Tailoring your Success Program to your Focus Population

Continuing Education Week – April 7th, 2025

REDF
An investment that works.

Introductions

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Continuing Education Week – April 7th to April 10th

April 8th, 2025:
Enhancing Employee Competitiveness for Quality Jobs

April 10th, 2025
Mapping Partnerships & Leveraging Core Strengths

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Today:
Tailoring your Success Program to your Focus Population

April 9th, 2025:
Designing a Quality Participant Worker Experience

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- ❏ Build peer connections

- ❏ Increase awareness of employee success programs and the impact of tailoring program design to focus population needs

- ❏ Increase familiarity with employee discovery and effective employee success programs

- ❏ Increase familiarity of employees as customers and product market fit

- ❏ Create space for raising questions, but be comfortable with not be able to resolve all questions today

How are we Going to Accomplish These Objectives?

1. Peer Learning!

2. Reflect on the focus population your ESE serves

3. Engage in a case study to design a program for a focus population

4. Use a tool that supports identifying and documents goals for supporting your focus population through your program model

5. Commit to what is next for you based on learnings from this session

Let's get into it!

Non-Judging Awareness

Fist to Five

- I have a deep understanding of the people my ESE employs

- Our ESE Leadership teams actively and consistently seeks new information about the people our ESE employs.

- Our ESE Leadership team designs elements of my ESE in partnership with the people my ESE employs

- Our ESE has identified outcomes for the people my ESE employs

- I am confident that the supports and programming that my ESE provides help employees to reach the desired outcome

Focus Population Definition and Example

Focus Population: The group of people breaking through barriers to employment that your ESE intentionally hires, trains, and supports.

People with Justice System Involvement: People who have been arrested, charged with a crime, and/or spent time incarcerated (jail or prison).

People with a Mental Health Challenge: People who have a mental health condition that affects how they think, behave, and interact with others which impacts their ability to function in daily life, including in the workplace.

People with Experiences of Homelessness/Housing Instability: People who have experienced/are experiencing homelessness or unstable housing.

Refugee/Asylee: People who have experienced serious threats to their wellbeing in their home country and left to seek safety and a better way of life.

Focus Population Definition and Example

People with a Substance Use Issue: People whose substance use impacts/impacted their daily functioning, including ability to work.

Opportunity Youth/Emerging Adult: People between the ages of 16 and 24 with life experiences that present barriers to employment.

People Who Have Experienced Domestic Violence: People who have been in a relationship that included a pattern of behaviors meant to maintain power and control over them by another person.

People Who Have Experience Trafficking: People who have been forced, coerced or deceived into working or providing a service by another individual, this includes commercial sex work as well as other types of work (including agriculture, domestic work, and cleaning services).

Activity

Using Zoom Annotations
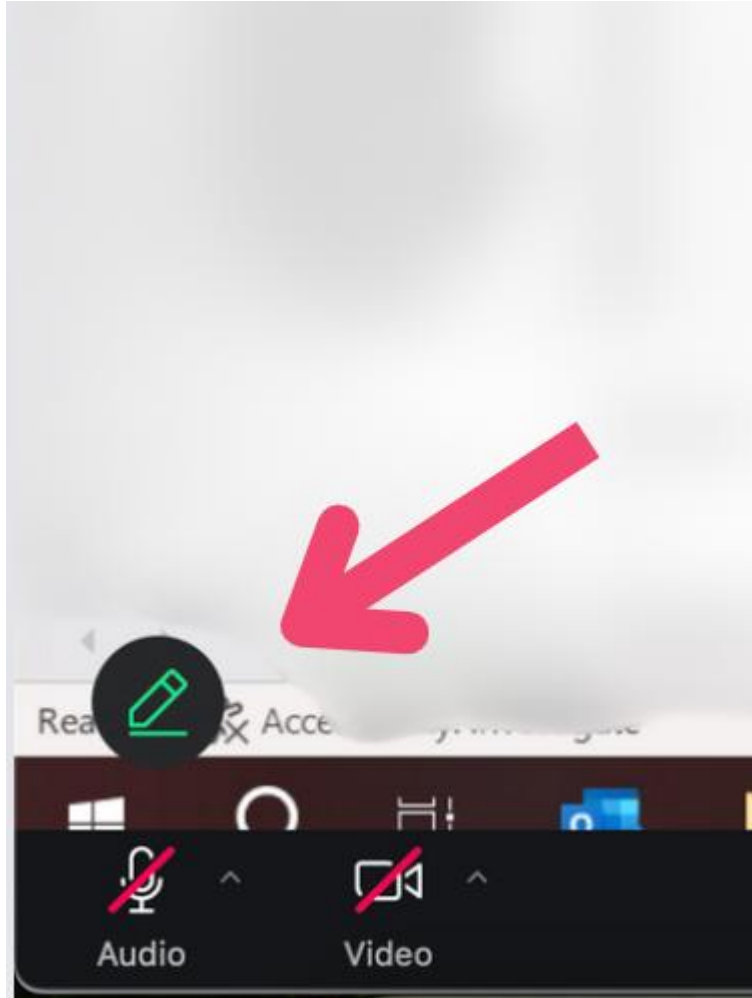
1. Click on the pencil at the bottom left of your screen

