker 2 (17:11):

it's a number of different things. Some of it is Twist. Some of it is ad-hoc reports that they have to run out of DocuWare. So as a combination of those two things. I can tell you though, and I don't know if you guys intend to speak with some of the folks at the support center.... Their processes, a lot of what they do is manual. And there's, there's not a whole lot of automation over there that occurs. Right. You know, when they assign out cases for eligibility, it's a manual process. We'd like for that to be an automatic thing. Right. And I pull the case, I do it. And then when I'm done, the next case pops up for me to work. Right. Sure. Right now they got assigned cases out on a daily basis.

Speaker 1 (18:02):

Got it. That's good to know as well. Are are all these different kind of software systems are maintained by workforce solutions, right? Not, not the individual...

Speaker 2 (18:16):

No. Uh, like Twist as a state, docuWare the contractor owns that system and manages it. Um, we have access to it, but it's not an HG system. And I know, um, there has been some discussion at the board about bringing a lot of those various systems to the board where,they (inaudible) reside at the board...

Speaker 1 (18:41):

Then that may be what's going into that. So that's good information. I mean, that may be part of what the RFP that we're helping, you know, do all the processes for that might be where that's eventually going to leave. Is that okay? Everything goes in house. If they're already leaning in that direction, I mean, there's, I know we need a top to bottom, you know, everything that the board level would own. Does the financial aid office work directly with the education and training provider network or is that all done through the career offices?

Speaker 2 (19:22):

Education training provider network is managed by the financial aid payment office.

Speaker 1 (19:28):

Okay. So, they just interact with that automatically all the time. Explain that to me, I guess, explain what you mean by so I get what you're saying.....

Speaker 2 (19:47):

So, before we can pay or authorized somebody to go to a school, right. Because that's the, that's the network that you described, right. They have to be a workforce solutions vendor, and they have to be on the state's website as well, which is the ETPL is eligible training provider list. All right. And so when when a vendor wants to put their training program on, they, they, we work with our financial aid payment office. There's an application that they submitted some supporting documentation and this, that, and the other, and there's some other things they have to do from the state's perspective as well, before they can be a vendor that we could send a customer to.

Speaker 1 (20:33):

Gotcha. So the vendors go directly through the financial aid office.

Speaker 2 (20:38):

Yes. And they, and when they approved those vendors date, put that information in Gazelle, which is another system that we use to, um, it's not primary. It's our FAMS, financial aid management system as well. Okay. Got it. And, um, and so that's how we pay vendors. That's how we track track vendors and that got approved and some of them, so.

Speaker 1 (21:03):

Okay. That's good to know, has the actual name of the program software Isabella in any of our other interviews?

New Speaker (21:18):

Speaker 3. Just briefly mentioned.

Speaker 1 (21:19):

Okay. So that's good to know. So what documentation if any documentation must be kept in the Sorkforce solutions, education training provider network. And I assuming all that is in DocuWare, once the provider applies and goes through all the steps they need to do....

Speaker 2 (21:58):

From the payment officer's perspective, because they are the ones who would be, who managed that information. I'm not 100% certain that that information is housed in DocuWare. I know DocuWare is our electronic management system for our customers, primarily, I'm not certain as used for the vendor provider side.

Speaker 1 (22:24):

Okay. Was there anything else that we haven't asked you that you think is important that we should know about operations? Why is this part of the financial aid office?

Speaker 2 (22:36):

I mean really, and truly when it comes to that it's financial aid support center. We historically, they they've always been like behind, I mean, there's always been a backlog of things to do. And a huge part of that is just the lack of automation, the lack of allowing it to sort of do some of that work for you. You know, everything is a manual thing. So anything we can do to help improve that, to where it's not just, you know, manual, that will be helpful. Yeah. I know from the financial aid application perspective, one of the things that I wish we would have part of it is ability to communicate with the customer through the app, through the portal, the financial aid portal, the way communication between, our staff and the customer right now, you know, it's a phone, it's a text message or as an email or something like that. So, you know, if you work it into the system, you know, you ideally, you could just stay in that one place and do what you need to do. Right. So that that'd be something I'd like to happen have happened.

Speaker 1 (24:02):
Right.

Speaker 2 (24:05):

I can't think of anything else? I can't think, I can't think of anything else.

Speaker 1 (24:15):

Okay. Are there different systems that financially uses to connect candidates to one or the other type of resources like vocational rehabilitation, veterans, uh, the veterans services or anything like that?

Speaker 2 (24:46):
Well, I mean, in most of our offices, we have veteran representatives. So if a customer needed that type of service, we could easily connect them to a staff person. But from a VR perspective, some offices are integrated. Some aren't. In those places where we are that connection is, is a lot smoother, a lot easier. And those places where we are, where we are not, then it requires a little bit, a little bit more effort to

connect a customer to that particular service. But there's no system that we're using to make those things happen.

Speaker 1 (25:30):

Is that because I know VR services, is not under the board's purview, right? They're under state purview.

New Speaker (25:41):

Speaker 2. That's correct.

New Speaker (25:42):

Speaker 1. It is the same thing with the veterans. Is that through the fixes veterans commission?

Speaker 2 (25:47):

Yes. They have their own leadership as well.

Speaker 1 (25:49):

Okay. And did they have their own systems or do they have access to the systems that....

Speaker 2 (25:55):

Our veterans have access to work in Texas, but Twist, I don't think our veterans have access to Twist, VR. They, are totally separate and have their own systems that they use. The only system I think, collectively that we would use. And this is something relatively new is, Appointee. Since the pandemic we've been, you know, scheduling appointments using, Appointee and we have been incorporating those types of services into the system.

Speaker 1 (26:34):

That's good. And I don't think we knew that previously, Isabel, we do know that Appointee system?

Speaker 4 (26:44):

Most of the time we've heard it's been well received. Some people have had some glitches, but how are you feeling about that with your team?

Speaker 2 (26:51):

Well, currently the current version of Appointee is meeting our needs, but there's a whole lot more, we want out of it. Right. And so we're going to be migrating here in the next three months, starting like now to July. I think, the implementation plan is like July 1st, second week of July think. The migration plan. So, but we're going to be migrating to Appointee 10, which has a lot of enhanced features that that will allow us to do a little bit more than what we're doing now. Currently Appointee, there's very limited reporting. And so the new version of it is going to have a lot more reporting capabilities for us. Then there's a few other things that we want out of Appointee. I think the biggest thing

Speaker 4 (27:47):

Are these reports like unifying everybody. Is that what it is?

Speaker 2 (27:52):

Well, it's, it's being able to. So right now you have to do things on an office by office, right? Each end of the office, we have 28 offices. So someone got to do 28 different things to get a collective report, whereas in a new world, we'll be able to do that all, at one time. So currently we primarily use Teams as, as the platform to conduct virtual meetings with, with our customers and we to a limited degree. And we had a little pilot where Zoom made a few licenses available and we allowed a few offices to use it and the customer experience and the staff experience was so much better, from the folks who use Zoom versus the folks who use Teams.

Speaker 2 (29:00):

And so that's the feedback that, that we received and, I'm not certain if we are going into Zoom direction, but it'd probably be beneficial from a customer experience perspective.

New Speaker (29:22):
Speaker 1. Very good, important information would be better than Microsoft teams?

New Speaker (29:30):
Speaker 2. Right? Customers are able to schedule, but we're not doing as many virtual visits. Everything is still not everything, but a lot of is still over the phone. And the staff tend to believe it's because of Teams, customers, aren't familiar with Teams. It, they take too much teams, don't have a phone number, that you can dial into and so on and so forth. So we feel like can increase that virtual experience...

Speaker 1 (30:00):

Yeah. And I know with like Zoom, you can, I can do it on my phone. Like, I've attended a couple of our staff meetings with the Zoom app on my phone while I've been driving. And, so you know, somebody who does everything through their cell phone, that would probably be helpful for them. They could just sit there and, you know, hold the phone up for their base and talk to that person if there was that capabilities. Okay. Perfect. Well, that is very, very helpful and told you, we wouldn't take the entire hour. So thank you. I appreciate all of your help today. You have a great day.

Speaker 2 (30:35):
Well, look forward to when we can see you guys in person again. Yeah.

Speaker 1 (30:38):
Yes, exactly. I have a great one. You too. Take care.

Appendix II
Workforce Solutions Basic Service Guidelines & Job Descriptions

I.   Standard

Good customer service begins by first listening to the customer describe what she wants and then providing information that helps her understand how Workforce Solutions can help meet her needs and expectations.
(Measured by the survey, monitoring)

Basic services are available to all resident customers. Workforce Solutions is committed to allowing each resident customer to work alone or with career office staff, and to access the basic services, whether it is information or direct services, she wants and needs in order to get a good job or keep a good job.
(Measured by the entered employments and direct placements)

II.   Background

Workforce Solutions provides services for residents that fall into three categories based on the level of resources required to provide those services-***basic services, expanded services and financial aid***. Every service provided by Workforce Solutions fits into one of these three categories-every service. The first level of services, **basic services**, does not require a great deal of staff assistance for each customer. We allow customers to access basic services and use available resources on a self-serve basis as often as they like. Customers have a choice on where, when and how they use basic services. All resident customers who 'touch' Workforce Solutions receive a basic service, therefore the total resources used to provide basic services may be significant but are spread over a large number of customers. In other words, the cost per customer to provide basic services is very low.

Basic services are informational in nature. For example, Workforce Solutions staff provide labor market information (LMI), a basic service, to any customer seeking a job who gives us information about her job skills and experience, and the type of work she desires. When we provide a customer with assistance and information on available jobs that match the customer's skills, we are providing her with LMI, a basic service.

All career office staff are expected to provide good customer service including the basic informational services. Staff assisted basic services require office personnel to have good listening skills, complete knowledge of services available through Workforce Solutions and the ability to quickly assess how Workforce Solutions can meet each customer's stated request or need. A critical step in providing quality basic services is telling each customer about the next step in the service process. Staff must never leave a customer wondering what will happen next.

The next step will not be the same for each customer as each person has a unique set of employment needs.

III.   Description of Basic Services

Basic services are available to any resident who wants or needs these services. They may be provided electronically or by staff. Basic services are designed to help residents get a job, keep a job, or get a better job.   Basic Services are the following:

- **Job Openings/Listings**

- **Placement Services**

- **Employment and Career Information**

- **Computer Access**

  ✓ Internet Job Search

  ✓ Computerized job search software tutorials

  ✓ E-mail

  ✓ Resume Preparation

- **Job Search Assistance (referral to job openings, FAX, Telephone)**

- **Labor Market Information**

- **Information on support services for working families including information on available and affordable child care**

- **Job Search Seminars**
  ✓ Resume tips
  ✓ Interviewing tips

Recruiting customers to offer Workforce Solutions job search assistance - Workforce Solutions staff often contact customers required to use Workforce Solutions in order to get or maintain government benefits. We contact TANF applicants or recipients, some Food Stamp recipients, Unemployment Insurance recipients and some customers who may be eligible to receive TAA benefits. Special efforts are made to recruit youth who are about to graduate from high school and are beginning to make career decisions. Workforce Solutions makes special efforts to recruit youth in the foster children program by working with schools and government agencies. We contact other groups of customers as well. Initiating contact to offer Workforce Solutions services is a Basic Service.

Work Application and Addendum - Providing information and gathering information from the customer, on paper or electronically, is a basic service. Keeping the information current is also a basic service. The Work application or Addendum provides the most basic information about the work life of Workforce Solutions customer. The information is used to match the customer with job openings. It is also helpful in identifying customers who may

benefit from a series of services or financial aid from Workforce Solutions. All customers directed to Workforce Solutions for help in job search must be offered a work application.

IV. Key steps in the Service Process

The following principles apply to providing Basic Services to customers.

1. The customer, alone or with the help of Workforce Solutions staff, determines what services she wants and needs.

2. <u>All staff must be able to provide basic services.</u> Greeters, Resource Specialists, and Employment Counselors are primarily responsible for providing basic services to customers. Personal Services Representatives provide many of the basic information services to customers who are also receiving more intensive services. Financial Aid Specialists, Testing and Assessment Specialists, and Seminar Facilitators deliver basic services as well.

3. Management is responsible for assuring quality basic services are delivered to all customers. Managers may do this by closely supervising the service delivery process and by directly serving customers.

4. Each customer may choose from an array of Workforce Solutions services to help meet her individual employment goals. As customers move through our system, each step of the service process must build on the step before it with some **value added**. It is the responsibility of Workforce Solutions staff to assure the customer is always aware of her next step in the process.

Steps in the Service Process – Basic Services

1. ***<u>Greeting a customer as she enters the office</u> -*** A staff member **wearing Workforce Solutions nametag** will greet each customer by asking, "How may I help you?" The staff member acting as a "greeter" always listens to the customer's request. All customers with specific requests will have those requests addressed <u>before</u> referral to, or suggestion of, another service. If a knowledgeable staff member is not immediately available to discuss or accommodate the customer's request, any staff member must be able to provide alternatives.

   For example, Mary Smith enters the office and tells the greeter she would like Workforce Solutions to help pay her tuition to go to school. Ms. Smith should be immediately directed to a staff person who can explain Workforce Solutions requirements for providing financial aid including seeking non-Workforce Solutions sources of financial aid. Staff will help Ms. Smith determine whether to pursue her request for financial aid from Workforce Solutions by gathering more information about the customer's financial status and job skills. Ms. Smith may discuss other avenues for financial aid with the Financial Aid Specialist or Ms. Smith may decide to attempt a work search using her

current skills. Once Ms. Smith makes this decision, Ms. Smith will be asked to complete any paper work necessary to begin her chosen service path. The next step is for the customer to speak to any one of the following staff persons:

- Employment Counselor, Personal Services Representative, Financial Aid Specialist, Testing and Assessment Specialist, or the Resource Specialist. When Ms. Smith leaves our offices, she should understand the help she can expect from Workforce Solutions on her next visit and what, if any, information we will need from her (In other words, the customer must understand the next step).

The Greeter will listen carefully to what the customer says when the customer is unsure of the services offered at Workforce Solutions or which service will best address her needs. The Greeter will then make suggestions about how Workforce Solutions may be of help. The Greeter may suggest the customer would likely benefit by a conversation with an Employment Counselor. The customer may want to take information on Workforce Solutions home to read or she may choose to use the resource library. A conversation or appointment with a Financial Aid Specialist may address the customer's request. The Greeter is not expected to provide most of the services but she is expected to appropriately direct the customer to staff who can provide the service.

All customers must be offered the handout entitled "Workforce Solutions Services" and an office monthly activity calendar. A menu of services listing the same services as those on the handout must be posted in easy view of all customers entering the office. The printed material allows the customer to review, at her leisure, all the choices available to her.

Note: – *Section VII.A. Information Resources for Staff - Technical Assistance Guide*, in this standard, provides a technical assistance guide to the service process. It describes the staff person most likely to provide services requested by resident customers. The guide is intended to help all staff, but especially new personnel, work with customers correctly after greeting them.

2. **<u>Orientations.</u>** Some customers come to the office in response to a recruitment letter from Workforce Solutions inviting them to use our services. Some also come as the result of a referral from another organization <u>directing</u> them to Workforce Solutions. Many of these customers receive information about Workforce Solutions services in an orientation that addresses the customer's responsibilities. (See *Information Resources for Staff Section VII. H. Orientation Scripts* and *VII. I. Recruitment Letters*).

   Board staff encourages Workforce Solutions offices to provide individual customer orientations whenever possible. A customer must be allowed to receive orientation information one-on-one from Workforce Solutions staff if she comes into the office during a time when a group orientation is not scheduled. Customers will never be asked to return on another day to receive information in a group.

All orientations emphasize how to make the most of career office resources/services to get a job, keep a job, or get a better job. The orientations may include the two-minute video/CD developed by Gilbreath entitled "Workers in SUPPLY Jobs in DEMAND". The video/CD quickly introduces customers to Workforce Solutions services in an entertaining manner. It may not be effective when there is not a large screen for viewing and the group is large.

Some customers may have a referral form or letter from a government agency.

✓ The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) requires TANF recipients and many Food Stamp recipients to look for work through Workforce Solutions in order to maintain benefits.

✓ Some Unemployment Insurance (UI) recipients are identified through the Profiling System as "likely to exhaust UI benefits before finding work". These customers may be required to contact Workforce Solutions for work search assistance in order to continue receiving UI benefits.

✓ Some ex-offenders are referred to Workforce Solutions through the Criminal Justice system.

✓ Customers notified that they may be able to receive benefits under TAA are directed to Workforce Solutions for more information about those benefits.

The content of the recruitment letters sent by Workforce Solutions and the orientations provided to customers responding to these letters is included in this Standard under Section *VII.H and VII.I. Information Resources for Staff – Orientation Scripts and Recruitment Letters*. All orientations and recruitment letters must follow the appropriate samples in this Standard. Staff may not change the content of the recruitment letters or the orientation.

As with all customers, people who come to Workforce Solutions in response to a recruitment letter or referral from a government agency will have their specific request for service addressed before staff begins to recommend additional or alternate services. Customers attend a group or individual orientation that informs the customer of Workforce Solutions services. The orientation also details the customer's responsibility in looking for work, or working, in order to obtain or maintain a government benefit. A brochure titled "Work Orientation" is given to the customer to take home. Each customer speaks to an Employment Counselor about her individual job search. Necessary HHSC forms are stamped for customers applying for TANF benefits. Information indicating that the customer responded to the profiling letter is data entered into WorkInTexas.com. TAA forms are completed. Information is data entered into TWIST if customers are directed to Workforce Solutions to fulfill a requirement of HHSC; TWIST records will be created when ex-offenders are directed to Workforce Solutions from the Criminal Justice System.

After customers view the orientation video/CD, staff will provide a short explanation of Workforce Solutions services and customer responsibilities for receiving various government benefits.

- No orientation will exceed 30 minutes in length.

- Individual orientations are preferable. Offices that schedule group orientation must offer them daily at the same time each day.

- Workforce Solutions will not require customers to remain in a group for additional services following the orientation. A customer will be asked to speak individually to an Employment Counselor about her job search as part of the orientation. This interview must take place very quickly after the group orientation to avoid long customer waits. Customers will be offered the opportunity to use office resources or complete work applications during the short wait to see Workforce Solutions staff member.

- An Employment Counselor will interview each customer at the conclusion of a group orientation to quickly assess whether she is ready to look for work and to work. The Employment Counselor will proceed to help with completion of the work application and addendum if necessary. If the customer is work ready, the Counselor will provide job referrals, give interviewing tips or career advice, and suggest the next step in receiving helpful services from Workforce Solutions or others. If the customer is not ready to work or look for work, the Employment Counselor will refer her to another specialist on the staff, usually a Personal Service Representation or Financial Aid Specialist. The customer will not have fulfilled a requirement to look for work with Workforce Solutions until she has spoken to an Employment Counselor and knows the next step for her.

- No customer will be required to attend a group orientation more than once in a twelve-month period.

- A customer referred by HHSC more than once in 12 months will be seen by a staff member who provides the customer the brochure "Work Orientation" used in all orientations. The staff member asks the customer to sign the Employment Plan portion of the brochure again. The staff member must discuss the customer's current work preferences and update information relevant to the work search. If the customer is work ready, staff will provide help with her job search during the visit. Staff explain to the customer the next step in working with Workforce Solutions, agree on a day the customer will return to the office, and stamp the HHSC form. The customer will not be required to attend another group or scripted orientation.

- A customer referred by HHSC who is under penalty or is a conditional TANF applicant will be asked to work with a Personal Service Representative. The PSR will be responsible for organizing the customer's work search or other work activities.

- Group orientations are appropriate for customers who require information about the <u>customer</u> responsibilities necessary to maintain benefits provided outside of Workforce Solutions. Orientations introducing Workforce Solutions services to customers who have no responsibility to allow Workforce Solutions to help them should not regularly be provided in a group. Customers may be offered an orientation in a group setting when a group orientation benefits the customer. However, customers should never be required to attend a group orientation before they can received services. Any customer who prefers to receive information about Workforce Solutions services from a staff member must be given that information at the time that it is requested.

3. ***<u>First Assessment - Job Skills and Employment Goals; The Work Application.</u>*** – The work application lists a customer's work skills, work experience, salary history, educational history and work goals. Most customers will benefit from having a work application in WorkInTexas.com because the application will match to suitable jobs in the database. The application also allows Workforce Solutions to contact the customer about current and future job opportunities and to help staff identify when a customer may need other helpful services. The work application must be available for data entry into WorkInTexas.com before screening and directing a candidate to an employer with a job posting in Workforce Solutions database. The work application **must** be updated when the customer's information or work requirements change.