2. Clink on the checkmark to mark stamps on the screen

3. Or click on the arrow to mark an arrow on the screen

LEFT   **MIDDLE**   **RIGHT**

My employees are getting their lives on track and just need some support to succeed in their jobs.

My employees are going through really hard times and need intensive supports to be successful.

My employees have networks of friends, family, and community through work, church, recovery groups, and community service.

My employees are building or rebuilding a network of support. Right now, we may be all they have.

LEFT | **MIDDLE** | **RIGHT**

My employees come to us with some hard and soft skills gained through work experience prior to their employment with me.

My employees have very little to no relevant work experience and are learning and practicing a lot of new skills on the job.

My employees have built up some inner strength and confidence on which they can draw when they face adversity at work.

My employees lack self confidence and a sense of their own strength and we are actively building those things through their employment.

Observations

Tailoring your employment social enterprise to your focus population is critical to the business and program
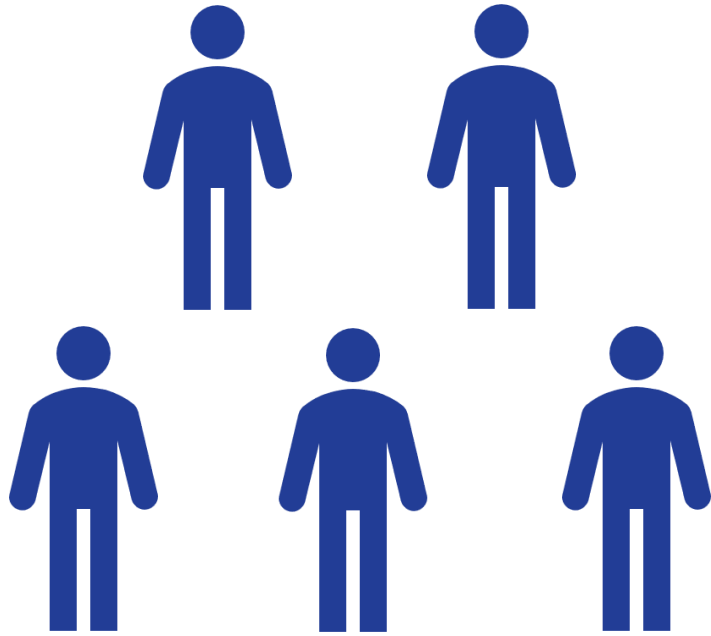
- Less turnover
- Improves culture
- Improves bottom line
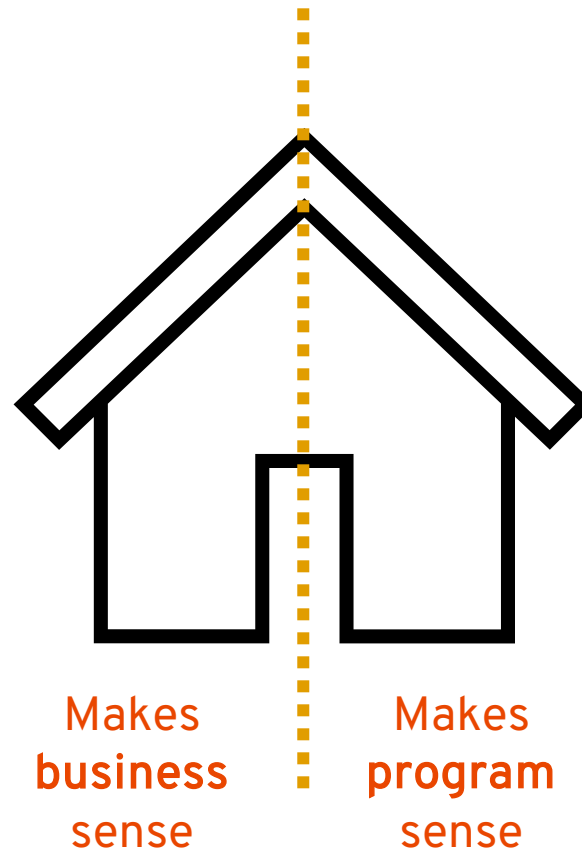
- Better people outcomes
- Helps an ESE become trauma aware
- Efficiency – no unnecessary activities