Note: All customers who complete a work application are included in the Employment Service performance measures.

Employment Counselors and other staff members interviewing customers for work should always follow the three steps listed below

- Listen to what the customer tells us she wants and needs to get a job, keep a job or get a better job
- Provide professional advice when it is helpful and desired by the customer, and
- Help the customer get the services that she and the staff member have agreed will move her toward her employment goals

Some customers know exactly what they want in a job and what they need to land the job. Others need more help in making those decisions. Youth may particularly benefit from more probing questions and staff suggestions to determine the kind of career they want. They are likely to need more preparation before they are ready to enter the chosen career.

4. ***Completing the Paper Work Application or Addendum -*** The paper Work Application contains all of the information for entry into WorkInTexas.com as well as the information found on the Work Application Addendum. The addendum is used to collect the additional information when the work application is submitted electronically into WorkInTexas.com. (See *VII. C or D Information Resources for Staff, Work Application Addendum English/Spanish*)

   Almost every customer is eligible to be tagged as a WIA-Adult or Dislocated Worker, and a signed paper application or addendum is the only document needed for our records. The signed documents allow customer services to be underwritten by funds from the Workforce Investment Act. Basic and Expanded Services may also be underwritten by Wagner-Peyser. TANF, FSE&T, and RIO funds may be used to pay for these services for some customers. Each Career Office contractor will use a cost allocation plan to determine the amount of each funding stream used to pay for basic and expanded services. The funding source that pays for staff time and materials to provide these services is an internal matter not to be discussed with the customer, **ever**. A more detailed explanation of how to use the Paper Application or Addendum as proof of eligibility is in this Standard, *VI. E. Information Resources for Staff, Use of the Paper Work Application or Work Application Addendum*.

5. ***Second Assessment - Exploring the Work Search Process; The Work Search Assessment Desk Aid*** (see *VII. F. Information Resources for Staff, Work Search Assessment Desk Aid*) Workforce Solutions staff who provide assistance to resident customers must determine what kind of work search the customer has under way. The Work Search Assessment Desk Aid is intended to help guide a staff person's conversation with a customer to determine whether the customer has begun a job search, how the customer is looking for work and whether the search is showing positive results. This information, in conjunction with the work application and addendum, is used to help the staff and the customer determine which of Workforce Solutions services are most likely to result in a successful search.

   The desk aid must be used as a guide for discussions about work search techniques for all customers. The desk aid is not to be used as a form to be completed by the customer. It may be transmitted electronically and reproduced. It may be found on Workforce Solutions web site at: http://wrksolutions.com attached to this Standard.

   Any time staff provide individual work search services to a customer, they must also give the customer good feedback on her job search. Staff should discuss with the customer her progress, and problems related to her job search and any feed back she has received from employers.

6. ***The Next Step in the Service Process for Each Customer*** – From the preceding steps, staff can make a determination about which services best suit each resident customer's work search needs and desire for help. (The next step)

   The information gathered may lead to additional basic services, expanded services, or the need to apply for financial aid. The process of gathering information about each customer's progress toward a successful work search is ongoing. The customer may ask for more

intensive services as problems in finding work become more apparent. Workforce Solutions staff may suggest additional services would be helpful.

When the Employment Counselor determines that a customer is ready to work but the most useful service to help the customer land a job is an expanded services, the Counselor should consider whether a continuing series of expanded services is likely to benefit the customer. An example of a customer likely to benefit from a series of expanded services follows: *The Counselor has suggested a customer change her career path because her previous work is no longer in demand. Providing this information, how to use the customer's transferable skills to move into an occupation and industry with a demand for workers with her skills, is an expanded service. The Employment Counselor may believe the customer would continue to benefit by receiving a group of services on a continuing basis until the customer is satisfied with a new career path, a direction for finding employment in the new career, and an eventual offer of employment in the new field.* The customer agrees that she would like to stay in close contact with the Employment Counselor as she receives a series of Workforce Solutions services until she has found satisfactory work. This customer would be tracked in TWIST under one of the funding streams available to pay for her services. Subsequent steps in the service process for these customers are found in the Expanded Services Standard.

A customer, who prefers not to commit to a continuing relationship with the counselor but prefers to ask for additional help if and when she feels she would benefit, will be tracked in WorkInTexas.com. Customers who are not ready to work or to look for work and need more intensive services to help them overcome barriers before beginning job interviews will be referred by the Employment Counselor (EC) to the appropriate staff specialist for help.

Note: All customers who are data entered into TWIST/Program Detail with a service under that Program funding source are included in performance measures for that funding source.

A customer, who is required to look for work through Workforce Solutions in order to receive TANF cash benefits or Food Stamps, or an ex-felon referred by from the Texas criminal justice system, is assessed in the same way as other customers. These customers who are work ready may or may not choose to receive an ongoing series of basic and expanded services. These customers are tracked in TWIST regardless of the level of services received.

The next step for customers coming to Workforce Solutions because they have applied for TANF Cash Assistance. To be certified to receive TANF benefits, an applicant must have an HHSC referral form stamped at Workforce Solutions (HHSC form 2588). The stamped form notifies HHSC that the customer applied for work at Workforce Solutions. When an Employment Counselor determines the customer is ready to look for work without help from another WorkSource specialist, the counselor will provide the customer referrals to open job opportunities, advice about how and where to look for work, and other helpful job search services provided by Workforce Solutions. The counselor and the customer agree on a "next step" and the customer is scheduled for another appointment as needed.. The Employment Counselor will then stamp the HHSC form 2588 and return it to the customer. The counselor must write in the appointment time on the bottom of Workforce Solutions orientation

brochure and make sure the customer understands when she is to return and for what purpose. The Employment Counselor will ensure that the customer has signed the office copy of the Family Service Plan agreement found in the brochure titled Facts on TANF and will remove that page for placement into the customer's physical file. If the customer has a signed paper Work Application or a signed addendum, place in them the physical file. All of the paperwork is given to the Program Tracking Specialist to data enter in the appropriate MIS and/or include in the physical file. (*See Attachments 6. Program Tracking Specialist Job Description*)

The Employment Counselor may determine the customer is not yet ready to look for work or to work. She will refer the customer to Workforce Solutions staff specialist who can address the problems that keep the customer from finding or keeping a good job. Usually a Financial Aid Specialist or a Personal Service Representative can help the customer become work ready. The customer may be given an appointment to return to see the specialist or she may be able to speak to the specialist immediately. The last staff person to see the customer on the day of orientation will provide or review the appointment time for the customer's next visit.

For example, Sally Smith came to Workforce Solutions because she was told at HHSC to do so. Ms. Smith has barriers that will prevent her beginning job search. After a short consultation directly following the orientation, the Employment Counselor refers Ms. Smith to a Personal Services Representative (PSR). The PSR talks to Ms. Smith and gives her an appointment for further services agreed to by both of them. The return appointment for Ms. Smith includes taking a TABE test and further discussion of possible training while looking for part time work. It is important to ensure that the customer understands the time of the next appointment, who she will see at that appointment, and what she can expect from the appointment. In this example, the PSR will stamp the HHSC Form 2588 for the customer and assure that all paper work is given to the Program Tracking Specialist.

V. Performance Measures Associated with this Standard

1. Workforce Solutions system must meet the standard set by the Workforce Board for the measure **Customers Who Entered Employment**.

2. Each office must meet the standard for **Direct Placements**.

3. Each office must provide Workforce Solutions **Customer Satisfaction Survey** to all customers entering the office during the second week of October, February, and June. The Survey must show a 70% response rate and no more than 30% of customers indicate that they are dissatisfied or only marginally satisfied.

4. If an office experiences a downward trend in **Customer Satisfaction** indicated by a decline of 5 percentage points or more from the initial survey results for two consecutive quarters, a corrective action plan will be prepared and implemented. For example, a corrective action plan would be necessary in the following instance. The office had a customer satisfaction rating of 90% on the first survey. The office rating is 83% on the

second survey, and 85% on the third. Two consecutive quarters are down 5 points or more from the initial survey. The plan will be approved by the contract representative and monitored by the H-GAC monitors.

5. Monitoring visits will determine an office's proficiency in providing basic services. A monitoring instrument following the process outlined in this standard is used to review the activities and outcomes of those responsible for primary delivery of basic services.

6. Greeters, Resource Specialists and Employment Counselors are the primary providers of basic services. Greeters in each office will have the same job description and performance expectations. The same is true for Resource Specialists and Employment Counselors. The job descriptions and performance expectations are found in attachments to this standard. Greeters, Resource Specialists, and Employment Counselors will have their individual job performance measured according to the performance expectations in the Standard. Individual monetary compensation including merit increases, as well as continued employment, will depend on that performance.

VI. Data entry and reporting requirements

1. **Work Application** – The Work Application is usually the first information to be data entered into Workforce Solutions database. The Work Application must be data entered into WorkInTexas.com for each resident customer who wants to receive staff assisted job matching services or expanded services - regardless of the funding stream(s) supporting the service. All staff assisted job referrals provided to a customer must be entered into WorkInTexas.com.

   The work application is maintained in the electronic database. A signed paper Work Application serves the same purpose as the Work Application Addendum. All of the information collected on the Addendum is included on the paper Work Application in addition to the information data entered into WorkInTexas.com.

   It is not necessary for a customer to complete and sign the paper application, however when she does, it should be filed alphabetically in the office file for Work Application Addendum of customers who are not receiving expanded services tracked in TWIST. It will be kept for 12 months unless moved to a separate file for customers receiving expanded services tracked in TWIST. The Work Applications will be filed alphabetically by month allowing an easy method of purging files a month at a time at the 13th month.

2. Work Application Addendum – The Addendum is a short paper document that provides information helpful in determining what a customer wants and expects from Workforce Solutions. It also provides information necessary to determine a customer eligible for Expanded Services supported by WIA-Adult and WIA- Dislocated Worker funds.

   A customer will not have completed the addendum information if she completes her work application directly into WorkInTexas.com. When the customer and the WorkSource staff agree that a series of Basic and Expanded Services is best, the staff member working directly with the customer will ask that customer to complete and sign the one page Work

Application Addendum. File the signed form alphabetically in the office file for customers receiving Expanded Service. In some cases, staff will complete additional information on the Work Application addendum out of customer's presence. The additional information includes required military draft registration information and evidence of dislocation when it is available. <u>Only paper documents not found in electronic files should be attached to the addendum. Staff should not print out copies of documents or information from TWIST or any other information system and place them in a physical file.</u>

Staff offering a series of Expanded Services to a customer with an application in WorkInTexas.com may not know whether the addendum information was collected as part of the new paper application on an earlier visit. When it is more convenient for the customer (i.e., staff should not make a customer wait while they search files for a previously completed Addendum), staff will ask the customer to complete and sign the short form – Work Application Addendum. It will be placed in the addendum file for customers receiving Expanded Service. (*See VII.E. "Use of the Addendum to determine when services may be funded by WIA Adult and WIA* Dislocated *Worker")*

Filing the Work Application and Application Addendum in a separate file for customers who receive expanded services allows monitors to easily review this alphabetical file and determine if eligibility was properly documented. The customer will not be required to provide further proof of age or citizenship unless an Application for Financial Aid is submitted at which time additional information will be obtained from the customer, some of which will be recorded in TWIST.

When a customer is receiving financial aid from Workforce Solutions, or when her hours of cooperation are tracked, she will have an individual file folder. The paper addendum will be included in this folder.

3. **Work Search Assessment Desk Aid** *(See VII.F.*)**– Determining the Next Step**

The Desk Aid is intended to help guide a staff person's conversation with a customer to determine whether the customer has begun a job search and, if so, whether the search is producing the desired results. It is not a form to be completed by either staff or customers. It must be used in conjunction with the Work Application information listing job skills, experience, salary history, and work goals. The staff and customer together determine the most likely reasons the customer has not yet found work. The Desk Aid provides a list of service options useful to staff who is suggesting the next step to the customer. The desk aid informs staff whether the next service falls is a basic service or expanded service. If the Employment Counselor believes the customer is not ready to work or to look for work, the customer is offered the services of a staff specialist to help her become work ready. The desk aid may be transmitted electronically and reproduced. It may be found on Workforce Solutions web site at: http://www.wrksolutions.com attached to this Standard as VII Information Resources for Staff, F.

When a customer is not work ready and is receiving help from a Personal Service Representative or when a work ready customer and the Employment Counselor agree to proceed with a continuing series of expanded and basic services the following records are entered:

- Complete the Program Detail in TWIST to track the customer's services under one or more of Workforce Solutions funding sources. (*See Information Resources for Staff Section VII.K. 1-6 TWIST Data Entry Aid*).

- *TWIST/Service Tracking* – Enter into TWIST/Program Detail/Service Tracking at least one service for customers who are receiving a series of expanded services and who want to continue working closely with Workforce Solutions counselors. Select a Program Type (WIA, Choices, FSE&T, RIO, TAA).

- Enter into WorkInTexas.com staff assisted job referrals provided. It is not necessary to enter subsequent services into both systems. The information posted in one system may be viewed from the other. It is not necessary to reference services entered in WorkInTexas.com in the counselor notes.

- The Employment Counselor or Personal Service Representative will enter a short statement into the counselor notes when the customer wants a series of expanded services. The Counselor notes will begin with the date and name of the counselor. The short statement in the counselor notes will indicate what services are planned and the desired result.

  The following is an example of a statement that might be found in a counselor note for a work ready customer. "*Sally Brown would like to use skills gained in previous jobs to begin to look for work as a technical writer in the oil industry. While continuing to search for a job, she will participate in workshops to develop a new resume, learn more about how her skills might apply to other occupations and industries and possibly take an interest-inventory test. Should she determine that this course of action is not producing the desired results, we will discuss another direction.*" It is not necessary to enter additional information into the counselor notes unless there is a change in direction of the job search. Services provided during Workforce Solutions association with the customer will be entered into TWIST services or WorkInTexas.com.

The services we provide to TANF applicants/ recipients, Food Stamp recipients required to search for work at Workforce Solutions, and ex-felons requiring RIO services are all tracked under TWIST Program Detail, regardless of the level of service received. All of the records noted in the bullet points above are necessary when tracking the services provided to these customers in TWIST except the counselor note. The counselor note is only required for work ready customers receiving a series of expanded services or customers working with a Personal Service Representative to overcome barriers to work.

Customers who's services are funded by TANF, FSE&T, or RIO can almost always have the expanded services they receive tracked under WIA. (*See Information Resources for Staff Section VII.E., Use of the Addendum to determine when services may be funded by WIA Adult and WIA Dislocated Worker*)

4. **Recording Response from Customers Recruited through the Worker Profiling System** (See *VII. Information Resources for Staff G. "Instructions for the Worker Profiling Data System*)

   Customers receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits may respond in person, by telephone, or email to letters sent to them through the Worker Profiling system. Responses are recorded in WorkInTexas.com. The Worker Profiling System assigns a score to most Unemployment Insurance benefit recipients when the customer receives her first UI payment. It is believed that the higher the score, the more likely the customer is to exhaust her UI benefits before finding work. Workforce Solutions staff should offer every customer responding to these letters help in finding work.

   The Worker Profiling recruitment letter states that if the customer does not respond to the letter, she may loose her UI benefits. Workforce Solutions staff must document in WorkInTexas.com when the customer responds. If this information is not entered, it will negatively affect the customer's UI benefits. (See *VII. Information Resources for Staff G. "Instructions for the Worker Profiling Data System*" for *complete data entry instructions for issuing the letter and posting the attendance. Numbers 21 – 23 indicate how to data enter attendance.*)

5. **Recording Orientation Attendance for Customers Who Have Applied for TANF Benefits, TANF Recipients, Food Stamp Recipients recruited to Workforce Solutions, Ex-offenders** (*see Information Resources for Staff VII. K.3-6. Adding Customers to TWIST – Program Detail*)

   - All of the information collected at individual or group orientations will be given to a Program Tracking Specialist to data enter or maintain in an individual's physical file folder. Information data entered into any MIS should not be duplicated in the paper file. Information from the orientation will likely include:

     1. Work application or application update - Recorded in WorkInTexas.com
     2. Job referrals - Recorded in WorkInTexas.com
     3. Information to create a TANF Applicant, Choices, Food Stamp E&T or RIO Record – Recorded in TWIST Program Detail
     4. Orientation Attendance – Recorded in TWIST – Services – Orientation (30)
     5. Other services – Recorded in TWIST or WorkInTexas.com
     6. Next appointment date – Recorded in the TWIST customer record under "Initial Appointment Date"
     7. Signed Family Employment/Employment Plan – Recorded in Paper File. The plan is taken from the office copy of the agreement in brochure titled "Work Orientation".

8. Signed Paper Work Application or Work Application Addendum – Recorded in Paper File

- The work application, or application update, and any services or job referrals provided by the Employment Counselor will be data entered into WorkInTexas.com. The Program Tracking Specialist may enter this information at the same time that she creates a Program Detail record TWIST. When the customer already has a work application in the database, the Employment Counselor will update the application information and enter services and job referrals into WorkInTexas.com while she is with the customer.

- When the customer has an HHSC form 2588 the Employment Counselor will stamp the form 2588 and return it to the customer unless the customer is to see another staff person (usually a Financial Aid Specialist or PSR) before leaving. The last staff person to help the customer on the day of orientation will stamp the form 2588 and ensure the customer knows the date of her next appointment.

- The last staff person to provide services to the customer on the day she comes to an orientation will ensure that all of the above information is given to the Program Tracking Specialist for data entry into the appropriate MIS or placement in the file folder. The Family Employment Plan agreement from the TANF Orientation brochure will be signed each time that the customer is referred by HHSC- as a TANF applicant whether she attended a group or individual orientation. Customers may have a signed Work Application or Addendum.

Any customer referred by another agency to the same Workforce Solutions orientation more than once during a 12-month period will be seen individually. She will not be required to attend a group orientation again. Her need for particular WorkSource services will be reevaluated by the appropriate staff person after a review of her current situation. She will receive and sign another office copy of the brochure reminding her of the agreement with the Family Employment Plan/Employment Plan and the penalties of non-cooperation. A Program Tracking Specialist will enter into TWITH the customer attended another orientation. The new signed agreement will be placed in the customer's individual folder in front of the previous signed agreement page.

VII. Information Resources for Staff

A. Technical Assistance Guide – Directing Resident Customers to the Services Requested
B. Workforce Solutions Work Application - Spanish
C. Work Application Addendum – English
D. Work Application Addendum - Spanish
E. How to use the Addendum for charging services to WIA Adult or Dislocated Worker

F. Work Search Assessment Desk Aid – Determining the Next Step

G. Instructions for the Worker Profiling Data System

H. Orientation Scripts

   1. Profiling – Serving customers who respond to a letter

   2. A. TANF Applicants – Power Point

   2. B. TANF Applicants – Staff Guide

   3. Food Stamp Recipients

   4. Ex-Offenders

I. Recruitment Letters

   1. Invitation to customers receiving Food Stamps who are required to participate to continue receiving food stamps.

   2. Letter to customers identified through the State's Worker Profiling system

   3. Invitation to customers who are receiving TANF but are exempt from a requirement to work with Workforce Solutions to receive TANF benefits

   4. Letter to TANF customers who are not cooperating and may lose benefits

   5. Letter to TANF customers currently receiving cash benefits who have never been to Workforce Solutions office

     a. Letter Instructions

   6. Letter to TANF customers close to end of 4 week allowed work search activity.

   7.A. Follow up letter for working TANF customers

   7 B. Follow up telephone call for working TANF customers

J. Survey

K. TWIST Data Entry Aid

   1. Adding a customer to TWIST WIA Adult Fund

   2. Adding a customer to TWIST WIA Dislocated Worker Fund

   3. Adding a customer to TWIST TANF Applicant Fund

   4. Adding a customer to TWIST Choices Fund

   5. Adding a customer to TWIST Food Stamp E&T Fund

   6. Adding a customer to TWIST RIO Fund

   7. Changing a TANF Applicant to Choices

L. Documents Required in a Customer Paper File

Attachments:

1. Greeter Job Description and Performance Expectations
2. Greeter Customer Service Observation Form
3. Resource Specialist Job Description and Performance Expectations
4. Resource Specialist Customer Service and Knowledge of Resources Observation Form
5. Employment Counselor Job Description

6. Employment Counselor Customer Service Observation Form
7. Workforce Solutions Quality of Referrals Rating
7.a. Workforce Solutions Quality of Referrals Rating in Excel
8. Program Tracking Specialist Job Description

GREETER

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Greeter is usually the first, and sometimes the only, contact a customer has with Workforce Solutions. The Greeter is the face of Workforce Solutions to many of our customers. She/He welcomes people as they enter the office. She/He listens to understand what each individual wants from us. The Greeter has the first responsibility to get every customer to the resource or staff member who can help that person.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The individual in this position reports to _____ (line supervisor)

RELATIONSHIPS

A Greeter interacts with almost every customer who comes into a Workforce Solutions office. The Greeter works with all staff in a career office.

QUALIFICATIONS

- High school diploma or GED and two years of college coursework OR
  - ✓ High school diploma or GED and two years of customer service where skills learned are transferable to a Greeter position at Workforce Solutions OR
    - – Each 6 months of experience substitutes for 15 semester hours of college coursework
  - ✓ Two years of experience working at Workforce Solutions and a recommendation from current or most recent supervisor

- Has knowledge of the workplace, jobs, and requirements for entry into those jobs.
- Is able to listen to customers, analyze expressed needs and use good judgment in suggesting how and who at Workforce Solutions can help
- Uses tact, diplomacy, and persistence in providing suggestions to customers
- Is friendly, courteous and presents herself/himself as a professional
- Is able to deal patiently with problems, complaints – remain courteous when dealing with difficult and angry customers
- Is able to handle effectively situations where a large number of customers want her/his attention at the same time.
- Is flexible and adaptable

- Works well in teams and with resident customers and other staff (flexible, congenial and adaptable)
- Has good communication skills including listening and speaking clearly
- Is able to communicate orally and in writing at a business level

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provides a friendly greeting and suggests the best route for a customer to get desired service based on a short conversation with each customer
- Understands entire office operation sufficiently to direct customers appropriately
- May summarize Workforce Solutions services to customers who ask what we do
- Offers work application and encourages it's completion when appropriate
- May check for previous work registration or other service and updates MIS systems
- Provides information about community resources
- May provide job search assistance including direct referral to jobs in Workforce Solutions database
- Records those referrals properly
- Assures that needed materials are available to the public near the office entry

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

1. Provides good customer service (Use the Greeter Customer Service Observation Form to track this performance expectation)
➢ We measure this performance expectation by the supervisor's recorded observation of at least four (4) customer interactions a month noting the following for each observation:
   - The Greeter's appearance, demeanor and actions communicate to Workforce Solutions customers that we are a professional organization able to help residents get a job, keep a job, or get a better job.
   - The Greeter engages each customer in a friendly manner. The Greeter listens to customers' requests for service or information and makes quick assessments of who and what can help meet the requests.
   - The Greeter communicates correctly and clearly how Workforce Solutions can help. The Greeter tells the customer the next step for that customer.

Mark each of the three (3) areas above as acceptable, or not acceptable, during each of four (4) monthly customer interactions. For example, four observations of a WDS I must have 9 of 12 items marked acceptable to meet the 75% proficient lever of performance for that month.

Performance expectations follow:

* Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) I Proficient = 75% to 80% of recorded supervisor areas of observation are rated acceptable

* WDS II = 81% to 85%
* WDS III = 86% to 90%
* WDS IV = 91% to 95%

✓ Outstanding – Exceeds the above performance expectation for the staff members classification
✓ Unacceptable – Does not meet the above performance expectation for the staff members classification

2. Administers the Work Application correctly by offering it when appropriate, explaining how a good application will help the customer match with jobs, and telling the customer who in the office can help her/him to complete it.

➢ We measure this performance expectation by the supervisor's recorded observation of the Greeter at least four (4) times a month.
   * Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) I Proficient = 85% to 90% of recorded supervisor observations are rated acceptable
   * WDS II = 90% to 95%
   * WDS III = 92% to 97%
   * WDS IV = 94% to 98%

   ✓ Outstanding – Exceeds the above performance expectation for the staff members classification
   ✓ Unacceptable – Does not meet the above performance expectation for the staff members classification

3. Materials and supplies are available and neatly arranged. (Use the Greeter Customer Service Observation Form to track this performance expectation)

➢ We measure this performance expectation by the supervisor's recorded observation of the office resource area at least four (4) times a month.
   * Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) I Proficient = 85% to 90% of recorded supervisor observations are rated acceptable
   * WDS II = 90% to 95%
   * WDS III = 92% to 97%
   * WDS IV = 94% to 98%

   ✓ Outstanding – Exceeds the above performance expectation for the staff members classification
   ✓ Unacceptable – Does not meet the above performance expectation for the staff members classification

Performance Expectations for Greeters with at least two years experience as a Greeter who have scored 100% on the last two month's observations

Tenured staff that consistently performs at a high level may not need supervisory observations as frequently as others may. When an employee has

- two years experience as a Workforce Solutions Greeter and
- has scored 100% on the last two months observations,

the supervisor may decide to record only one customer interaction each quarter. Observations once a quarter will continue unless the Greeter falls below the outstanding level on her/his annual review. If the tenured Greeter does not rate as Outstanding on the annual review, the supervisor will resume recording four (4) observations a month. If, at any time during the review period, the Greeter's performance is unacceptable, the supervisor will begin to record four (4) observations each month.

Overall Performance Rating

Outstanding – Rated outstanding on the customer service performance expectations and not unacceptable on the others

Proficient – Not rated either Outstanding or Unacceptable

Unacceptable – Rated unacceptable in any one of the three performance expectations.

RESOURCE SPECIALIST

POSITION DESCRIPTION

A Resource Specialist introduces residents to Workforce Solutions self help resources. She/He helps residents use Workforce Solutions computers and other resources. She/He may suggest talking to another Workforce Solutions staff member, or using staff assisted resources such as workshops, to help the customer get a job, keep a job or get a better job.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The individual in this position reports to _____ (line supervisor)

RELATIONSHIPS

A Resource Specialist works primarily with residents using Workforce Solutions Resource Room. Inside Workforce Solutions, a Resource Specialist works with all staff in a career office, but particularly Employment Counselors, Personal Service Representatives, and Financial Aid Specialists.

QUALIFICATIONS

- High school diploma or GED and two years of college coursework OR
    - ✓ High school diploma or GED and two years of customer service or contact with people in a business environment where skills learned are transferable to a resource specialist position at Workforce Solutions OR
        - – Each 6 months of experience substitutes for 15 semester hours of college coursework
    - ✓ Two years of experience working at Workforce Solutions and a recommendation from current or most recent supervisor

- Has knowledge of the workplace, jobs, and requirements for entry into those jobs.
- Is able to listen to customers, analyze expressed needs and use good judgment in suggesting solutions or next steps.
- Uses tact, diplomacy, and persistence in providing suggestions to customers
- Is friendly, courteous and presents herself/himself as a professional
- Is able to deal patiently with problems, complaints – remain courteous when dealing with difficult and angry customers
- Has intermediate to advanced computer skills including knowledge of Microsoft Windows and Office; able to learn new software

- Able to provide instruction or guidance in computer operations and can provide technical assistance in software programs such as Microsoft Office and Windows.
- Can provide assistance in establishing internet e-mail accounts, browsing and searching the internet
- Can solve minor operational problems with equipment in the resource library such as personal computers, printers, faxes and copiers
- Has good problem solving skills
- Is able to multi-task
- Is flexible and adaptable
- Works well in teams and with resident customers and other staff (flexible, congenial and adaptable)
- Is able to communicate orally and in writing at a business level

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Helps customers to access basic self help services through effective use of the resource library
- Is thoroughly familiar with electronic, print and other resources in order to make helpful suggestions depending on the customer's individual needs and desires
- Is computer literate and has sufficient skills to help customers use electronic resources
- May critique a resume or letter of introduction or may refer to another staff member to provide that help
- Provides information about community resources
- Uses good judgment in suggesting when customers may benefit from individual help from career office staff or other job seeking resources
- May provide job search assistance including direct referral to jobs in Workforce Solutions database for qualified candidates
- Records those referrals properly
- Understands entire office operations sufficiently to direct customers appropriately
- May provide local labor market information - what companies and industries are in the area, what skills and experience local area employers prefer and require, what is the usual means of entry into those companies/industries, advice on how best apply
- Is knowledgeable of current local labor market information, including:
  - Employers and industries in the region and near a local office, including the largest employers and key industries
  - Skills, education and experience area employers require and prefer, including skills and experience needed for growth occupations in key industries
  - Usual means of entry into area companies, industries and occupations, including the area's key employers and industries, and how to apply for work there
  - Workforce Solutions's targeted industries and high-skill, high-growth occupations and detailed information about entry into these industries and occupations

- Provides appropriate and relevant labor market information to help a customer in her job search
- Is knowledgeable of and able to use information about transferable skills from one industry

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

1. Provides Good Customer Service

➢ This performance is measured by observation of at least four (4) customer interactions a month noting the following for each observation:

- Resource Specialist interacts with customers in a friendly manner, making eye contact, listening to customer requests, and offering help to customers who have not asked for help.

- Resource Specialist communicates clearly and accurately to the customer how Workforce Solutions can be of help. Suggests how the customer may benefit from help from career office staff or other resources. Directs customers appropriately contributing to satisfied customers and organized customer movement into and out of the resource area

- Monitors the equipment and supplies customers use in the resource area. Makes sure the equipment is working, and is clean. Helps customers use equipment such as fax, copier, scanner, and computer. Helps customers set up email accounts and passwords for use in sending resumes, using WorkInTexas, applying on line for jobs, other work related functions

The three (3) areas above are acceptable or not acceptable during each of four (4) monthly observations (see observation form). This equals 12 observed areas marked as acceptable, or not, during the month. Performance ratings follow:

* Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) I Proficient = 75% to 80% of recorded supervisor observations are rated acceptable
* WDS II = 81% to 85%
* WDS III = 86% to 90%
* WDS IV = 91% to 95%

- ✓ Outstanding – Exceeds the above performance expectation for the staff members classification
- ✓ Unacceptable – Does not meet the above performance expectation for the staff members classification

2. Is knowledgeable enough to help customers search for and apply for suitable work
➢ This performance is measured by observation of at least four (4) customer interactions a month noting the following for each observation:

- Resource Specialist helps the customer with her/his WorkInTexas application by explaining how a good application will help the customer match with jobs, and helping customers who need help in completing and using the application to match.
- Resource Specialist responds to customer requests by giving accurate helpful information including resume critiques and assistance when appropriate.
- Resource Specialist is sufficiently knowledgeable to provide labor market information, information about office resources, community resources, and use of resource room materials and equipment (The supervisor may measure this performance by observation of the Resource Specialist interacting with a customer or by questions from the supervisor or designated staff person concerning knowledge in the areas listed.)

The three (3) areas above are acceptable or not acceptable during each of four (4) monthly observations (see observation form). This equals 12 observed areas marked as acceptable, or not, during the month. Performance ratings follow:
   * Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) I Proficient = 75% to 80% of recorded supervisor observations are rated acceptable
   * WDS II = 81% to 85%
   * WDS III = 86% to 90%
   * WDS IV = 91% to 95%

   ✓ Outstanding – Exceeds the above performance expectation for the staff members classification
   ✓ Unacceptable – Does not meet the above performance expectation for the staff members classification

3. Records thorough up-to-date information in Workforce Solutions management information systems (Some Resource Specialists do not complete WIT applications for customers)

   A customer's work application must show thorough up-to-date information about the customers work history, skills, education and work requirements. The matching profile and the resume reflect the same information. A supervisor will select a sample of at least 2 work applications each month and rate the application as acceptable or not acceptable. It is preferable to use the records of the customers the supervisor observed receiving service from the Resource Specialist.

   * Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) I Proficient = 75% to 80% of records are thorough and up-to-date
   * WDS II = 81% to 85%

* WDS III = 86% to 90%
* WDS IV = 91% to 95%

- ✓ Outstanding – Exceeds the above performance expectation for the staff members classification
- ✓ Unacceptable – Does not meet the above performance expectation for the staff members classification

Performance Expectations for Resource Specialists with at least two years experience as a Resource Specialist who have scored 100% on the last two month's observations

Tenured staff that consistently performs at a high level may not need supervisory observations as frequently as others may. When an employee has

- two years experience as a Resource Specialist and
- has scored 100% on the last two month's observations

the supervisor may decide to observe that Resource Specialist only once each quarter. Observations once a quarter will continue unless the Resource Specialist falls below the outstanding level on her/his annual review. If the tenured Resource Specialists does not rate Outstanding on the annual review, the supervisor will resume recording four (4) observations a month. If, at any time during the review period, the Resource Specialist's performance is unacceptable, the supervisor will begin to record four (4) observations each month.

Overall Performance Rating

Outstanding – Rated outstanding on the customer service standard and proficient or better on the other expectation/s

Proficient – Not rated either Outstanding or Unacceptable

Unacceptable – Rated unacceptable on either standard

EMPLOYMENT COUNSELOR

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The individual in this position helps people get a job, keep a job or get a better job. She/he provides professional advice to customers who want job search guidance, career advice or placement. She/he also helps customers access other services she may want or need, including Workforce Solutions' financial aid.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The individual in this position reports to _____ (line supervisor)

RELATIONSHIPS

An Employment Counselor works primarily with people who are looking for work. He/she may also speak with and sometimes work with employers. Inside Workforce Solutions, an Employment Counselor works with all staff in a career office, but particularly Greeters, Employment Counselors, Personal Service Representatives, Financial Aid Specialists and Staffing Specialists . Employment Counselors also have contact with Business Consultants and Labor Market Analysts.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelors degree OR
    - ✓ Six months of experience as a human resource recruiter, benefits coordinator or other human resource professional may be substituted for each 15 hours of college credit up to two years OR
    - ✓ Four years of experience working at Workforce Solutions and a recommendation from current or most recent supervisor
- Knowledge of the workplace, jobs and requirements for entry into those jobs
- Able to listen to customers, analyze expressed needs and suggest solutions and action plan. Uses tact, diplomacy, and persistence in providing suggestions to customers
- Proficient in Microsoft Windows and Office; familiar with and able to use computers; able to learn new software
- Works well in teams and with resident customers and other staff (flexible, congenial and adaptable)
- Able to communicate orally and in writing at a business level
- Self-motivated and self-directed
- Results-oriented

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Determines with customers what services are needed to meet job search and career goals

- Listens to each customer request and provides professional advice to help each customer decide the best services for her.
- Provides job search guidance and career advice
- Assures that customer understands the next step in receiving services from Workforce Solutions or other community resources

Helps customers locate and apply for a job that matches the customer's skills and expectations

- Provides direct job matching of open system postings with the customer's skills and work requirements
- Offers qualified job candidates the opportunity to interview for posted jobs
- May check with the candidate or the employer to assess quality and success of the referral
- Searches files for qualified candidates for job postings
- With permission from the responsible Business Consultant, calls businesses to locate openings for customers with skills and experience that are useful to those businesses

Provides career advice

- Provides local labor market information - what companies and industries are in the area, what skills and experience local area employers prefer and require, what is the usual means of entry into those companies/industries, advice on how best apply
- Is knowledgeable of current local labor market information, including:
  - Employers and industries in the region and near a local office, including the largest employers and key industries
  - Skills, education and experience area employers require and prefer, including skills and experience needed for growth occupations in key industries
  - Usual means of entry into area companies, industries and occupations, including the area's key employers and industries, and how to apply for work there
  - Workforce Solutions' targeted industries and high-skill, high-growth occupations and detailed information about entry into these industries and occupations
- Provides appropriate and relevant labor market information to help a customer in her job search
- Is knowledgeable of and able to use information about transferable skills from one industry or occupation to another to advise a customer

Directs customers to a productive job search

- Helps customers to access basic self help services through effective use of the resource library

- Provides resume advice. Suggests resume formats and helps in determining how and where the customer sends her resume
- Is thoroughly familiar with electronic, print and other resources to help customers in making helpful career and job search suggestions Uses this knowledge to determine which resources will benefit individual customers.
- Uses good judgment when suggesting to a customer that she may benefit from individual help from career office staff specialists or other community resources
- May provide - or connect to another Workforce Solutions staff person to provide - up to $200 in financial aid to help customers to quickly get a job, keep a job or get a better job.

Other duties

- May take information from employers about current job opportunities and relay that information to the Employer Service Division for data entry into the electronic database.
- Enters information concerning customer service and outcomes in the appropriate management information systems
- Carries out special projects as requested by his/her supervisor or manager on or off site
- Completes required records

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

1. Averages between * [enter range] direct placements a month and at least ½ of the expectation is met with placements on WorkInTexas postings that are not hiring events.

   * Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) I Proficient = between 4 and 6
   * WDS II = between 6 and 9
   * WDS III = between 8 and 12
   * WDS IV = between 10 and 14

   ✓ Outstanding – Exceeds the above performance expectation for the staff members classification
   ✓ Unacceptable – Does not meet the above performance expectation for the staff members classification

2. Provides quality customer contacts to employer job postings in WorkInTexas.com

   Supervisors measure this expectation by assessing referrals the counselor has made to job openings.   A customer's work application in WorkInTexas.com must clearly document that the customer has all qualifications required in the posting to which the counselor referred her. A supervisor will select a sample of at least 5 referrals each month and rate the referrals.

   *Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) I Proficient = 75% to 80% of referrals meet all employer requirements
   * WDS II = 81% to 85%
   * WDS III = 86% to 90%
   * WDS IV = 91% to 95%

   ✓ Outstanding – Exceeds the above performance expectation for the staff members classification
   ✓ Unacceptable – Does not meet the above performance expectation for the staff members classification

3. Provides good customer service

   Supervisors measure this expectation by observing at least two customer interviews a month, noting a description of the interaction and explaining why the staff did a good job and/or how she/he can improve: The following lists some items the supervisor may observe and describe.

   * You greeted the customer correctly
   * You listened to understand what the customer wanted from Workforce Solutions
   * You gave good advice and/or the appropriate service to help the customer meet her/his needs (this includes a review of the number of contacts you gave the customer)

- You spent the time needed to give good service but did not spend excessive time
- You explained or confirmed the "next step" to the customer and made an appointment or introduced the customer to a staff specialist when applicable

  * Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) I Proficient = 75% to 80% of recorded supervisor observations are rated acceptable
  * WDS II = 81% to 85%
  * WDS III = 86% to 90%
  * WDS IV = 91% to 95%

  ✓ Outstanding – Exceeds the above performance expectation for the staff members classification
  ✓ Unacceptable – Does not meet the above performance expectation for the staff members classification

4. Records thorough, up-to-date information in Workforce Solutions management information systems

   A customer's work application must show thorough up-to-date information about the customers work history, skills, education and work requirements. The matching profile and the resume reflect the same information. A supervisor will select a sample of at least 2 work applications each month and rate the application as acceptable or not acceptable. It is preferable to use the records of the customers the supervisor observed receiving service from the employment counselor.

   * Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) I Proficient = 75% to 80% of records are thorough and up-to-date
   * WDS II = 81% to 85%
   * WDS III = 86% to 90%
   * WDS IV = 91% to 95%

   ✓ Outstanding – Exceeds the above performance expectation for the staff members classification
   ✓ Unacceptable – Does not meet the above performance expectation for the staff members classification

Overall Performance Rating

Outstanding – Rated outstanding on at least 2 performance expectations and may not be unacceptable in the others.

Proficient – Not rated either Outstanding or Unacceptable

Unacceptable – Rated unacceptable in one or more of the four performance expectations

Appendix III
Workforce Solutions
Expanded Service Guidelines
& Job Descriptions

I.   Standard

Expanded Services are available to help every customer who wants and needs career advice. Expanded services also help residents learn how to search for work and how to land a job offer. Every customer who wants and needs it will have the opportunity to receive a series of basic and expanded services from Workforce Solutions professional staff.

II.   Background

Workforce Solutions classifies the services provided residents into three categories based on the level of resources required to provide them-*basic services, expanded services and financial aid*. Every service provided by Workforce Solutions fits into one of these three categories. The second level of services, *expanded services*, requires more staff assistance and expertise than the basic services. Staff who provide expanded services must have extensive knowledge about careers, the local labor market, and how to land a job. Expanded services help customers who are ready to work and those who are not. Customers with good marketable skills are advised on how to make the most of those skills in the marketplace. Customers, who are not ready to work, or look for work, may receive help from Workforce Solutions Personal Service Representatives to develop and follow a plan leading to employment.