Makes **business** sense

Makes **program** sense

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Intro to the Employee Success Program

Getting aligned with the language we use

Focus Population – The people an ESE actively recruits and is focused on providing work experience and support to.

Participant Employees – Individuals overcoming barriers to employment hired by your ESE.

Employee Success Program

Employee Success Program:
ESE services to support participant workers' success while working at the ESE and onwards

The **structure** and **activities** through which you address the barriers to employment faced by participant employees.

Program Structure → **Wraparound Services** → **Job Skills**

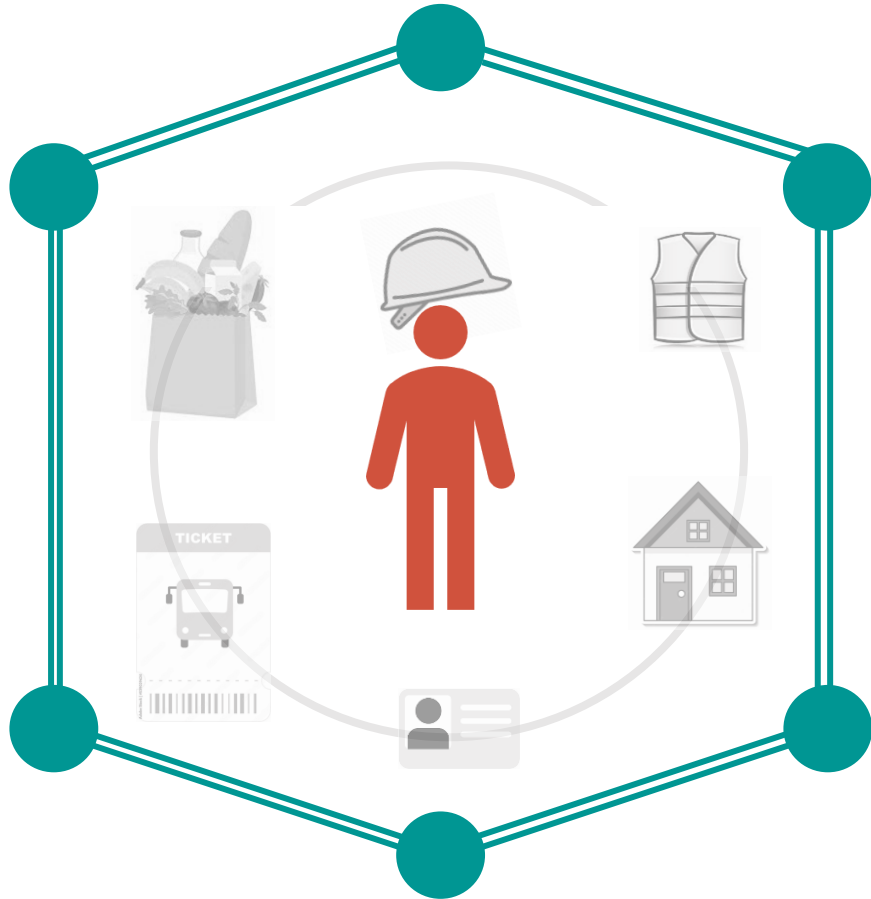The intentional design of the employee's job and pathway within the social enterprise to ensure long-term employment.

The individual activities, services, and benefits that help employees secure, succeed, and advance toward post-supportive employment.

The training that equips employees with essential skills to successfully perform their job at the ESE and prepare for post-supportive employment.