Each office has staff members with primary responsibility for providing some expanded services to the customers who want and need them. We expect staff members to become experts in providing the services for which they have primary responsibility. Employment Counselors are expert in helping customers who are ready to work find the best possible job and career. Personal Service Representatives help customers who need continued guidance or preparation in moving into a successful work life. Testing and Assessment Specialists and Facilitators work with both groups of customers to guide career choices and prepare for successful interviews. Program Tracking Specialists record events and watch to assure that customers and staff follow funding requirements. The "Trackers" allow Workforce Solutions customer service staff to concentrate on providing each customer the service she wants and needs to meet her work goals.

III. Description of Expanded Services

Expanded services are available to all customers who want and need them. A significant number of customers in our system receive some or all of these services. Many of the expanded services entail working with a customer to determine her career direction and helping her know <u>how</u> to land the job she wants. Many young people are just beginning to make career choices and they would benefit from expanded services. Young people, often without much work experience, will benefit from financial aid for scholarships as well.

Expanded services include following:

- Skills Assessment

  - ✓ Formal assessment (ability, aptitudes, interests) using recognized testing instruments
  - ✓ Identification of Skills (acquired and transferable)

- Individualized/Specific Labor Market Information

- Individualized Job search and Job Development

- In-depth Job Search Seminars

  - ✓ Completing Application
  - ✓ Interviewing Techniques
  - ✓ Tailoring Resumes

- Employment/Career Planning

  - ✓ These services are available to adults and youth
  - ✓ Youth who are still in school may receive the services through information provided by Workforce Solutions to school districts, school counselors and teachers

- Networking

- Assistance in Obtaining Support Services from the Community

- Financial Aid Assistance

  - ✓ Identifying and /or Obtaining Financial Assistance for Education or Support Services needs Including Child Care

- Staff-assisted job referrals resulting from screening customers for employers who have special arrangements with Workforce Solutions – Usually mass on-site interviewing for the employer

- Help for young people to stay in school – Workforce Solutions may provide tutoring, mentoring, remedial classes, credit recovery, English as a second language, internships and other expanded services that help youngsters stay in school. We also provide the basic service of helping young students to find appropriate part time work.

IV.   Key steps in the Service Process

The following principles apply to customer service in Workforce Solutions category of Expanded Services.

1. All customers who receive a continuing series of basic and expanded services from Workforce Solutions staff are aiming toward an offer of work in the best job they are qualified to perform.

2. Each customer makes decisions about the mix of services that she wants with the professional advice of Workforce Solutions staff.

3. When there is the possibility that the customer may lose a financial benefit for choosing not to follow the advice of Workforce Solutions staff, the consequences of that choice must be made clear to the customer.

4. Workforce Solutions continues to be available to help our customers keep the job or get a better job after beginning work.

Steps in the Service Process – Expanded Services

1. ***Workforce Solutions Employment Counselor or other staff member provides a continuing series of basic and expanded services to a job ready customer.*** The customer has spoken to an Employment Counselor or other Workforce Solutions professional and the two are in agreement that the customer is ready to look for work. The customer knows what kind of work she prefers and is qualified to perform the work. Both she and the Employment Counselor believe her pay and other job requirements are realistic. The customer has chosen to keep in close contact with Workforce Solutions staff member until she becomes employed. She will take advantage of the services, basic and expanded, that she believes will help her to get an offer for the kind of job she wants. The customer and the Employment Counselor will evaluate what they believe may be standing in the way of work opportunities and decide which of Workforce Solutions services might address the problem. They will also determine what job search efforts seem to get positive employer response and continue to incorporate those into the entire search.

   A series of expanded services may be planned to address the customer's needs or she may decide to take advantage of one service, for example, attendance at a seminar on how to interview, and then evaluate the need for additional services after feed back from future interviews. Job matches and referrals to employers from Workforce Solutions database are always provided as part of the service package. A formal employment plan is not necessary to guide most work ready customers' job search. A short summary statement of the services planned should be included in the counselor notes if it is not clear from other records what direction the services are leading the customer.

The Employment Counselor or other staff member assures that the customer understands the next step in working with The Work Source. If she is scheduled to return an appointment card is provided and the staff member offers a business card.

2. ***Workforce Solutions Employment Counselor or other staff member helps the customer access supportive services that will allow her to begin to look for work or to work***. The customer has spoken to an Employment Counselor or other Workforce Solutions professional and they are in agreement that the customer is prepared to work but needs some supportive services before beginning her job search or before accepting a job. The Employment Counselor may refer the customer to an outside organization for the needed help. The customer may need temporary housing, food, clothes, medical attention, or other personal help before she can begin a job search. When the needed services are not provided by Workforce Solutions - or are more easily provided by another organization - Workforce Solutions staff member will refer the customer to the appropriate organization. Someone on Workforce Solutions staff will call the organization to assure the needed service is available before sending the customer. The staff member should check back with the organization or the customer to assure that the needed service was received. Checking to see that services were received assures that this customer is getting help and also provides information to Workforce Solutions staff about the quality of service provided by service organizations on our referral lists.

   Workforce Solutions provides financial aid for some supportive services. Payments for child care and transportation are available to many of our customers when the customer requests and needs those services. Customers who sign the work application or addendum may receive up to $200 a year from Workforce Solutions to pay for job related expenses. (*See Current Standard and Guideline 316. A new standard addressing all financial aid will replace this one in the near future*.)   Customers may receive services and ongoing transportation assistance at the most convenient Workforce Solutions office once the payments have been approved by any of our offices.

   When the Employment Counselor or other Workforce Solutions staff member knows that supportive services are readily available she provides work search advice and job referrals immediately. She provides a series of basic and expanded services when the customer wants to form a continuing relationship with Workforce Solutions to guide her work search.

   The Employment Counselor or other staff member assures that the customer understands the next step in working with The Work Source. The staff member offers a business card and if the customer is scheduled to return an appointment time and date are written as a reminder for the customer.

3. ***Workforce Solutions Personal Service Representative begins to provide direction; advice and counseling to customers who are not yet ready to work or look for work.*** The Employment Counselor or other Workforce Solutions professional has determined that the customer is not ready to begin job interviews or she is not prepared to begin work. There

are many reasons that an individual may need help in preparing to look for work and to work before beginning interviews. These may include lack of interest in pursuing work or insistence on looking for work for which the customer clearly is not qualified. Other barriers may include serious personal difficulty and lack of marketable skills. Customers not prepared to interview for work who want to continue to look for work through Workforce Solutions are provided the most comprehensive staff services to prepare them for entry into the workplace. A Personal Service Representative (PSR) has the responsibility for guiding these customers through the array of services offered by Workforce Solutions and other community organizations until they become employed in work that allows self-sufficiency. Many young people benefit from the advice and guidance of a Personal Service Representative. Often financial aid for scholarships in a chosen career, in conjunction with part time work, is a valuable benefit to someone at the beginning of her work life.

Often difficulties hindering a successful work search are apparent the first time an Employment Counselor interviews a customer.   Sometimes problems preventing a customer from looking for work or from working are not evident until the staff member comes to know the customer better. The services of a PSR will be offered whenever it becomes clear that a customer is unlikely to find work because of one of the following:
✓ Education is necessary to provide skills needed to obtain employment
✓ Personal problems are such that the customer cannot work or look for work
✓ Extensive direction in the form of a formal employment plan is needed to move the customer toward success.
✓ The customer continues to have unrealistic expectations of salary and occupation relative to her skills or is uncooperative in looking for work.

The Personal Services Representative or other staff member assures that the customer understands the next step in working with The Work Source. If she is scheduled to return an appointment card is provided and the staff member offers a business card.

4. ***A comprehensive assessment, usually including testing, helps to determine the customer's career goals and what will allow her to reach them.*** A desk aid that is provided in this standard will help Personal Service Representatives identify what each customer wants to achieve in her work life and the barriers that may prevent the customer from becoming successful. (*See Information Resources for Staff VIII.A. Comprehensive Needs Assessment Desk Aid*). Once the customer goal is established and the barriers identified the customer and PSR are ready to make an employment plan to guide the customer to success. *(See Information Resources for Staff VIII.B. Identifying Barriers to Employment)*

5. ***Formal Employment Planning is provided to guide customers not ready to work through a series of steps to help meet long-term career goals.*** Some customers who are not work-ready sign an Employment Plan/Family Employment Plan during an orientation to give the customer information about her responsibilities to cooperate with Workforce Solutions in order to get a benefit. The PSR and the customer work together to supplement

the items included in any Employment Plan/Family Employment Plan signed during an orientation. They develop a more comprehensive plan to include the following:

✓ The plan summarizes the customer's information about relevant job skills and job interests and decisions about employment goals.
✓ The long-term or ultimate goal will provide self-sufficiency to the customer and her family.
✓ All long-term goals will include the occupation – kind of job - the customer wants to obtain. The goal may often also state a particular industry.
✓ The plan provides a guide including short-term goals leading to the ultimate or long-term goal. A time line provides targeted dates to achieve each part of the plan.
✓ Supportive services needed are identified and included in the plan.
✓ Testing is offered to help to identify realistic goals and barriers.
✓ The plan is flexible enough to allow for changes whenever circumstances result in a need for change.
✓ Employment plans must always be reviewed and updated when the customer goes to work.

6. ***Post employment counseling and planning reminds the customer that this job may be only one step to achievement of her long–term goal.*** Workforce Solutions begins to help the customer to keep a job. Also to get a better job if this one does not meet the customer's long term goal.

✓ *Keep a Job* - Workforce Solutions can provide customers who want and need it up to $200 in any 12-month period to pay for work related expenses such as physicals, uniforms, temporary transportation costs, tools, and payment for vocationally necessary exams including the GED. Workforce Solutions professional staff can provide counseling to help the customer cope with work and home responsibilities. Recommendations for child care arrangements that provide quality care during the hours that a parent is at work are available.

✓ *Get a Better Job* - Workforce Solutions is available to help a working customer update a resume to include new skills and experience. Professional counselors are available to help the customer to figure out what new career ladders may be open to her as she gains work experience. Advice and sometimes scholarships for training may allow a customer to move to the next level from her current job. She may want to advance with her current employer or another one.

V. Performance Measures Associated with this Standard

1. Measurement of progress toward the Board's Target for "More and Better Jobs" and "Higher Incomes" in under development. Workforce Solutions expected contribution toward meeting these goals is part of the measures being developed. Office contribution toward these goals will become part of the performance measure for this Standard.

2. Monitoring visits will determine an office's proficiency in providing expanded services. A monitoring instrument will be developed to follow the process outlined in this standard. The review will include the activities of those responsible for primary delivery of expanded services.

3. Employment Counselors and Personal Service Representatives in every office - major providers of expanded services - will be given the same job descriptions and performance expectations. Program Tracking Specialists- who keep records associated with customer service – will also have a common job description and performance expectations. Job descriptions and performance expectations will be found in attachments to this standard. The above mentioned staff will have their individual job performance measured according to the performance expectations in the Standard. Individual monetary compensation including merit increases, as well as continued employment, will depend on that performance.

VI. Data entry and reporting requirements

1. **Determining which customer is tracked in TWIST and which in WorkInTexas.com**. –
   All customers who agree to receive the continuing series of basic and expanded services are tracked in TWIST/Program Detail and have a work application in WorkInTexas.com. Customer services tracked in one MIS can be viewed in the other. At least one service must be entered into TWIST/Program Detail/Service Tracking. The service posted to TWIST assures that the customer will be included in the performance measures, as required, of the funding source paying for the service.

   Some customers are required to come to Workforce Solutions to obtain or retain benefits. These customers must be tracked in TWIST regardless of the level of services needed. Customers who must be tracked in TWIST include:

   ✓ TANF applicants, recipients, and some former recipients
   ✓ Food Stamp recipients recruited by Workforce Solutions
   ✓ Ex-offenders who report to Workforce Solutions after referral from the Justice System
   ✓ Ex-offenders who have volunteered upon release from prison to report to Workforce Solutions
   ✓ Customer's receiving scholarship assistance paid by TAA
   ✓ Customer's receiving any financial aid over $200 a year from Workforce Solutions.
   ✓ Customer's receiving a continuing series of basic and expanded services

   Note - Information on how to data enter a customer record in TWIST can be found in the Information Resources for Staff section of the Basic Services Standard.

2. **TWIST Counselor Notes** – All counselor notes will begin with the date and counselor name. Usually the initial entry into the counselor notes provides a short summary of the services planned and why the customer wants and needs them. The initial counselor note statement is used for customers, who have agreed to receive a series of expanded and basic services, working with Workforce Solutions EC or PSR, until finding acceptable work. When the initial statement concerns a customer not yet ready to work or look for work it should summarize why the customer is not yet ready. If the barriers or problems are in the Employment Plan (TWIST service plan) the notes may direct the reader there.

   ✓ Additional counselor notes should appear in chronological order and show changes in the direction of the service process and the reason for those changes. Usual changes in direction of services include personal circumstances; decisions to change career paths, decisions to stop looking for work, decisions that Workforce Solutions services are no longer wanted or needed, or the next step in keeping a job or looking for a better job after the customer accepts work.

   ✓ Counselor notes will reflect information received from a customer who responds to a letter warning of a benefits loss. The notes would include information about part time work, promise to begin cooperation, reason for good cause for not cooperating, and other pertinent parts of the conversation and expected next step.

✓ Counselor notes will also state monthly the reasons that a customer required to cooperate with Workforce Solutions to retain benefits is not preparing for work.

✓ Employment information that does not come from a direct placement but will be entered into TWIST may be further explained in the counselor notes if it will help in the provision of post employment services.

The following are two examples of statements to illustrate initial TWIST counselor notes for a customer who wants a continuing series of expanded and basic services.

> *"Sally Brown would like to use skills gained in previous jobs to begin to look for work as a technical writer in the oil industry. While continuing to job search, she will participate in workshops to develop a new resume, learn more about how her skills might apply to other occupations and industries and possibly take an interest-inventory test. Should she determine that this course of action is not producing the desired results, we will discuss another direction."*

> *"Sally Brown will attend a one day seminar on improving interviewing skills. Other services will follow if employer response at interviews leads her to believe she needs additional instruction."*

In the first example a series of services was initially planned. In the second example the customer said that she wanted to work through her job search by continuing to work with Workforce Solutions staff but wanted to try one service before determining what should come next.

It is <u>not</u> necessary to enter the initial statement of services planned when other entries in any Workforce Solutions MIS make it completely clear what direction the services are leading the customer. An example of a situation that would not require counselor notes follows:

Sally Brown completed a job application on her first visit to Workforce Solutions several months ago. WorkInTexas.com indicates a long list of job referrals all with the result marked "not hired". Ms. Brown appears to have the qualifications required on the job postings. A new program detail in TWIST has been created that shows the customer has begun to attend seminars.

In the example above it is assumed that this customer is beginning to take advantage of Workforce Solutions expanded services seminars because she has been unsuccessful in finding work to date.

✓ Information in the counselor notes must not duplicate what is found in other parts of any of Workforce Solutions Management Information Systems - TWIST, WorkInTexas.com, or The Child Care management system.

✓ The counselor notes should **not** include information indicating that an effort was made to call the customer but no conversation took place. It should **not** include statements indicating that there has been no change in the customer's planned course of action or circumstances.

Workforce Solutions customer service personnel providing the service will almost always enter information into the TWIST counselor notes. A Program Tracking Specialist may sometimes data enter counselor notes – written by the service provider staff - from the customer's initial visit to Workforce Solutions at the time that she is data entering all other initial data.

3. **Employment Plan** – Employment plans are an agreement between the customer and Workforce Solutions about the path that the customer will follow to a successful work life. Some Employment Plans are more comprehensive than others. Some are recorded in TWIST and some are maintained in a customer's individual paper file.

✓ *Signed Paper Employment Plan* – These plans are found in the Workforce Orientation brochures for TANF applicants, some Food Stamp Recipients, and some Ex-offenders. The plans identify the customer's responsibility in working with Workforce Solutions to job search. The brochures for TANF applicants and Food Stamp recipients are placed in an individual file folder. Ex-offender signed brochures are kept in an alpha file centrally located in each office.

Family Employment Plan - TANF Applicants and Recipients – Customers required to search for work in order to receive TANF benefits must have a signed Family Employment Plan. Customers who volunteer to allow Workforce Solutions to help them find work while receiving TANF benefits must also have a signed Family Employment Plan. The brochure given to these customers during orientation (group or individual) includes a Family Employment Plan. A Customer must sign this plan each time HHSC refers her to Workforce Solutions as part of the TANF application process. The customer maintains a copy of the signed plan that is part of the brochure "Work Orientation" and Workforce Solutions maintains a signed copy for the customer's individual file folder.

Employment Plan -Food Stamp Recipients - Food Stamp recipients who are required to look for work with the help of Workforce Solutions in order to continue to receive Food Stamps must have a signed Employment Plan. The brochure "Work Orientation" given to food stamp recipients during orientation (group or individual) includes an Employment Plan. Each customer must sign this plan when she responds to Workforce Solutions letter inviting her to the office to begin work search efforts. The customer maintains a copy of the signed plan that is part of the brochure "Work Orientation" and Workforce Solutions maintains a signed copy for the customer's individual file folder.

Employment Plan – Ex-offenders – Ex-offenders referred to Workforce Solutions by the criminal justice system must have a signed Employment Plan. The brochure "Work Orientation" given to these customers during orientation (group or individual) includes an Employment Plan. Each customer must sign this plan during the orientation. The customer

maintains a copy of the signed plan as part of the brochure "Work Orientation" and Workforce Solutions maintains a signed copy in an alpha file located centrally in each office.

✓ *TWIST Employment Plan/Family Employment Plan/Service Plan* – Customer's who are not ready to look for work or to work require the help of a Personal Service Representative to develop a formal employment plan. The plan will identify barriers to a successful work life and a path to overcome the barriers. It will provide the customer a guide to accomplish both long and short-term goals. The formal TWIST plan complements any existing signed paper employment plan.

Customers who are receiving financial aid in the form of scholarships funded by Workforce Solutions will always have a formal employment plan.

The PSR will enter the employment plan into TWIST. It is not necessary to keep a signed paper copy of the plan in the customer file folder.   The Personal Service Representative may provide a paper copy of the plan to the customer as a reminder of the path the customer has determined to follow.

4. **Testing** – Test information and scores will be entered into TWIST/Assessment/Testing. Tests will be used to help the customer and Workforce Solutions staff determine work interests and aptitudes as well as basic education needs. The employment plan should reflect the information gained by testing. Action steps in the employment plan will reflect that deficiencies in basic skills are being addressed.

The Testing and Assessment Specialist or the PSR will usually data enter test scores into TWIST.

5. **Customer Services – TWIST and WorkInTexas.com entry** – Services should be entered into either TWIST or WorkInTexas.com. It is generally not necessary to enter the same service into both systems.

✓ *WorkInTexas.com* – After the work application has been entered into WorkInTexas.com services may be data entered into the MIS. Entry into the WorkInTexas.com services requires access to the customer application usually by keying the Social Security number. Choose the appropriate service from the drop down box in WorkInTexas.com

✓ *TWIST/Service Tracking* - Services for customers who are receiving a series of expanded services and who want to continue working closely with Workforce Solutions counselors must be entered into TWIST/Program Detail/Service Tracking. Program Type must indicate one of the programs tracked in TWIST and at least one service must be data entered to one of the funds tracked in TWIST (WIA, Choices, FSE&T, RIO, TAA). Customers required By HHSC or the Criminal Justice System to work with Workforce Solutions must also be tracked in TWIST regardless of the level of services received. Youth who are tracked in TWIST under WIA/Youth for the receipt of expanded services must complete an Application for Financial Aid. Youth tagged in TWIST as WIA/Youth they must meet

poverty guidelines. Most out of school youth who are tagged as WIA/Youth will also receive financial aid. See VIII. K. Information Resources for Staff/Adding a TWIST record in the Basic Services Standard.

In most cases the customer service personnel (EC, PSR, and Financial Aid Specialist) who provide a service will enter the information into one of Workforce Solutions management information systems. If the service is provided on the customer's first visit to Workforce Solutions a Program Tracking Specialist may enter the services at the same time that she data enters the work application and TWIST program detail.

6. **Financial Aid (Supportive Services)   - TWIST, Child Care Management Information System, Financial Aid Application, other financial documents -** Workforce Solutions provides financial aid to customer's who want and need it to find or accept suitable employment. This aid comes in many forms. Most commonly Workforce Solutions financial aid subsidizes needy customer's child care expenses, pays travel costs for customers to look for work, prepare for work, or work, pays tuition for customer's without marketable skills to go to school, and pays other work related expenses. Every customer who receives financial aid from Workforce Solutions must have that aid tracked as a payment to the customer. All financial aid except child care is tracked in TWIST to a customer with a record in Program Detail under one of Workforce Solutions funding streams.

✓ *TWIST* – All financial aid is recorded in TWIST/Support Services except tuition assistance. Customers may receive aid costing $200 or less in a twelve-month period without completion of a Financial Aid Application. Aid in excess of $200 during any 12 month period requires completion of the Financial Aid application. Staff members must check TWIST before approving aid without the application to assure that the total will not exceed $200. Customers may receive ongoing financial aid for transportation at any office once it has been approved by one. Each office must enter aid received and any hours of cooperation for other offices to view.

A Financial Aid Application must be included in the customer's individual file folder indicating eligibility to receive aid in amounts over $200 a year. Documents proving information on the application are attached to the application in the file folder.

Scholarships provided by Workforce Solutions are recorded in TWIST/ITA/Financial Asst. The expected amount of aid is data entered in the ITA tab and withdrawals from the total are data entered as they occur.

A Financial Aid Specialist, Employment Counselor or Personal Service Representative usually enters this information into TWIST.

✓ *Child care Management Information System* – Information about child care financial aid records not recorded in TWIST are found in the financial aid Standard and Guideline.

✓ *Financial Aid Application* – This paper application must be on file in the customer's individual file folder for all Workforce Solutions aid except child care subsidies if the amount of aid exceeds $200 in a twelve month period.

This application is completed by the customer with assistance from a Financial Aid Specialist, Personal Service Representative or other staff member.

✓ *Paper Documents* – When there are documents such as vouchers or receipts tracking aid to customers this information may be kept in the customer's individual file folder or a central file as determined by management.

7. **Tracking hours of cooperation - TWIST** – In order to maintain receipt of benefits TANF recipients and some Food Stamp recipients must track the number of hours they look for work or prepare to work as agreed to in an Employment/Family Employment Plan. The number of hours is data entered into TWIST.

✓ *TWIST/Service Tracking* – Hours must be tracked under the appropriate Program Type and Fund in TWIST. The customer must have a record in TWIST/Program Detail. Enter the appropriate service in TWIST/Service Tracking. Click on the "Participation" button, record the month of participation and the hours of participation. Customers recording hours under more than one service code must have hours tracked under each code.

The Program Tracking Specialist enters hours of participation.

See Desk Aid VII.F. Information Resources for Staff – Desk Aid for One-Time Partial Week Cooperation.

✓ *Paper Documents* – Job search logs and other paper documents will be used by the customer to record hours as noted above. Each job search contact, regardless of the means of contact, will be considered as 2 hours of participation. A customer who makes 15 contacts in a week will have 30 hours of participation in job search. Job search logs and other documents tracking participation will be filed in the individual file folder.

8. **Sending Non-Cooperation Notices Warning of Loss of TANF Benefits – TWIST** - *See Information Resources for Staff VIII. D. Utilizing the Outreach Letter Process in TWIST Phase 4 Scheduler* – Use the recruitment letter found in the Basic Services Standard/Information Resources for Staff VIII. 4 for TANF non-cooperation. This letter will be sent to the customer by the third Monday of each month in which cooperation is not adequate. The non-cooperation letter will ask the customer to call a Personal Service Representative. After speaking to the customer the PSR may decide to update hours of participation for customers who have in fact complied with the employment plan or determine that the customer has good cause not to cooperate. The PSR will enter the good cause reason into TWIST. In these instances the customer's TANF cash assistance is not affected. If the customer does not have a good reason for not co-operating the Program Tracking Specialist will notify HHSC of the non-cooperation and the customer will likely loose benefits for a time.

In some cases the name of the PSR on the customer non-cooperation letter will be a staff member who has been guiding the customer's job search or work readiness activities. In other cases the PSR may not have spoken previously to the customer. [See this standard, VIII. C. Information Resources for Staff, Resident Services Process Maps, 1. Customer Requests Services to Allow Her TANF Certification and 2. Customer Requests Services to Continue Receipt of Food Stamps.] These process maps indicate how the PSR will help each customer who calls, in response to a non-cooperation letter, and what will be documented in TWIST.

The PSR will receive a roster, generated in TWIST, of the letters that were sent in her name. The PSR will data enter into TWIST counselor notes information from the conversation with the customer. She will also data enter good cause reasons for non-cooperation and will give the Program Tracking Specialist any documents verifying additional hours of cooperation.

The Program Tracking Specialist will notify HHSC of non-cooperation.

9. **Documenting Customer Responses to Non-cooperation Letters in TWIST-Program Detail – Program Type- Choices** – A summary of the conversation with a customer responding to a non-cooperation letter will be entered into the TWIST counselor notes by the staff member (usually a PSR) who has the conversation. (*See Process Chart in this standard titled Customer Requests Services to Allow Her TANF Certification – Steps 6A – 6D)*

✓ If the customer responds that she has gone to work:
1. The PSR will get information about where the customer is working, expected work hours and pay and enter it into TWIST/Services (39) Unsubsidized Employment.
2. The PSR will inactivate the work application in WorkInTexas.com if the customer does not want to continue looking, check WorkInTexas.com to determine if the customer's job is the result of Workforce Solutions referral to the employer, notify ESD if the job results in a direct placement.
3. Notify the Tracker to send the 2583 notifying HHSC of the employment
4. PSR will close TWIST records for services no longer being used by the customer
5. Note in counselor notes the customers desire or not for post employment services
6. Update or add TWIST employment plan to reflect post employment services other than child care

✓ If the customer has good cause not to cooperate she will be assigned to the PSR who determined the good cause. (*See desk aid I. E. Information for Staff- Workforce Solutions Good Cause Desk Aid for Personal Service Representatives*) The PSR will guide the customer's work search for as long as she wants and needs Workforce Solutions services.
1. The PSR will show good cause in all the appropriate areas of TWIST – Counselor notes- Good Cause tab- Service Activity for Good Cause
2. The Program Tracking Specialist will discontinue or resume financial aid as directed by the PSR. The Program Tracking Specialist will assure appropriate changes in child care payments are initiated.

3. The Program Tracking Specialist will check TWIST monthly to determine when the customer no longer has good cause not to cooperate or she may learn this from the PSR. The Program Tracking Specialist will then begin to look for records of cooperation from the customer.

✓ The PSR may determine that the customer does not have sufficient reason for non-cooperation but the customer expresses an interest in beginning to cooperate with Workforce Solutions. The PSR will begin to guide her work search and do so for as long as she wants and needs Workforce Solutions services.
1. The PSR will enter into TWIST/ Counselor notes a summary of the conversation.
2. The Program Tracking Specialist will complete TWIST/Penalty tab to impose the penalty for non cooperation
3. The Program Tracking Specialist will resume child care payments for the customer if they have been stopped. She will notify the appropriate contractor and include information in TWIST/Support Services
4. The Program Tracking Specialist will enter any hours of participation provided by the customer

✓ If the customer has fulfilled her required cooperation hours but for some reason they are not recorded the PSR will assure that appropriate paper documents are on hand and hours are recorded in TWIST. The customer may continue to guide her own work search with the help of an Employment Counselor if she prefers.

✓ If the customer does not respond to the non cooperation letter or responds that she will not be cooperating
1. The PSR records any conversation in TWIST/Counselor Notes including the PSR's offer of continued job search assistance from Workforce Solutions.
2. The Program Tracking Specialist records the sanction in TWIST/Penalty tab and closes Services in TWIST /Service Tracking
3. The Program Tracking Specialist discontinues all financial aid contingent of the customer's cooperation. This may include completion of the paper form 2510 to stop child care payments.
4. The Program Tracking Specialist inactivates the WorkInTexas.com work application
5. In one month after the customer has indeed not co-operated the Program Tracking Specialist closes the customer record in TWIST/Program Detail/Final Completion reason.

10. **Recommending Penalties or Other HHSC Actions for Customers Receiving Food Stamps -TWIST – Program Detail – Program Type – Food Stamp E&T** - A sanction will be recommended to HHSC when a food stamp recipient does not respond to a recruitment letter by the date specified on the letter. The recommendation is sent through TWIST/Customer Record/FSE&T History/ Penalty tab. The reason "did not respond" is used to recommend the sanction. The same process is used to recommend a sanction when the customer does not cooperate according to her employment plan agreement. The reason in this case is "did not cooperate".

A notice of reconsideration is sent to HHSC when a customer responds to a recruitment letter with an apparently valid reason why she is not required to cooperate. This is done using the HHSC paper form 1817.

11. **Employment Information – WorkInTexas.com, TWIST** - It is the ultimate goal of Workforce Solutions to help our customers find a job, support them in work and find a better job if they want. Tracking a customer's employment allows us to measure our success. Employment information is recorded in the same MIS that maintains the customer record.

✓ *WorkInTexas.com* – **Direct placements** are recorded in WorkInTexas.com. An employer services representative will call the employer to confirm the hire and it will be recorded on the job posting.

A d*irect placement* is defined as an employment placement activity that meets the following four conditions:

1. A job posting describing the needs of the employer is entered into WorkInTexas.com prior to directing any candidates to the employer.

2. Workforce Solutions staff member directs a candidate to contact the employer and records the contact in WorkInTexas.com.

3. The <u>employer</u> confirms the job candidate is employed in an unsubsidized job as defined above.

4. Employer Services Division staff verify the direct placement.

Resident services staff should <u>not</u> call employers to verify a candidate has been hired. They are, however, strongly encouraged to verify employment through the job candidate. Resident service staff with information about a candidate who is hired should sent the information by email to the employer services office at 2020 N. Loop West. The email address is placementinfo@wrksolutions.com. ESD staff will then verify the placement with the employer and enter placement information in WorkInTexas.com.

Obtained employments may be data entered to the customer record in WorkInTexas.com when the employment is not a direct placement and the staff member has good reason to believe that the employment will not be recorded in Texas UI wage records. The WorkInTexas.com definition of an obtained employment is employment of the customer after work registration in a job that is not a direct placement as defined above. This employment is automatically recorded from UI wage record data if the customer goes to work for a Texas UI covered employer. The information must be data entered into WorkInTexas.com in addition to entry into TWIST.

Obtained Employments manually recorded by staff are usually data entered by the staff member who receives the information from the customer

Job Developments may result in a direct placement to be entered into WorkInTexas.com. A job development occurs when a Resident Services staff member has the agreement of the Business Consultant to call an employer who is known to hire workers with the skills and/or experience held by a particular job seeker. The resident services staff member calls

the employer, discusses the specific customer's qualifications, the employer agrees to interview the customer, and an appointment is made. After the referral is made:

1. The Employment Counselor or other staff member records the job development activity in the WorkInTexas.com service panel.
2. If the customer reports that she has been hired the Resident Service staff person completes the Placement/Job Development Verification form and emails it to www.placementinfo.org for verification. This form has a section for recording placements from job development activity.
3. When the email is received, Employer Services staff at 2020 N. Loop (ES2020) office will data enter the job posting and referral in WorkInTexas.com.
4. ES 2020 verifies and data enters the hire, and completes an employer satisfaction survey.

✓ *TWIST*– **Initial employment** should be recorded in TWIST/Service Tracking/Employment Services (39) as soon as a customer who has a record in TWIST/Program Detail works for pay in an unsubsidized job. Resident Services staff verifies employment with the resident customer.

Resident services staff may enter TWIST placement information from information recorded as a direct placement in WorkInTexas.com without verifying the information again with the customer. The Employer Services Division has verified WorkInTexas.com direct placement information with the employer.

Specific job information is required in TWIST when entering "employment" for the customer. If the customer is self-employed it is desirable to note a short summary of the kind of business, service or product provided, place of business, and expected income in the counselor notes. The TWIST Placement button requires completion of certain fields. The following fields must have accurate information: Employer, Address, City, State, Zip, Phone, County code and City code. When information is not available to accurately complete the remaining Placement fields, use the default information noted below:

✓ Start date: default to 1st day of whatever month the placement may have occurred
✓ Wage/Hr: default to minimum wage $5.15/hr.
✓ Hrs/Wk: default to 40
✓ Contact: default to "Contact"
✓ Worksite: default - leave blank
✓ # Employees: default - leave blank
✓ OES: default to: 99999-Other Miscellaneous Services
✓ SIC: default to: 9999-Other
✓ Training Related: default - leave blank
✓ U.I. Covered: default - leave blank - * see note
✓ Employer Benefits: default - leave blank
✓ Relocate: default - leave blank

*note- If not UI covered go to wage detail. The following information must be included-
Customer name and social security number, company name and address, start date with this
employer, customer's job title, wages earned, quarters and applicable year in which wage
were earned. **See TWC WD 11-00 for complete instructions.**
http://www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/wdletters/wd00letter.html

If the work is not Texas UI covered an assigned staff member may enter the employment and
wage information into the TWIST record for performance credit. The staff member will bring
up the customer record and click on Performance. Employment data may be entered from
information gained from the customer if the information is supported by employer-generated
documents such as check stubs. Telephone verification of employment/wages with the
employer is acceptable with the written permission of the customer. Paper documents used
to support supplemental wage information must be maintained with the customer's paper file.

The customer record is often closed when she finds employment. A customer with a record in
Program Detail – Program Type – Choices who is working with will have the employment
entered as stated above. The record will not be closed until the customer is no longer
receiving TANF cash assistance. Her service code will be changed to show that she is
"transitional" – in the process of moving from TANF cash assistance toward self-sufficiency.

12. **Exits or closing of records – WorkInTexas.com, TWIST** – In both Management
    Information Systems records may be manually closed or will automatically close when a lack
    of activity indicates the customer is no longer working with Workforce Solutions. In
    WorkInTexas.com the automatic close is called an "inactivation" of the record and in TWIST
    it is called a "soft" close. TWIST records will only soft close when no services are open for
    the customer. It is always preferable to close the record manually when the customer no
    longer wants or needs Workforce Solutions services.

✓ *WorkInTexas.com* - Records in WorkInTexas.com automatically become inactive when a
   direct placement or "obtained employment" is recorded. The application is available in
   WorkInTexas.com for reactivation for one year from the date of last service. Applications in
   WorkInTexas.com will remain in active/open status for as long as a customer is receiving an
   unemployment check. The applications will automatically become inactive/close when the
   customer is not receiving unemployment, has no recorded service for 90 days, has not
   entered the database using her password, and the application has not been manually updated
   in 90 days. Direct customer access into WorkInTexas.com at least once every 60 days will
   allow the application to remain active in the data base.

✓ *TWIST* – In order to close a record in TWIST all services must be closed and then the
   Program Detail record must be updated with the appropriate exit code. In many cases
   closing a record begins the process of performance measurement for the customer under the
   Program Type recorded in the TWIST record. When closing a record because the customer
   is working Placement information must be entered before using the placement as a final
   completion reason.

Records in <u>Program Detail – Program Type – WIA</u> must be closed when the customer has found work and no longer wants expanded services to keep a job or get a better job, has not found work but no longer desires help form Workforce Solutions, or has lost touch with Workforce Solutions and cannot be contacted after reasonable attempts are made.

The staff person working with the customer will close each service that is open in TWIST/Service Tracking when the customer is no longer receiving that service. A new service will be opened when appropriate. All services must be closed before the Program Detail is exited. If the reason for the closure is not clear from reading other parts of TWIST it should be noted in counselor notes.

Records in <u>Program Detail – Program Type – TANF Applicant</u> will be closed when the customer becomes Choices eligible. When the Program Tracking Specialist sees a certification date in TWIST for the TANF applicant she will open a service under Program Detail - Program Type – Choices. The TANF applicant record may then be closed or allowed to soft close.

When it becomes clear that the customer will not be certified (wait two months from application) the record is closed unless the customer asks for Workforce Solutions services to help her find employment. The extent and type of services that she wants and needs will determine how she is tracked at that time. Program Tracking Specialists may periodically review the active and inactive lists in TWIST to close any record that is more than two months old with no TANF certification date. This information can be found in the LBB report on TWIST, or in TWIST/TANF History or in HHSC/SAVERR.

Records in <u>Program Detail – Program Type – Choices</u> must be closed when the customer is no longer eligible to receive TANF benefits. The Program Tracking Specialist or other staff member will be aware of the ineligibility through the HHSC Management Information System (SAVERR). The Program Detail Record must be closed effective on the last day of the month in which TANF benefits are received. Services must be closed when they are no longer being provided to the customer and all services must be closed before closing the Program Detail record.

A customer who is exempt from requirements to cooperate with Workforce Solutions but has volunteered to do so may be closed as soon as she makes it known that she no longer wishes to work with Workforce Solutions. The TWIST closure code – Volunteer Claimed Exemption -is used.

Records in <u>Program Detail – Program Type – Choices +</u> must be closed when the customer no longer wants or needs our services. The customer may have reached her goal of a better job or she may have decided she is satisfied with her present work. The Choices + record is closed if the customer looses a job and reapplies for TANF.

Records in <u>Program Detail – Program Type – Food Stamp E&T</u> must be closed when HHSC management information system (SAVERR) indicates that benefits have been denied.

When a customer finds work, information about the job is entered into TWIST/Customer Information/Services/Placement as noted in the section above "*TWIST* – **Initial Employment**". A record in Program Detail –Program Type – Food Stamp E&T is closed when the employment is expected to be for at least 30 hours a week. If the customer is an ABAWD the record is closed when the employment is expected to be 20 hours a week.

When Workforce Solutions staff member sends a HHSC form 1817 recommending reconsideration of cooperation requirements the record is closed. If HHSC does not reclassify the customer she will be returned to the outreach pool and again recruited for help in her job search.

13. <u>Follow up</u>

Workforce Solutions staff members will attempt to communicate periodically with customers who have received financial aid from Workforce Solutions, have gone to work, and have not requested continued help in keeping the job or finding a better job.   This communication is usually referred to as "follow up".   All customers who receive financial aid for scholarships or work related expenses such as uniforms, tools, etc. costing Workforce Solutions more than $200 in a year will receive such follow up.

Personal Service Representatives will call or write these customers at least once each quarter for one year following the recording of employment in TWIST. Each contact will be recorded in TWIST counselor notes. Personal Service Representatives will attempt to discuss whether the customer is still working, satisfied with her work, in need or any other services that may help her to keep her job or get a better job.

Attachments:

Employment Counselor Job Description
Personal Service Representative Job Description
Employment Counselor/Personal Service Representative Customer Observation Form
Personal Service Representative Quality Counseling Records Review
Program Tracking Specialist Job Description
Program Tracking Specialist Performance Measures
Program Tracking Specialist Review Form

Workforce **S**olutions

PERSONAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

Position Description

The individual in this position helps residents get a job, keep a job or get a better job. She/he

- *guides* customers in identifying work and career goals;

- *plans, arranges and manages* Workforce Solutions service and other community services to help customers reach their goals; including

  - knowing when to test and how to use tests as an assessment tool
  - financial planning

    - using the financial aid application with a detailed plan for income support while attending school

    - identifying a job that provides experience leading to a better job to meet the customer's financial goals

    - identifying jobs using the customers skills that will meet the customer's financial requirements

- *maintains close contact* with customers to help them through each step toward their goals

- *reports* progress and outcomes in appropriate MIS

Reporting Requirements

Reports to _____ (line supervisor)

Internal Relationships

Resident Service Division: All career office staff but has a particular need to work well with Employment Counselors and Financial Aid Specialists.

Employer Service Division: Staffing Specialists, Business Consultants, Labor Market Analysts

Qualifications

- Bachelor degree and 1 year experience in career counseling or other areas of human resources.