Program Structure

Program Structure – The intentional design of the employee's job and pathway within the social enterprise to ensure long-term employment

Examples of program structure:

- Length of time a participant employee is employed before being considered for promotion or supported into a new job
- Wage rate
- Expected meetings/check-ins with coaches/case managers
- Culture
- Benefits
- Requirements for programmatic success

Program Structure | Wraparound Services | Job Skills
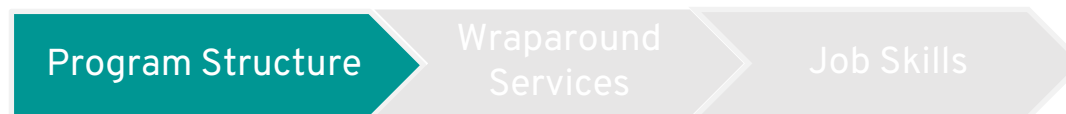
Wraparound Services

Wraparound Services – Resources that help participant employees secure, succeed and advance in employment (e.g., transportation assistance, earnings supplements, record expungement, retention incentives). These wraparound services address the barriers/ obstacles faced by the participant employees.

Examples of wraparound services

Vocational skills training	Relapse avoidance planning	Mentorship
Work readiness credential	Case management	Basic educational instruction
Soft skills training	GED credential	Facilitated/mandated savings
Interest assessment/ goal setting	Emergency funds	Financial education and coaching
Individual placement and support	Funds for employment-related expenses	Benefits planning, screening, & application

Program Structure | **Wraparound Services** | Job Skills
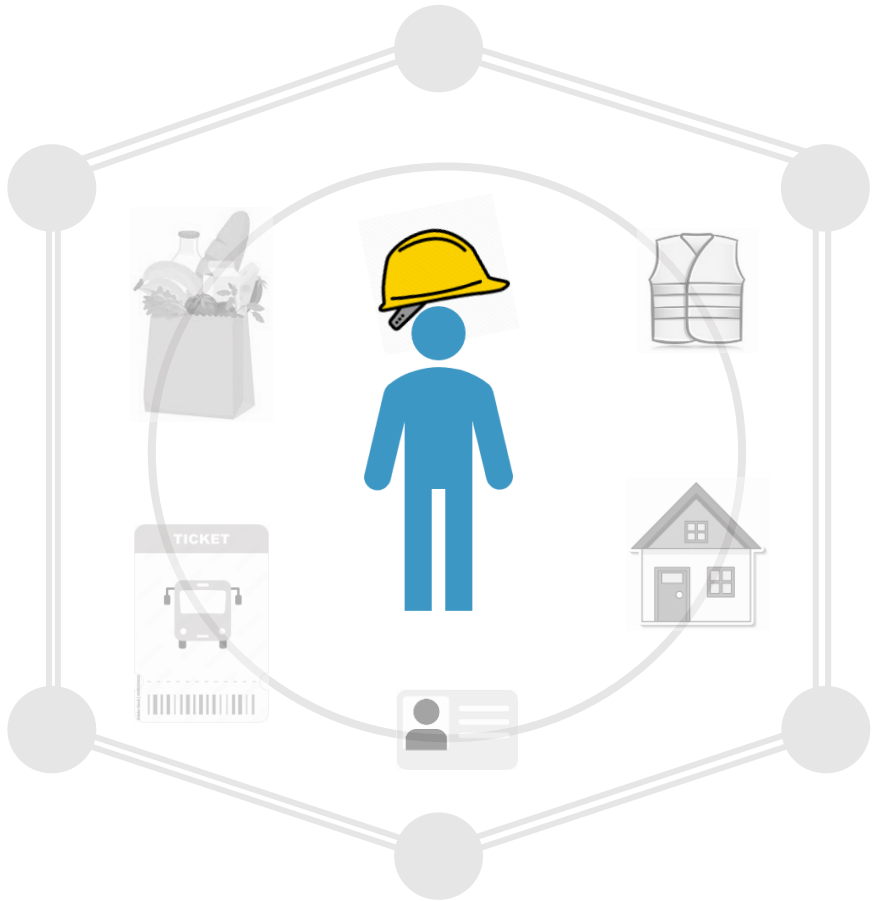
Job Skills

Job Skills – Job training that supplements work experience to equip participant employees with the skills needed for long-term success in mainstream employment and life. This includes on-the-job training (firsthand experience and learning from doing a job with real-time guidance from a co-worker or supervisor) and instructor or group-led training (classroom or skills training provided before or during ESE employment to upskill employees).