    OR

- 4 years of experience working at Workforce Solutions in a professional position and a recommendation from current or most recent supervisor

- Knowledge of career counseling techniques

- Knowledge of the workplace and jobs, including requirements for entry into work as well as knowledge of Workforce Solutions' targeted industries and demand occupations, and Workforce Solutions' services and delivery process

- Familiar with services available in the community that can support her customers' employment plans and able to help customers get those services

- Able to conduct labor market research on individual employers and industries, as well as specific occupations and their education, experience and credential requirements

.
- Able to listen to customers, analyze expressed needs and suggest solutions and action plan. Uses tact, diplomacy, and persistence in providing suggestions to customers

- Proficient in Microsoft Windows and Office; familiar with and able to use computers; able to learn new software

- Works well in teams and with resident customers and other staff (flexible, congenial and adaptable)

- Able to communicate orally and in writing at a business level

- Self-motivated and self-directed

- Results-oriented

- Receives a level 2 certification from the National Workforce Institute within a year of the start date of work as a Personal Service Representative

Duties and Responsibilities

Job Placement
- Matches customers with appropriate Workforce Solutions job postings and contacts potential employers for the customer
- Helps customers to prepare resumes, write letters of introduction, and thank you notes.
- Gives advice on how to interview successfully
- Helps customer complete on line and other employment applications
- Matches customers with volunteer jobs to develop the customers work skills and experience leading to unsubsidized employment

Career Counseling

- Provides useful regional labor market information to help customers develop career goals Provides information on opportunities, qualifications, and expected pay in various industries and occupations.

- Provides information relating training courses and pre requisites to employment goals

- Provides electronic, print and other resources to help customers make career and job search decisions.

- Connects customers, who may benefit from other career office staff specialists or other community resources, to that specialist or resource

- Helps customers relate employment goals to their current skills, experience, abilities, and interests.

- Helps customers relate employment goals to education.

- Helps customers relate employment goals to other support services.

- Helps customers understand the time and financial commitment required to meet particular career goals - Guides the customer in choosing whether to make those commitments.

- Continues to work with a customer until employment goals are met

Performance Expectations

1. **During a 12-month period makes between 16 and 20 direct placements of customers assigned to a Service Representative**
   This expectation is measured in WorkInTexas.com and TWIST

2. **Provides quality contact referrals to job postings in WorkInTexas.com -** Supervisors measure this expectation by assessing referrals the service representative has made to job openings. A customer's work application in WorkInTexas.com must clearly document that the customer has all qualifications required in the posting to which the service representative referred her. A supervisor will select a sample of at least 5 referrals each month and rate the referrals on the Personal Service Representative Customer Service Observation and Records Review form.
   - ✓ Outstanding - Exceeds performance expectation – 90% - 100% of sampled customer referrals show that the customer met all the job requirements.
   - ✓ Proficient - Meets performance expectation – 80% to 89% of sampled customer referrals show that the customer met all the job requirements.
   - ✓ Unacceptable - Does not meet performance expectation – 79% or fewer of sampled customer referrals show that the customer met all the job requirements

3. **Provides good customer service** - Supervisors measure this expectation by observing at least two customer interviews a month, noting a description of the interaction and explaining why the staff did a good job and/or how she/he can improve. Record observations on the Personal Service Representative Customer Service Observation and Records Review form.

➢   The following lists some items the supervisor may observe and describe.
  • You greeted the customer correctly
  • You listened to understand what the customer wanted and needed from Workforce Solutions
  • You gave good advice and/or the appropriate service to help the customer meet her/his needs (this includes a review of the number of contacts you gave the customer)
  • You spent the time needed to give good service but did not spend excessive time
  • You explained or confirmed the "next step" to the customer and made an appointment or introduced the customer to a staff specialist when applicable

  ✓ Outstanding - Exceeds performance expectation – 90% - 100% of interviews observed meet expectations.

  ✓ Proficient - Meets performance expectation – 80% to 89% of interviews observed meet expectations.

  ✓ Unacceptable - Does not meet performance expectation – 79% or lower of interviews observed meet expectations.

4. **Provides ongoing quality counseling directed to helping the customer into unsubsidized employment.** *The supervisor will use the Quality Service Records review form to rate and document a random sample of at least 5 customers' records a quarter.*

➢   The supervisor will rate the entire customer record including records in all of the management information systems and the paper records for each customer reviewed:
  • Records show a clear assessment of the services the customer wants and needs to complete a successful work search
  • Records include a thorough employment plan consistent with the assessment and documented appropriately on the job search map or the more formal TWIST employment plan.
  • Work applications and job search maps, employment plans, and services complement each other.
  • Records indicate that the PSR regularly monitors the goals set by the customer

and the PSR and works with the customer to adjust them when necessary.

The supervisor reviews the entire customer record for five customers each month and determines if the records are acceptable or not acceptable.

- ✓ Outstanding - Exceeds performance expectation – 90% - 100% of customers' records reviewed meet expectations.

- ✓ Proficient - Meets performance expectation – 80% to 89% of customers' records reviewed meet expectations.

- ✓ Unacceptable - Does not meet performance expectation – 79% or lower of customers' records reviewed meet expectations.

Overall Performance Rating

Outstanding – Must be rated outstanding on at least 2 performance expectations and may not be unacceptable in the others.

Proficient – Is not rated either Outstanding or Unacceptable

Unacceptable – Is rated unacceptable in any one or more of the four performance expectations.

Appendix IV
Employer Services
Division Job
Descriptions

I. Staff Roles and Responsibilities

An ESD Director and/or Manager, with regards to his/her respective unit, oversee the quality and delivery of service to business customers, other staff, and partners in the Workforce System:

Employer Service Director:
- Manage the day-to-day activities of the Business Consultant Managers, Strategic Operations Manager
- Effectively interact with the funder and the other service providers to ensure effectiveness of workforce operations under WIOA
- Oversee monthly program placement and business development goals
- Drive strong levels of customer service to business partners and increase relevancy of the funder brand
- Ensure collaboration between community partners and service providers by maintaining an integrated system
- Champion performance improvement projects that focus on improving efficiency of the system
- Ensure the system is poised to accomplish all negotiated contracted goals, WIOA Primary Indicators, and meet the needs of the region's businesses and jobseekers

Strategic Operations Manager:
- Provide feasibility/capacity studies on the business system, covering operations and functions of the program
- Trouble shoots operational problems to ensure effective service delivery
- Develop detailed controlled reports and make recommendations based on results
- Conduct daily/weekly/monthly audits to measure compliance with local, state, federal policy and check for accuracy of data entries to verify database accuracy.
- Monitor staff responsiveness to customers
- Measure compliance with data security protocol
- Gathers system requirements, designs and configures internal database's (Salesforce) to accurately capture program performance data elements, increase data-processing automation and strengthen quality controls.
- Work with various members of management on analytical projects to determine goals and objectives
- Conducts regular audits on integrity of program's data records
- Is the SME for Salesforce
- Provides basic systems training for new and existing Business Consultants
- Provides LMI reporting to Business Consultants
- Works with HGAC staff on EEO, training and other requirements as requested
- Manages, administrative assistant, quality assurance coordinator and communications coordinator

Business Consultant Manager:

- Provides leadership and management support to team ensuring that they meet their weekly and monthly development, engagement, and placement goals.
- Responsible for developing a Quarterly Business Development plan including strategies to achieve contractual goals.
- Responsible for weekly, monthly, and quarterly Employer Service team reporting.
- Manage the Job Order Referral Process, ensuring that data are entered into Work In Texas & Salesforce systems in an accurate and timely manner.
- Ensure that all placements are validated via employer and/or jobseeker.
- Meet performance expectations and prepare regular reports of results.
- Networks and assist in developing relationships with industries and the industry commissions.
- Ensure career services providers are highly satisfied with quantity and quality of job opportunities being developed.
- Organize a system-wide professional development plan to share industry intelligence with all workforce system partners.

II. ESD Staff oversee the quality and delivery of service to business customers and partners in the Workforce System:

Business Consultant:

- Develop and maintain relationships with employers in order to generate job opportunities for jobseeker base.
- Offer business partners assistance with hiring, posting jobs, and attends industry events to become better connected to the communities in the region and assist in regional growth. These events include but are not limited to Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Groups, and Professional Industry Organizations.
- Market Work in Texas to employers and support them in uploading job opportunities
- Obtain employment orders or contracts for services.
- Organize special hiring help and events for business partners and equip recruiters with the tools to recruit and pre-screen jobseekers.
- Build and maintain a steady book of business to meet the needs of qualified candidates trained in the career offices.
- Make ongoing follow-up calls with jobseekers and employers to determine employment status and satisfaction with services delivered.
- Meet performance expectations and prepare regular reports of results.
- Develop, through constant cold-calling and maintain relationships with employers, job opportunities with sustainable living wages.

Quality Assurance Specialist:

- Responsible for monitoring, inspecting, and proposing measures to correct or improve the company's QA awareness and processes in order to meet established quality standards

- Conduct daily/weekly/monthly audits to measure compliance with funder policy and check for accuracy of data entries to verify database accuracy
- Compile audit data to understand the team trends and create reports to present audit results
- Detect coaching needs and take actions in accordance with these needs in order to ensure compliance with quality standards
- Completing QA quarterly action plans and improvement logs
- Create weekly QA Trivia regarding policy and procedures to test the team comprehension
- Track professional development training hours for all staff
- Perform as the backup Workforce Solutions Local Information Security Officer
- Work with various members of management on analytical projects related to QA standards
- Work with SOM and funder to support system-wide quality initiatives

Administrative Assistant
- Produces information by transcribing, formatting, inputting, editing, retrieving, copying, and transmitting text, data, and graphics.
- Use of internal tools and internet to unearth hard-to-find information.
- Read, research, and rout correspondence; draft letters and documents; collect and analyze information; initiate telecommunications.
- Maintains the business services team calendar by planning and scheduling meetings, conferences, teleconferences, and travel.
- Support by attending and note-taking at meetings.
- Maintains customer confidence and protects operations by keeping information confidential.
- Prepares reports by collecting and analyzing information.
- Secures information by completing data base backups.
- Contributes to team effort by accomplishing related results as needed.
- Assist in reconciliation projects.
- Ensure operation of equipment by completing preventive maintenance requirements; calling for repairs; maintaining equipment inventories; evaluating new equipment and techniques.
- Assist with QA Incompletes

Communications Coordinator:
- Schedule human resources topics with subject matter experts for employer education seminars as well as coordinate the event logistics and promotions to inspire employer's attendance.
- Schedule Educational Events in coordination with BC's, Chambers and Career Offices
- Obtain Speakers and Venues (Pro Bono) for our Educational Events
- Approves speakers and content to ensure SHRM and HCRI Continuing education credits
- Coordinates schedules with Business Consultants for manning of educational events
- May be onsite for educational events to help with registration and setup

- Attends HR seminars to gather data on potential speakers and topics
- Collects and synthesize information related to Employers, Industries and community engagement by spotlighting valuable information and trends via monthly newsletters.
- Increase community engagement of the Employer Service Division the Communication Coordinator provides support by identifying events within the Gulf Coast region that the team may partner with to broaden ESD relationships within the region and expand the exposure of HR Seminars.
- Assist with QA Incompletes
- Assist in reconciliation projects.

Job Description: HR Consultant – Current Worker Training

Position Focus:	Offers business solutions based on employer needs. Develops and maintains relationships, consults on industry specific services, and provides local employers with human resource solutions to help organizations meet their business goals.

Division/Department:	ESD	Location:	West Alabama
Reports to:	Outreach & Recruitment Manager	Team:	Current Worker Training

Type of Position:	Position Duration:	Wage Type:
Full Time	Regular	Exempt

PRIMARY DUTIES

- Market and outreach to regular and prospective customers to promote services offered through Workforce Solutions
- Analyze employer's business needs and provide customized solutions
- Educate employers on training program regulations and requirements
- Consult local employers on tax incentive credits and technical assistance with government regulations and programs
- Plan and promote career and employment-related programs and events, such as career planning presentations, work experience programs, job fairs, and career workshops
- Identify potential customers through market research and staying apprised of market trends
- Prepare proposals, service plans, and needs assessment within 48 hours upon recommending the employer for approval for Talent Development services
- Work with employers, community partners, and Workforce Solutions staff to create & manage events on the EasyVirtualFair platform
- Compose detailed case notes of all customer interactions that include activities, recommendations and outcomes in appropriate management information systems
- Serve as the initial and continuing point of contact with employers, visit job sites regularly and follow up with employers being served
- Keep apprised of Workforce Solutions services and HR trends impacting the Gulf Coast Region
- Make presentations to community partners and participate in networking events
- Participate in special projects as assigned

QUALIFICATIONS

- BA or BS in Business Administration, Marketing, Human Resources, Psychology, or related field, or at least 4-5 years direct experience in business administration, marketing, human resources, or public workforce system (preferred)
- Strategic thinker with knowledge of human resource topics, principles and methods for marketing services and methods of providing quality customer service
- Effective verbal and written communication skills, proficient with public speaking and able to present data to clients, managers, and executive leaders
- Analytical thinker with the ability to use multiple sources of information to drive business strategy, solve customer needs, suggest solutions and develop actions plans
- Collaborate with business customers and all levels of staff inside and outside of organization
- Self-directed and able to make rational decisions based on what is best for a customer
- Results oriented, self-motivated, and adaptable to changing priorities, effectively prioritize tasks and manage time

- Proficient in Microsoft Windows and Office, familiar with and able to use computers, able to learn new software

- Valid Driver's License and Insurance

This position is performed in an office setting and requires the ability to sit/stoop/stand, repetitive typing motions, may require the ability to lift up to 30 lbs and includes light travel around the Houston Gulf Coast region. ETC is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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I understand that my performance will be rated based upon the performance expectations attached as an addendum to the job description.

I understand that this document does not represent a written employment contract and does not alter the at-will status of my employment. Either the Company or I have the right to terminate my employment at any time with or without notice.

_____
EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

_____
EMPLOYEE NAME

Job Description: HR Service Representative

Position Focus:	Represents Workforce Solutions to the public. Conducts outreach and marketing to employers in the Gulf Coast region to offer human resource services such as recruiting for their open positions, employee or candidate training, employer tax credits and incentives, and offers technical assistance with government regulations and programs.

Division/Department:	ESD	**Location:**	West Alabama
Reports to:	Employer Service Supervisor - Outreach & Recruitment	**Team:**	Outreach & Recruitment

Type of Position:	**Position Duration:**	**Wage Type:**
Full Time	Regular	Exempt

PRIMARY DUTIES

- Market and offer business solutions, talent development and other workforce services to employers
- Create thorough and accurate job postings that will attract quality applicants and build customer loyalty
- Provide excellent customer service by assisting employers with technical support, order processing, and by listening to their concerns; resolve customer complaints timely
- Document detailed records of all customer interactions in management information systems
- Work with employers, community partners, and Workforce Solutions staff to create & manage events on the EasyVirtualFair platform
- Ensure confidentiality of documents and personal identifying information by complying with industry standards and guidelines as well as incorporating best cyber security practices
- Monitor and maintain the integrity of all data, and report any fraudulent activities
- Research and monitor community trends that indicate need for services in HR or talent development
- Communicate best practices and customer feedback with partners and team on assigned projects
- Collaborate with industry partners and team to ensure customers are being served
- Develop and maintain constructive and cooperative working relationships with community and workforce partners
- Conduct orientations on Workforce Solutions services at meetings and networking events
- Keep apprised of Workforce Solutions services and HR trends impacting the Gulf Coast Region
- Participate in special projects as assigned

QUALIFICATIONS

- BA/BS (or equivalent) in Business Administration, Marketing, Human Resources, Psychology, or related field (preferred)
- 2 to 3 years of inside sales and marketing or business outreach experience required
- Strategic thinker with knowledge of principles and methods for marketing services, human resource topics (training, recruiting, application process, interviewing, hiring, etc.) and provides consistent quality customer service
- Analytical with the ability to evaluate multiple information sources to drive business strategy, solve customer needs, suggest solutions and develop actions plans

Effective Date: 10/1/2020

- Effective communicator both orally and in writing at a business level required, proficient with public speaking and able to present data to clients, managers, and executive leaders (preferred)

- Driven by customer service to make high-volume calls, maintain a positive attitude and adapt to customer needs

- Productive multitasker, collaborator, efficient time manager, remains calm in stressful situations

- Results oriented, self-motivated, and adaptable to changing priorities

- Proficient in Microsoft Windows and Office, familiar with and able to use computers, able to learn new software

- Valid Driver's License and Insurance

This position is performed in an office setting and requires the ability to sit/stoop/stand, repetitive typing motions, may require the ability to lift up to 30 lbs and includes light travel around the Houston Gulf Coast region. ETC is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria.

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_____

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

_____

EMPLOYEE NAME

Job Description: Recruiter – New Worker Training

Position Focus:	Assist in filling open positions, targeting hard to fill and high-volume postings. Prepare candidates from eligible pool for employment opportunities.

Division/Department:	ESD	Location:	West Alabama
Reports to:	Recruitment Supervisor	Team:	New Worker Training

Type of Position:	Position Duration:	Wage Type:
Full Time	Regular	Exempt

PRIMARY DUTIES

- Source and recruit candidates through direct channels, social media, and relationship building
- Screen and refer qualified candidates to job postings in WorkInTexas.com
- Assess candidates' relevant knowledge, skills, soft skills, experience and aptitudes
- Coach candidates on career development techniques, such as job search and application strategies, resume writing, and interview skills
- Initiate outreach to present Workforce Solutions Talent Development services to employers in the Gulf Coast area
- Act as a point of contact and build influential relationships with internal and external customers
- Create analytical and well documented recruiting reports
- Compose detailed case notes of all customer interactions that include activities, recommendations and outcomes in appropriate management information systems
- Ensure confidentiality of documents and personal identifying information by complying with industry standards and guidelines as well as incorporating best cyber security practices
- Arrange and monitor logistics of any events hosted for customers, such as jobsite hiring events
- Follow up to ensure effective delivery of services/products
- Maintain job postings based on activity levels and employer needs
- Communicate customer feedback with partnering units; collaborate and explore creative methods to improve workflow based on feedback
- Travel to attend events and meetings at locations outside of ETC when required and participate in projects as assigned

QUALIFICATIONS

- BA or BS in Business Administration, Marketing, Human Resources, Psychology, or related field, or at least 2-3 years direct experience in business administration, marketing, or human resources (preferred)
- Strategic thinker with knowledge of human resource topics and alternative methods of recruiting qualified candidates using tools such LinkedIn, Facebook, and other social media
- Effective verbal and written communication skills that blend professionalism, friendliness, builds rapport and trust
- Analytical and proficient at building reports with data derived from candidate screening and assessment
- Driven by customer service to make high-volume calls, maintain a positive attitude and adapt to customer needs
- Self-directed and able to make rational decisions based on what is best for a customer
- Results oriented, self-motivated, adaptable to changing priorities, effectively prioritize tasks and manage time

- Proficient in Microsoft Windows and Office, familiar with and able to use computers, able to learn new software and database systems
- Valid Driver's License and Insurance

This position is performed in an office setting and requires the ability to sit/stoop/stand, repetitive typing motions, may require the ability to lift up to 30 lbs and includes light travel around the Houston Gulf Coast region. ETC is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria.

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EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

EMPLOYEE NAME

Job Description: Recruiter (Outreach & Recruitment)

Position Focus:	Assist in filling open positions, targeting hard to fill and high-volume postings. Prepare candidates for employment opportunities.

Division/Department:	ESD	**Location:**	West Alabama
Reports to:	Manager – Outreach & Recruitment	**Team:**	Outreach & Recruitment

Type of Position:	**Position Duration:**	**Wage Type:**
Full Time	Regular	Exempt

PRIMARY DUTIES

- Source and recruit candidates through direct channels, social media, and relationship building
- Screen and refer qualified candidates to job postings in WorkInTexas.com
- Assess candidates' relevant knowledge, skills, soft skills, experience and aptitudes
- Coach candidates on career development techniques, such as job search and application strategies, resume writing, and interview skills
- Initiate outreach to present Workforce Solutions Talent Development services to employers in the Gulf Coast area
- Act as a point of contact and build influential relationships with internal and external customers
- Create analytical and well documented recruiting reports
- Compose detailed case notes of all customer interactions that include activities, recommendations and outcomes in appropriate management information systems
- Ensure confidentiality of documents and personal identifying information by complying with industry standards and guidelines as well as incorporating best cyber security practices
- Arrange and monitor logistics of any events hosted for customers, such as jobsite hiring events
- Follow up to ensure effective delivery of services/products
- Maintain job postings based on activity levels and employer needs
- Communicate customer feedback with partnering units; collaborate and explore creative methods to improve workflow based on feedback
- Travel to attend events and meetings at locations outside of ETC when required and participate in projects as assigned

QUALIFICATIONS

- BA or BS in Business Administration, Marketing, Human Resources, Psychology, or related field, or at least 2-3 years direct experience in business administration, marketing, or human resources (preferred)

- Strategic thinker with knowledge of human resource topics and alternative methods of recruiting qualified candidates using tools such LinkedIn, Facebook, and other social media

- Effective verbal and written communication skills that blend professionalism, friendliness, builds rapport and trust

- Analytical and proficient at building reports with data derived from candidate screening and assessment

- Driven by customer service to make high-volume calls, maintain a positive attitude and adapt to customer needs

- Self-directed and able to make rational decisions based on what is best for a customer

- Results oriented, self-motivated, adaptable to changing priorities, effectively prioritize tasks and manage time

- Proficient in Microsoft Windows and Office, familiar with and able to use computers, able to learn new software and database systems

- Valid Driver's License and Insurance

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I understand that my performance will be rated based upon the performance expectations attached as an addendum to the job description.