Examples of job skills:

- Running a power washer
- Sorting donated goods
- Putting labels on candles
- Planting a tree

- Developing a delivery route
- Designing a website
- Clocking in and clocking out
- Requesting time off

Program Structure | Wraparound Services | **Job Skills**

Considerations for your Employee Success Model

Program Structure

Participation Model	Staffing
Budget	Delivery Method
Business Industry & Model	Metrics to Track
Recruitment & Hiring	Policies and Procedures

Wraparound Services

Budget	Partnerships
Typical barriers faced by workers	Availability of expertise

Job Skills

Term Length or Promotion Pathway	Labor Market Demand
Wage Potential	ESE Compensation
Training	Skills @ hire of workers

Drop in the chat: Which of the three categories is an area of strength for your organization OR something you want to improve.

How to Tailor your Employee Success Program to your Focus Population

Tailoring your employee success model

As you design or iterate on your employee success model, consider three critical steps

| 1 Define Goals	2 Define Strategies	3 Tailor Your Model
▪ What are the overarching goals of your employment social enterprise? *Consider your business and social impact*	▪ What are the key sets of strategies your ESE is focusing on in order to achieve your defined goals?	▪ What are the job skills that are needed to be successful? ▪ What should I consider for the program structure? ▪ What services/ benefits should I offer?

Reference: https://redfworkshop.org/resource/designing-an-employee-supports-program-goals-and-strategies/

Human Centered Design supports defining goals of your program

Human-Centered Design (HCD) is an approach to problem solving that encourages organizations to focus on the people they're creating for, which leads to better products, services, and processes.

HCD Framework
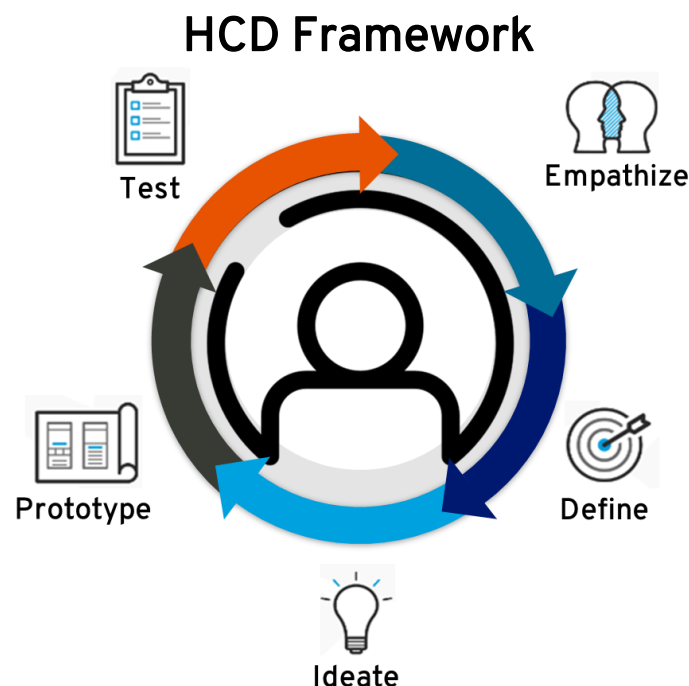
Consider conducting interviews, focus groups, and/or surveys, Some important questions to consider are:

- What have they experienced in their life that may have impacted/is impacting their ability to find stable employment?
- What are my employees long term goals for themselves?
- What are their needs? What are their assets?
- What skills may be enhanced in order to improve their likelihood of achieving their employment goals?

Goals you may consider:

- Participant workers transition to external employment
- Increase in social capital for participant workers
- Employees have increased hope for their future
- Employees have increased their autonomy
- Participant workers retain their employment 12 months after starting the ESE
- All participant workers are promoted within X months

REDF has identified six key strategies for employee success programming that apply to many social enterprises' goals

Six Strategies

- **Get and keep benefits:** Ensuring employees are connected to the benefits that they qualify for as well as leveraging the new benefits made available to them because there are working like Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

- **Level the playing field:** Removing your employees' barriers so they are not at a disadvantage compared to other applicants for jobs outside the ESE

- **Connect to employment:** Supporting your employees succeed in the workplace when or if they decide to transition from the ESE.

- **Prevent backtracking:** Ensuring that the gains made during ESE employment are permanent

- **Incentive Success:** Providing incentives for success, beyond a paycheck

- **Build towards a better future:** Providing opportunities for your employees to achieve long term stability

Drop in the chat: Which of these strategies have you experimented with OR which do you want to learn more about?