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_____
EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

_____
EMPLOYEE NAME

Job Description: Recruiter (Special Projects)

Position Focus:	Assist in filling open positions, targeting hard to fill and high-volume postings. Prepare candidatess for employment opportunities.

Division/Department:	ESD	**Location:**	West Alabama
Reports to:	Manager – Special Projects	**Team:**	Operations

Type of Position:	**Position Duration:**	**Wage Type:**
Full Time	Regular	Exempt

PRIMARY DUTIES

- Source and recruit candidates through direct channels, social media, and relationship building
- Screen and refer qualified candidates to job postings in WorkInTexas.com
- Assess candidates' relevant knowledge, skills, soft skills, experience and aptitudes
- Coach candidates on career development techniques, such as job search and application strategies, resume writing, and interview skills
- Act as a point of contact and build influential relationships with internal and external customers
- Provide analytical and well documented recruiting reports to the rest of the team
- Compose detailed case notes of all customer interactions that include activities, recommendations and outcomes in appropriate management information systems
- Ensure confidentiality of documents and personal identifying information by complying with industry standards and guidelines as well as incorporating best cyber security practices
- Arrange and monitor logistics of any events hosted for customers, such as jobsite hiring events
- Follow up to ensure effective delivery of services/products
- Maintain job postings based on activity levels and employer needs
- Communicate customer feedback with partnering units; collaborate and explore creative methods to improve workflow based on feedback
- Travel to attend events and meetings at locations outside of ETC when required and participate in projects as assigned

QUALIFICATIONS

- BA or BS in Business Administration, Marketing, Human Resources, Psychology, or related field, or at least 2-3 years direct experience in business administration, marketing, or human resources (preferred)

- Strategic thinker with knowledge of human resource topics and alternative methods of recruiting qualified candidates using tools such LinkedIn, Facebook, and other social media

- Effective verbal and written communication skills that blend professionalism, friendliness, builds rapport and trust

- Analytical and proficient at building reports with data derived from candidate screening and assessment

- Driven by customer service to make high-volume calls, maintain a positive attitude and adapt to customer needs

- Self-directed and able to make rational decisions based on what is best for a customer

- Results oriented, self-motivated, adaptable to changing priorities, effectively prioritize tasks and manage time

- Proficient in Microsoft Windows and Office, familiar with and able to use computers, able to learn new software and database systems

- Valid Driver's License and Insurance

This position is performed in an office setting and requires the ability to sit/stoop/stand, repetitive typing motions, may require the ability to lift up to 30 lbs and includes light travel around the Houston Gulf Coast region. ETC is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria.
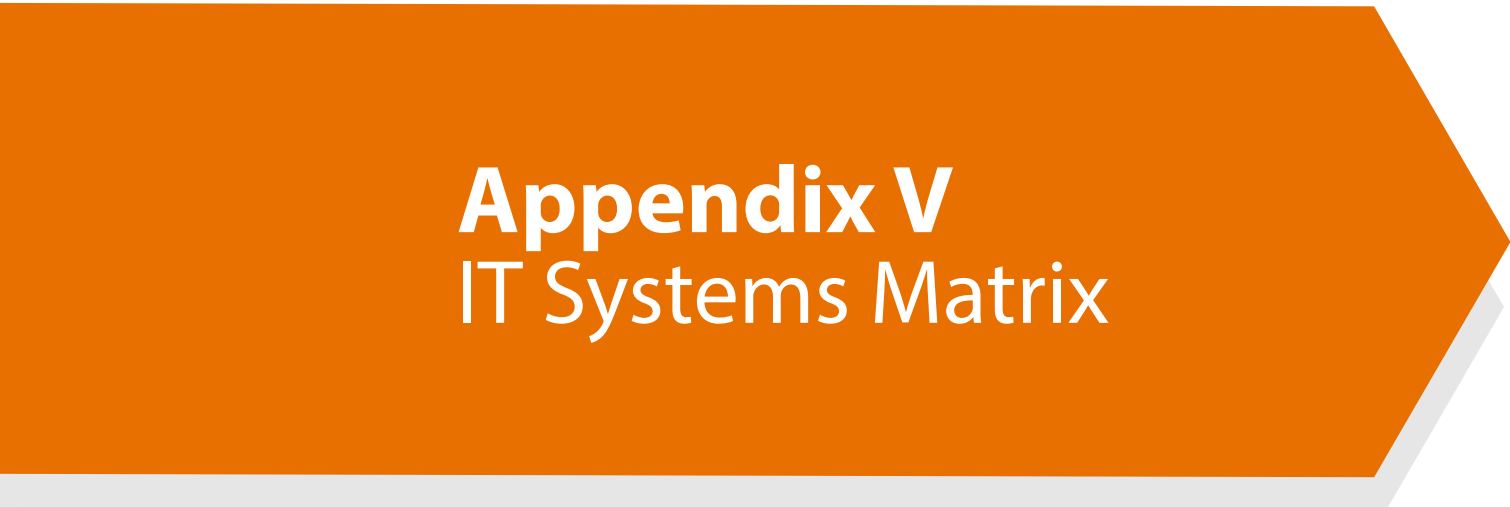
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I am employed by Employment & Training Centers Inc. and assigned the duties described in this document. I have read the above job description and understand that I am responsible for carrying out the duties described within the job description, as well as additional responsibilities as assigned. I understand my FLSA classification has been established in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and that I will be paid accordingly. I acknowledge that non-exempt employees will be paid at the overtime rate for any time worked beyond 40 hours in a given work week. I further understand that overtime must be preapproved by my immediate supervisor or a member of the management team. In the interest of maintaining accurate records, I agree to report my actual time worked using the system designated by management.

I understand that my performance will be rated based upon the performance expectations attached as an addendum to the job description.

I understand that this document does not represent a written employment contract and does not alter the at-will status of my employment. Either the Company or I have the right to terminate my employment at any time with or without notice.

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EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

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EMPLOYEE NAME

Appendix V
IT Systems Matrix

System Name	Description	Manufacturer	Version (Build)	Services Using System	Roles Using System	Current Integration Approach	Integration Capabilities	Future Integration Approach	Relation to Portal Functionality	Phase
Current Workforce Solutions Website/Portal	https://www.wrksolutions.com/	Ingeniux Corporation	Version 10 (WFS to confirm)		All Staff, People	Manual – All information in system is input manually by users	NOTE: Need to determine if system has integration capabilities for the future or not. Does it have open, published API or other integration options?	Would like option to have data and/or content from other systems populated with minimal human manipulation	Functionality of this system is expected to be totally subsumed by the Portal	1
DocuWare	Document management software that serves as repository for People documentation	DocuWare Corporation	Version 70	Financial Assistance Office		Manual – Career Office staff scan into DW; Financial assistance documents uploaded through online form are automatically submitted to DocuWare				1
Appointy	Online scheduling software	Appointy Software Inc.	Enterprise Plan	Career Office, Employer Service	Greeters, Program Assistants, Resource Specialists, Employment Counselors, Personal Service Reps, Business Consultants, Recruiters, People					1
Zoom	Business communication platform	Zoom Video Communications, Inc.		Career Office, Employer Service						1
govDelivery	Web-based e-mail/text/social subscription management system	Granicus	WFS to confirm							1
PandaDoc	Esignature	PandaDoc	Version 2	Career Office/WF IT	WFS IT			None		1
Gazelle	Customer Tracking and Reporting	Abila	Version 2018.3.0.29284	Career Office/WF IT	WFS IT			None		1
Eventbrite	Event management and ticketing	Eventbrite		Customer/Career Office/Staff	WFS IT	None	None	None		1
Mobilosoft	Manage location data	Mobilosoft	3.5.13	Career Office	Customer	Connected from wrksotlutions.com	None	None		1
Learning Management System	TBD									2
TWIST	Case management system			Career Office	Greeters, Employment Counselors, Personal Service Reps	Manual – All information in system is input manually by users	NOTE: Need to determine if system has integration capabilities for the future or not. Does it have open, published API or other integration options?	Would like option to have data and/or content from other systems populated with minimal human manipulation	Functionality of this system will remain intact and cannot be subsumed by the Portal	N/A
WorkInTexas.com	Separate website run by Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). WFS constituents use this as its main vehicle for finding employment opportunities.	Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)		Career Office, People	Greeters, Program Assistants, Resource Specialists, Employment Counselors, Personal Service Reps, Business Consultants, Recruiters, Regional Navigators, People	Manual – All information in system is input manually by users	NOTE: Need to determine if system has integration capabilities for the future or not. Does it have open, published API or other integration options?	Would like option to have data and/or content from other systems populated with minimal human manipulation	Functionality of this system will remain intact and cannot be subsumed by the Portal	N/A
Microsoft Teams	Business communication platform	Microsoft		Career Office, Employer Service						N/A
SharePoint	Web-based collaborative platform	Microsoft	SharePoint Online							N/A
Office 365	Microsoft Office	Microsoft			WFS IT					N/A

System Name	Description	Manufacturer	Version (Build)	Services Using System	Roles Using System	Current Integration Approach	Integration Capabilities	Future Integration Approach	Relation to Portal Functionality	Phase
LISO System	Records systems permissions for Board staff & contractors			None	WFS IT	Not currently connected to wrksolutions.com		None	Functionality of this system will remain intact and cannot be subsumed by the Portal	N/A
Microix	Inventory Management System	Abila	Version 2019.001.3	Career Office/WF IT	WFS IT			None		N/A
FACS	Finacial Aid Communitation System	Abila	Version 20.3.0.0	Career Office/WF IT	WFS IT			None		N/A
SurveyMonkey	Online survey	SurveyMonkey		None	WFS IT	None	None	None	None	N/A
TWC Mainframe	State Mainframe	State Mainframe		WF IT and Career Office	WF IT and Career Office	None	None	None		N/A

Appendix VI
Functional
Recommendations

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	R1	**Meeting Scheduler**	Request, accept or reject meetings	• Residents schedule meetings with Staff by selecting service needed, then preferred date/time, and/or staff member, in-person or online options, through Appointy web app • Request office resources (computer, tablet, printer, fax machine, TDD machine, etc.) • Send notifications via Resident's preferred communication method (automated phone message, email or SMS) to provide reminder of upcoming appointment • Enables Resident to change or cancel appointment • Provides robust reporting on service appointments to integrate into CRM to inform personalized communications	Appointy	Both	• Improves customer service by reducing wait time for Residents • Appointments are assigned to Staff and can be re-assigned if needed • Increases staff productivity with planning and resourcing	• Other requests in general request form with free form text • All forms would automatically go to designated counselor	Resident Profile	Appointy
1	R2	**Enhanced Communication**	Communicate with Staff via internal email, chat or video conferencing; receive SMS notifications from Staff	• Email, chat, notifications, SMS and video conferencing • Residents should launch communication choice in simple dropdown or other method that works effectively for computer or smart phone access	Resident Profile	Both	• Ease of communication between Residents and Staff • Residents receive automated notifications and reminders for appointments via their preferred communication method	-	Archive Communications Sent and Received	-
1	R3	**Video Conferencing**	Video conferencing communications	• In-portal video conference solution for meetings, trainings and seminars (Residents are end users only)	None	Both	• Single platform for all users • Users remain within platform for ease of use and to increase session duration	-	-	Zoom
1	R4	**Online Forms**	Residents fill out required forms in portal and submit to Staff electronically	• Online forms (English and Spanish) would be available in drop-down window for users could select • Common forms include Job Search Logs, Financial Assistance Applications, etc. • Automatically submits to Staff for review and submissions are logged in Resident's profile	None	Both	• Reduces paperwork • Saves Staff time • Drives more virtual/electronic communications • Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions	• Job Search • Financial Assistance application • Other common forms to be determined	Resident Profile	DocuWare
1	R5	**Help Desk Support**	Help Desk Support for any Service – Phone	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Help desk submission would be automatically routed to designated counselor (or other staff member TBD) • If non-account person, it would be placed in queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password	Unknown	Both	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot	-	-	-

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
	R6	**Help Desk Support**	Help Desk Support for any Service – Chat	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Resident could open chat window that goes into queue and connects to help desk personnel to dialogue in chat session • If non-account person, it would be placed in a queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password	Unknown	Both	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot			
	R7	**Help Desk Support**	Help Desk Support for any Service – Email/Form	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Resident could open form located on their portal homepage that goes into queue for help desk personnel to respond • If non-account person, it would be placed in a queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password	Unknown	Both	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot			
1	R8	**Virtual Document Submission**	Submit requested or required documentation	• Upload documents digitally to storage location for Personal Service Representatives to retrieve • Example documents could be scanned form, PDF or JPG, i.e. photo of driver's license using cell phone	Unknown	Both	• Provides transparency to Residents on required documentation • Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions • Provides tool to more easily manage documents • Reduces Staff time spent on collecting and managing documents	-	Resident Profile	DocuWare

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	R9	Calendar	Calendar shown on dashboard that includes upcoming appointments and relevant events	• Listing of job search seminars, online learning, job fairs, other system events that may be of value to Residents • Ability to sort events in multiple ways such as by event/topic, ZIP, career office location, online vs. in-person, etc. • Relevant events could be put onto calendar by Staff probably based on Resident's profile and/or location • Residents could accept or search for another date/location	• Seminars, job fairs, & other events tied to current location, or primary ZIP • Appointments from Appointy	Both	• Similar to current functionality on wrksolutions.com • Upcoming events and appointment reminders should appear when Resident logs into account	-	-	-
1	R10	Job Search RSS Widget	Displays new job openings in user's location or in designated area	• Ability to view and sort "Hot Jobs" and "Jobs Now" listings in multiple ways such as by industry, job title, ZIP/location, etc.	• Currently entered manually to page on wrksolutions.com • Set up RSS-enabled page to target and/or geolocate; RSS-enabled widget to display on dashboard • In future, could potentially be tied directly into WorkInTexas.com	Both	• Provides platform to communicate full value of services to Residents • Connects Residents to jobs • Increases engagement with Residents • Better targeting of "Jobs Now" listings to reach specific customers		-	-
	R11	WorkInTexas.com Icon/Link	Direct link to Texas Workforce Commission job database	• Residents use quick link to reach WorkInTexas.com database	www.mytxcareer.com & www.WorkInTexas.com	Both	• Ease of use to connect to WorkInTexas.com from Resident's dashboard • Enables Staff to promote importance of creating and building out WorkInTexas.com profile to connect them to jobs			
1	R12	Social Media – Facebook	Widgets for Facebook social media service would be available to load in Resident's dashboard	• Automatic listing of @AdvanceMyCareer (WFS) social media posts to drive engagement with all stakeholders	RSS-enabled widget	Computer	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services to Residents • Connects Residents to jobs, events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with Residents	-	-	-
1	R13	Social Media – LinkedIn	Widgets for LinkedIn social media service would be available to load in Professional Resident's dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with all stakeholders	RSS-enabled widget	Computer	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services • Connects Residents to jobs, events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with Residents	-	-	-
1	R14	Social Media – Twitter	Not applicable to Residents					-	-	-

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	R15	Social Media – Instagram	Widgets for Instagram social media service would be available to load in Resident and Young Adults' dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with all stakeholders	RSS-enabled widget	Computer	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services • Connects Residents to jobs, events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with Residents	-	-	-
1	R16	EasyVirtualJobFair Icon/Link	Residents directly access EasyVirtualJobFair platform, or it is directly integrated into portal so users are accessing within their user account	• Direct integration with existing virtual job fair platform to allow participation without leaving website • Seamless integration with "drag and drop" widget on dashboard	EasyVirtualJobFair platform	Both	• Ability for Resident to use same login credentials for both Workforce Solutions portal & EasyVirtualJobFair platform • Better tracking of attendee and their session length • Increases session length on Workforce Solutions portal	-	Attendance	EasyVirtualJobFair
1	R17	Geolocation Mapping	Directs Residents to nearest Career Office location and other community resources	• Displays in map format closest Career Office locations (designates if Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) or Veterans Services available) to user • Shows community resources such as public libraries, child care facilities, food banks, etc.	User Location Data	Both	• Better targeting of customers to nearby resources • Reduces Staff time researching resources for Residents	-	-	Mobilosoft
1	R18	Video Player	In-house created videos including marketing and seminars	• All users can view streaming content with call to action • Temporary solution for job search seminar videos and orientations until Learning Management System (LMS) is procured	YouTube (some videos currently reside on Workforce Solutions' YouTube channel)		• Enables Residents to view videos within portal • Marketing videos urge Residents to create account on portal • Attend virtually job search seminars and online learning for Residents	-	-	-
2	R19	Learning Management System	Residents take online courses, seminars and orientations	• Ability for Residents to view video courses anytime, anywhere • Allows Resident to come back to continue viewing where they left off • Track completion of video content and report to Staff, i.e. job search seminars, required SNAP/TANF/UI orientations and other similar employment training content • Reminders to start or complete training within specified period via their preferred communication method (automated phone message, SMS or email)	LMS	Both	• Platform to house, deliver and manage all training content • Tracks and reports completion of job search seminars and required orientations • Enables Residents to schedule online orientations/workshops at convenient time for them • Provides automated reminders for Residents to complete required training • Allows Staff to focus on services that deliver higher value to Residents	-	Resident Profile	TBD

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	R20	**Search**	Search all content and types of files in portal	• Residents should be able to search all content and file types such as .PDF, .PPT, .DOC, .XLS, video formats, etc. on portal based on access level	Portal	Both	• Increases usability of portal • Ability for Residents to be able to quickly and easily find information they need • Audit statistics in Search Terms report to serve up relevant content and inform content strategy, SEO, FAQs, etc.			
				TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS						
1	R21	**Directory Server Authentication Sign-in**	*This is technology – account set up is use case*	-	-	Both	• Provides secure access for all users	• Username & password	Resident Profile	DocuWare
2+	R22	**Single Sign-on**	Sign on to multiple applications automatically from the home page/dashboard for each user	• Allows user to set up account and authenticates user during each log-in and allows pass-through access to other websites (i.e.: WorkInTexas.com, pending ability to access system)	Single Sign-on system	Both	• Provides secure access for all users	• Basic Resident information	Resident Profile	DocuWare
1	R23	**Portal Set-up**	Portal set-up after new account set-up	• User has ability to personalize home page/dashboard within portal by selecting widgets and applications • Provides at-a-glance preview of important information and access all relevant apps or data • Everything in workspace would be confidential to them		Computer	• Increases usability of portal • Personalized set-up allows Residents to access system services and resources more effectively	-	-	-
1	R24	**Portal Administration**	Manage content and key admin functions in portal	• Allows designated Staff to assist in regaining access, add or change content, create new forms, add/edit job descriptions, view reports, metrics, change security settings such as passwords, etc.				-	-	-
1	R25	**Account Set-up**	Open up a new account	• Users can set up account to access important applications and data • Residents required to create account using email address (those without email addresses will be directed to create one using free email service) • Based on profile, they would have access to certain applications and data to build their portal dashboard including free email and calendar set up if they don't already have one • User information and services provided would feed into CRM to inform personalized communications		Both	• Added security to customer sessions with Staff • Enables enhanced communications to multiple channels, i.e. email, chat, video	• Basic information (name, cell phone, address, and relevant information that Staff would need to perform job duties)	Resident Profile	DocuWare
1	R26	**Enhanced Security Features**	*This is technology – account set up is use case*	• Encryption-based database to store sensitive information and submit confidential information via email and chat • Allows for secure auditing of information • Sets time limit for keeping information • Consider reCAPTCHA to prevent robots from opening new accounts		Both	• Assures confidentiality of data submitted to Staff • Reduces exposure that might present security risk	-	-	-

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	R27	**Web Content Accessibility**		• Provides access to web content for Residents with disabilities		Both	• Meets WCAG 2.1 Level AA accessibility guidelines – https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/	-	-	-
1	R28	**Language Translation**		• Users can select preferred language to view website and portal-generated content (Phase 1: English & Spanish) • Needs ability to support other languages in future (TBD) based on our region's needs		Both	• Increases usage of portal among Limited English Proficient (LEP) Residents • Meets federal requirements for language access	-	-	-

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	E1	**Meeting Scheduler**	Request, accept or reject meetings	• Employers schedule meetings with Staff by selecting service needed, then preferred date/time, and/or staff member, in-person or online options, through Appointy web app • Enables Employers to change or cancel appointment • Provides robust reporting on service appointments to integrate into CRM to inform personalized communications	Appointy database	Both	• Improves customer service by reducing wait time for Employers • Appointments are assigned to Staff and can be re-assigned if needed • Increases staff productivity with planning and resourcing	• Request appointments; request staff resources; any other requests in general request form with free form text • All forms would automatically go to appropriate staff member	Employer Profile	Appointy
1	E2	**Enhanced Communication**	Communicate with Staff via internal email, chat or video conferencing; receive SMS notifications from Staff	• Email, chat, notifications, SMS and video conferencing • Employers should launch communication choice in simple dropdown or other method that works effectively for computer (primary device) or smart phone access	Employer profile	Both	• Ease of communication between Employers and Staff • Employers receive automated notifications and reminders for appointments via their preferred communication method	-	Archive Communications Sent and Received	-
1	E3	**Video Conferencing**	Video conferencing communications	• In-portal video conference solution for meetings, trainings and seminars (Employers are end users only)	None	Both	• Single platform for all users • Users remain within platform for ease of use and to increase session duration	-	-	Zoom
1	E4	**Online Forms**	Employers fill out required forms in the portal and submit to Staff electronically	• Online forms (English only) would be available electronically either directly in Employer dashboard or via link sent by Staff • Automatically submits to Staff for review and submissions are logged in Employer profile	None	Both	• Provides transparency to Employers on required documentation • Reduces paperwork • Saves Staff time • Drives more virtual/electronic communications • Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions	• Common forms to be determined	Employer Profile	DocuWare
1	E5	**Help Desk Support**	Help Desk Support for any Service – Phone	• Assistance for all customers for any need • If non-account person, it would be placed in a queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for staff to reset password	Unknown	Both	• Enables Employers to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Employers • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Employers to troubleshoot	-	-	-

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	E6	**Help Desk Support**	Help Desk Support for any Service – Chat	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Employer could open chat window that goes into queue and connects to help desk personnel to dialogue in chat session • If non-account person, it would be placed in a queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for staff to reset password	Unknown	Both	• Enables Employers to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Employers • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Employers to troubleshoot	-	-	-
1	E7	**Help Desk Support**	Help Desk Support for any Service – Email/Form	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Employers could open form located on their portal homepage that goes into queue for help desk personnel to respond • If non-account person, it would be placed in queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for staff to reset password	Unknown	Both	• Enables Employers to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Employers • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Employers to troubleshoot	-	-	-
1	E8	**Virtual Document Submission**	Submit requested or required documentation	• Employers submit documents digitally through email or direct upload, which would feed to their profile, or to Business Consultant or Recruiter to review and upload to DocuWare • Example documents could be scanned forms or PDFs of job training logs, pay stubs, etc.	Unknown	Both	• Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions • Provides tool to more easily manage documents • Reduces Staff time spent on collecting and managing documents	-	Employer Profile	DocuWare
1	E9	**Calendar**	Calendar shown on dashboard that includes upcoming appointments and relevant events	• Listing of HR seminars, online learning, job fairs, other system events that may be of value to Employers • Ability to sort events in multiple ways such as by event/topic, ZIP, online vs. in-person, etc. • Relevant events could be put onto calendar by Staff probably based on Employer's profile and/or location • Employers could accept or search for another date/location	HR Training & Development seminars calendar, job fairs, & other events tied their current location, or their primary ZIP; Appointments from Appointy	Both	Event calendar similar to current functionality; appointments as reminders whenever a person logs into their account in the portal.	-	-	-
1	E10	**Job Search RSS Widget**	Not applicable for Employers							

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	E11	WorkInTexas.com Icon/Link	Direct link to Texas Workforce Commission job database	• Employers use quick link to reach WorkInTexas.com database	www.WorkInTexas.com	Both	• Ease of use to connect to WorkInTexas.com from their dashboard			
1	E12	Social Media – Facebook	Not applicable for Employers					-	-	-
1	E13	Social Media – LinkedIn	Widgets for LinkedIn social media service would be available to load in Employer's dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with Employers	RSS-enabled widget	Computer	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services • Connects Employers to events, HR Training & Development seminars, online learnings on host of topics • Increases engagement with Employers	-	-	-
1	E14	Social Media – Twitter	Not applicable for Employers					-	-	-
1	E15	Social Media – Instagram	Not applicable for Employers					-	-	-
1	E16	EasyVirtualJobFair Icon/Link	Employers directly access EasyVirtualJobFair platform, or it is directly integrated into portal so users are accessing within their user account	• Direct integration with existing virtual job fair platform to allow participation without leaving website • Seamless integration with "drag and drop" widget on dashboard	EasyVirtualJobFair platform	Both	• Ability for Employers to use same login credentials for both Workforce Solutions portal & EasyVirtualJobFair platform • Better tracking of attendee and their session length • Increases session length on Workforce Solutions portal	-	Attendance	EasyVirtualJobFair
1	E17	Geolocation mapping	Not applicable for Employers							
1	E18	Video Player	In-house created videos including marketing and seminars	• All users can view streaming content with call to action • Temporary solution for job search seminar videos and orientations until Learning Management System (LMS) is procured	YouTube (some videos currently reside on Workforce Solutions' YouTube channel)		• Enables Employers to view videos within portal • Marketing videos urge Employers to create account on portal • Attend virtually HR Training & Development seminars and online learning for Employers	-	-	-
2	E19	Learning Management System	Applicable for Employers?							
1	E20	Search	Search all content and types of files in portal	• Employers should be able to search all content and file types such as .PDF, .PPT, .DOC, .XLS, video formats, etc. on portal based on access level	Portal	Both	• Increases usability of portal • Ability for Employers to be able to quickly and easily find information they need • Audit statistics in Search Terms report to serve up relevant content and inform content strategy, SEO, FAQs, etc.			

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS
1	E21	Directory Server Authentication Sign-in	*This is technology – account set up is use case*	-		Both	• Provides secure access for all users	• Username & password	Employer Profile	DocuWare
2+	E22	Single Sign-on	Sign on to multiple applications automatically from the home page/dashboard for each user	• Allows user to set up account and authenticates user during each log-in and allows pass-through access to other websites (i.e.: WorkInTexas.com, pending ability to access system)	Single Sign-on system	Both	• Provides secure access for all users	• Basic Employer information	Employer Profile	DocuWare
1	E23	Portal Set-up	Portal set-up following new account set-up	• User has ability to personalize home page/dashboard within portal by selecting widgets and applications • Provides at-a-glance preview of important information and access all relevant apps or data • Everything in workspace would be confidential to them		Computer	• Increases usability of portal • Personalized set-up allows Employers to access system services and resources more effectively	-	-	-
1	E24	Portal Administration	Manage content and key admin functions in portal	• Allows designated Staff to assist in regaining access, add or change content, create new forms, add/edit job descriptions, view reports, metrics, change security settings such as passwords, etc.				-	-	-
1	E25	Account Set-up	Open new account	• Users can set up account to access important applications and data • Employers required to create account using email address (those without email addresses will be directed to create one using free email service) • Based on profile, they would have access to certain applications and data to build their portal dashboard including free email and calendar set up if they don't already have one • User information and services provided would feed into CRM to inform personalized communications		Both	• Added security to customer sessions with Staff • Enables enhanced communications to multiple channels, i.e. email, chat, video	• Basic information (name, cell phone, address, and relevant information that Staff would need to perform job duties)	Employer Profile	DocuWare
1	E26	Enhanced Security Features	*This is technology – account set up is use case*	• Encryption-based database to store sensitive information and submit confidential information via email and chat • Allows for secure auditing of information • Sets time limit for keeping information • Consider reCAPTCHA to prevent robots from opening new accounts		Both	• Assures confidentiality of data submitted to Staff • Reduces exposure that might present security risk	-	-	-
1	E27	Web Content Accessibility		• Provides access to web content for Employers with disabilities		Both	• Meets WCAG 2.1 Level AA accessibility guidelines – https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/	-	-	-
1	E28	Language Translation		• Users can select preferred language to view website and portal-generated content (Phase 1: English & Spanish) • Needs ability to support other languages in future (TBD) based on our region's needs		Both	• Increases usage of portal among Limited English Proficient (LEP) Employers • Meets federal requirements for language access	-	-	-

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	S1	**Meeting Scheduler**	Request, accept or reject meetings	• Staff can schedule appointments with Residents and Employers by selecting service needed, then preferred date/time, and/or staff member, in-person or online options, through Appointy web app • Request office resources (computer, tablet, printer, fax machine, TDD machine, etc.) • Send notifications via Resident and Employer's preferred communication method (automated phone message, email or SMS) to provide reminder of upcoming appointment • Enables Staff to change or cancel appointment • Provides robust reporting on service appointments to integrate into CRM to inform personalized communications	Appointy database	Computer	• Improves customer service by reducing wait time for Residents • Appointments are assigned to Staff and can be re-assigned if needed • Increases staff productivity with planning and resourcing	• Other requests in general request form with free form text • All forms would automatically go to designated counselor	Staff Calendar (Outlook)	Appointy
1	S2	**Enhanced Communication**	Communicate between Staff and with Residents and Employers via internal email, chat or video conferencing; receive SMS notifications from Staff	• Email, chat, notifications, SMS and video conferencing • Staff should launch communication choice in simple dropdown or other method that works effectively for computer or smart phone access	Staff, Resident and Employer Profile	Both	• Ease of communication between Staff, and with Residents and Employers	-	Archive Communications Sent and Received	-
1	S3	**Video Conferencing**	Video conferencing communications	• In-portal video conference solution for meetings, trainings and seminars (conferencing between Staff, and with Residents and Employers)	None	Both	• Single platform for all users • Users remain within platform for ease of use and to increase session duration	-	-	Zoom
1	S4	**Online Forms**	Staff can create forms in portal and receive submitted forms from both Residents and Employers	• Staff would have ability to create, change or delete forms for Residents and Employers • Forms should be templated with Workforce Solutions brand and color palette • Online forms (English and Spanish) would be available in drop-down window for users could select • Common forms include Job Search Logs, Financial Assistance Applications, etc. • Automatically submits to Staff for review and submissions are logged in Resident and Employer's profile	None	Computer	• Reduces paperwork • Saves Staff time • Drives more virtual/electronic communications • Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions	• Job Search • Financial Assistance application • Other common forms to be determined	Resident Profile Employer Profile	DocuWare

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	S5	**Help Desk Support**	Help Desk Support for any Service – Phone	• Assistance for both Residents and Employers for any need • Help desk submission for Residents would be automatically routed to designated counselor (or other staff member TBD) • If non-account person, it would be placed in a queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password	Unknown	Computer	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot	-	-	-
1	S6	**Help Desk Support**	Help Desk Support for any Service – Chat	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Resident could open chat window that goes into queue and connects to help desk personnel to dialogue in chat session • If non-account person, it would be placed in a queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password	Unknown	Computer	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot			
1	S7	**Help Desk Support**	Help Desk Support for any Service – Email/Form	• Assistance for all customers for any need • Resident could open form located on their portal homepage that goes into queue for help desk personnel to respond • If non-account person, it would be placed in queue to be reviewed and assisted by Staff • Automatically provide link to FAQs on common portal use issues • Ability for Staff to reset password	Unknown	Computer	• Enables Residents to get information they need quickly and efficiently • Improves customer service and increases interaction with Residents • Staff can handle high volume of questions via online tool • Provides source of customer insights to inform website content we should make available • Resource Room Staff could be trained to field calls and work with Residents to troubleshoot			

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	S8	**Virtual Document Submission**	Submit requested or required documentation	• Upload documents digitally to storage location for Personal Service Representatives to retrieve • Example documents could be scanned form, PDF or JPG, i.e. photo of driver's license using cell phone	Unknown	Both	• Provides transparency to both Residents and Employers on required documentation • Reduces human error by providing timestamped record of submissions • Provides tool to more easily manage documents • Reduces Staff time spent on collecting and managing documents	-	Resident Profile Employer Profile	DocuWare
1	S9	**Calendar**	Calendar shown on dashboard that includes upcoming appointments and relevant events	• Listing of job search seminars, online learning, job fairs, HR Training & Development and other system events that may be of value to Residents and Employers (events displayed to be based on Staff's role as Resident- or Employer-facing) • Ability to sort events in multiple ways such as by event/topic, ZIP, career office location, online vs. in-person, etc. • Relevant events could be put onto calendar by Staff probably based on Resident and Employer's profile and/or location • Listing of Staff only events with ability to view these only	Unknown	Computer	• Similar to current functionality on wrksolutions.com • Upcoming events and appointment reminders should appear when Staff logs into account	-	-	-
1	S10	**Job Posting Page**	Create, edit and delete job listings as needed	• Ability for Staff to post jobs and maintain "Hot Jobs" and "Jobs Now" listings	Could potentially be tied directly into WIT	Computer	• Similar to current functionality on wrksolutions.com	-	-	-
1	S11	**Job Search Icon/Link**	Not applicable to Staff							
1	S12	**Social Media – Facebook**	Widgets for Facebook social media service would be available to load in Staff's dashboard	• Automatic listing of @AdvanceMyCareer (WFS) social media posts to drive engagement with Residents and Public	RSS-enabled widget	Computer	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services to both Residents and Employers • Connects Residents to jobs, Employers to job candidates, and both Residents and Employers to events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with both Residents and Employers	-	-	-
1	S13	**Social Media – LinkedIn**	Widgets for LinkedIn social media service would be available to load in Staff's dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with Employers, Professional Residents and Public	RSS-enabled widget	Computer	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services • Connects Residents to jobs, events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with Residents	-	-	-

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
1	S14	Social Media – Twitter	Widgets for Twitter social media service would be available to load in Staff's dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with Public	RSS-enabled widget	Computer	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services to both Residents and Employers • Connects Residents to jobs, Employers to job candidates, and both Residents and Employers to events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with both Residents and Employers	-	-	-
1	S15	Social Media – Instagram	Widgets for Instagram social media service would be available to load in Staff's dashboard	• Automatic listing of social media posts to drive engagement with Residents, Young Adults and Public	RSS-enabled widget	Computer	• Increases social media engagement • Provides platform to communicate full value of services to both Residents and Employers • Connects Residents to jobs, Employers to job candidates, and both Residents and Employers to events, and tips and advice on host of topics • Increases engagement with both Residents and Employers	-	-	-
1	S16	EasyVirtualJobFair Icon/Link	Not applicable to Staff							
1	S17	Geolocation mapping	Helps Staff direct Residents to nearest Career Office location and other community resources	• Staff can create, edit, and delete Career Office locations and community resources such as public libraries, child care facilities, food banks, etc. as needed • Automatically feeds to Resident's dashboard	User Location Data	Computer	• Better targeting of customers to nearby resources • Reduces Staff time researching resources for Residents	-	-	Mobilosoft
1	S18	Video Player	Staff maintain current and add new videos as needed	• All users can view streaming content with call to action • Temporary solution for job search seminar videos and orientations until Learning Management System (LMS) is procured	YouTube (some videos currently reside on Workforce Solutions' YouTube channel)		• Enables both Residents and Employers to view videos within portal • Marketing videos urge Residents and Employers to create account on portal • Attend virtually job search seminars and online learning (Residents) and HR Training & Development and online learning (Employers)	-	-	-

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
2	S19	Learning Management System	Staff maintain current and add new modules as needed	• Ability for Staff to recommend video courses for both Residents and Employers • For Residents, track completion of video content and report to Staff, i.e. job search seminars, required SNAP/TANF/UI orientations and other similar employment training content • Ability for Staff to send reminders to Residents to start or complete training within specified period via their preferred communication method (automated phone message, SMS or email)	LMS	Both	• Platform to house, deliver and manage all training content • Tracks and reports completion of job search seminars and required orientations • Enables Residents to schedule online orientations/workshops at convenient time for them • Provides automated reminders for Residents to complete required training • Allows Staff to focus on services that deliver higher value to Residents	-	Staff Profile	DocuWare
1	S20	Search	Search all content and types of files in portal	• Staff should be able to search all content and file types such as .PDF, .PPT, .DOC, .XLS, video formats, etc. on portal based on access level and role (Resident- vs. Employer-facing	Portal	Both	• Increases usability of portal • Ability for Staff to be able to quickly and easily find information they need • Audit statistics in Search Terms report to serve up relevant content and inform content strategy, SEO, FAQs, etc.			

Phase	ID	Technical Requirements	Use Case	Use Case Description	Data Source	Computer/Mobile	Value to WFS	Forms	Logs	Integration
**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**										
1	S21	Directory Server Authentication Sign-in	*This is technology – account set up is use case*	-		Both	• Provides secure access for all users	• Username & password	Staff Profile	DocuWare
2+	S22	Single Sign-on	Sign on to multiple applications automatically from the home page/dashboard for each user	• Allows user to set up account and authenticates user during each log-in and allows pass-through access to other websites (i.e.: WorkInTexas.com, pending ability to access system)	Single Sign-on system	Both	• Provides secure access for all users	• Basic Staff information	Staff Profile	DocuWare
1	S23	Portal Set-up	Portal set-up after new account set-up	• User has ability to personalize home page/dashboard within portal by selecting widgets and applications • Provides at-a-glance preview of important information and access all relevant apps or data • Everything in workspace would be confidential to them		Computer	• Increases usability of portal • Personalized set-up allows Staff to access system resources more effectively	-	-	-
1	S24	Portal Administration	Manage content and key admin functions in portal	• Allows designated Staff to assist in regaining access, add or change content, create new forms, add/edit job descriptions, view reports, metrics, change security settings such as passwords, etc.						
1	S25	Account Set-up	Open up a new account	• Users can set up account to access important applications and data • Staff required to create account using email address • Based on profile, they would have access to certain applications and data to build their portal dashboard		Both	• Added security to customer sessions with Staff • Enables enhanced communications to multiple channels, i.e. email, chat, video	• Basic information (name, cell phone, address, and relevant information that Staff would need to perform job duties)	Staff Profile	DocuWare
1	S26	Enhanced Security Features	*This is technology – account set up is use case*	• Encryption-based database to store sensitive information and submit confidential information via email and chat • Allows for secure auditing of information • Sets time limit for keeping information • Consider reCAPTCHA to prevent robots from opening new accounts		Both	• Assures confidentiality of data submitted to Staff by both Residents and Employers • Reduces exposure that might present security risk	-	-	-
1	S27	Web Content Accessibility		• Provides access to web content for Residents with disabilities		Both	• Meets WCAG 2.1 Level AA accessibility guidelines – https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/	-	-	-
1	S28	Language Translation		• Users can select preferred language to view website and portal-generated content (Phase 1: English & Spanish) • Needs ability to support other languages in future (TBD) based on our region's needs		Both	• Increases usage of portal among Limited English Proficient (LEP) Residents • Meets federal requirements for language access	-	-	-

Appendix VII
Glossary of Key Terms

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

- **CRM:** Client Relationship Manager

- **LEP:** Limited English Proficiency

- **LMS:** Learning Management System

- **RSS:** Real Simple Syndication

- **SEO:** Search Engine Optimization

- **SMS:** Short Messaging Service

- **SNAP:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

- **TANF:** Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

- **TDD:** Telecommunications Device for the Deaf

- **TWC:** Texas Workforce Commission

- **UI (benefit):** Unemployment Insurance

- **UI (Technical):** User interface

- **VRS:** Vocational Rehabilitation Services

- **WCAG:** Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

- **WFS:** Workforce Solutions

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