Connecting Goals, Strategies, Employee Supports/Benefits

GOALS	STRATEGIES	EMPLOYEE SUPPORTS/BENEFITS
Participant workers transition to external employment	Level the playing field	Barrier removal fund
	Connect with employment	Record expungement
Increase in social capital for participant workers	Build towards a better future	Alumni networking events
Employees have increased hope for their future	Prevent backtracking	Motivational interviewing
All participant workers are promoted within X months	Incentive Success	Career navigation

Break

Example Scenario:

Renaissance Café is an ESE employing woman survivors of human trafficking in Houston, Texas. They sell vegan sandwiches and specialty drinks, like homemade lemonade. The ESE provides an 18-month transitional employment (28 hours per week). Woman are employed as cashiers for their time at Renaissance Café. The ESE has reached out to you because they would like to improve long term employment outcomes for their participant workers. They share with you that they think they need to provide more wraparound services, a better program structure and more job skills.

As part of your work, you conduct two focus groups with participant workers and one focus group with support staff. You learn the ESE is struggling to place their participant employees into quality external jobs. The newer participant employees expressed fear of working at the front desk. The participant workers also shared they are nervous they won't get a job that will be self-sustaining once they leave the ESE.

Example Goals:

GOALS	STRATEGIES	EMPLOYEE SUPPORTS/BENEFITS
70% of associates will express an increased sense of autonomy over their future career plans		

REDF COMMUNITY

Example Strategies:

GOALS	STRATEGIES	EMPLOYEE SUPPORTS/BENEFITS
70% of associates will express an increased sense of autonomy over their future career plans	Build towards a better future	
	Get & keep benefits	

Example Employee Supports/Benefits:

GOALS	STRATEGIES	EMPLOYEE SUPPORTS/BENEFITS
70% of associates will express an increased sense of autonomy over their future career plans	Build towards a better future	Alumni workshops
	Get & keep benefits	Lifetime free tax preparation

Example Goals:

GOALS	STRATEGIES	EMPLOYEE SUPPORTS/BENEFITS
70% of associates will express an increased sense of autonomy over their future career plans	Build towards a better future	Alumni workshops
	Get & keep benefits	Lifetime free tax preparation
90% of associates who obtain external employment will have a wage of 20% above minimum wage with health benefits		

Example Strategies:

GOALS	STRATEGIES	EMPLOYEE SUPPORTS/BENEFITS
70% of associates will express an increased sense of autonomy over their future career plans	Build towards a better future	Alumni workshops
	Get & keep benefits	Lifetime free tax preparation
90% of associates who obtain external employment will have a wage of 20% above minimum wage with health benefits	Incentivize success	
	Prevent backtracking	
	Connect with employment	

Example Employee Supports/Benefits:

GOALS	STRATEGIES	EMPLOYEE SUPPORTS/BENEFITS
70% of associates will express an increased sense of autonomy over their future career plans	Build towards a better future	Alumni workshops
	Get & keep benefits	Lifetime free tax preparation
90% of associates who obtain external employment will have a wage of 20% above minimum wage with health benefits	Incentivize success	$100 bonus at exit if goals achieved
	Prevent backtracking	Cognitive behavioral therapy by licensed therapist
	Connect with employment	Career coaching sessions (8)

Activity: Let's Apply our learning to our ESE

Now we are going to do an individual activity where you all will have the opportunity to reflect on your own employment social enterprise. We have a tool for you to use that expands upon the activity we just did. Please:

1. Access - https://bit.ly/FocusPop

2. Make a Copy or Download

3. Individually reflect on your ESE and complete at least one goal, a few strategies, and the employee supports/benefits offered to your ESE participants. Additionally identify the efficacy of this benefit/support. Is it meeting expectations? You can start with the program goals you already have and the support/benefits you offer.

Activity: Let's Apply our learning to our ESE

Next is in small groups identify:

- Which areas did you identify as "Ineffective"?
- What areas do you think you may need to see if you need to offer additional supports/benefits?
- What questions do you have to learn how to best tailor supports/benefits to your employees?

These questions are in the chat + bottom of your tool.

Debrief:

What did you take away from this activity?

What questions do you have for us?

What questions do you have for your employees?

SESSION IN REVIEW:

- ✓ Build peer connections

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April 9th, 2025:
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Thank you!

Appendix

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Program Structure Questions

Participation Model	What is the most optimal method for encouraging participation in programming given my focus pop? Will program participation be compensated, incentivized, voluntary, or a combination?
Staffing	How are the key roles, functions, and structure needed to ensure the success of participant workers?
Budget	What is the staffing budget?
Delivery Method	What is the most optimal method of delivering supports given my ESE's focus pop? Will supports be offered one-on-one, in a group setting, virtual, or a combination?
Business Industry & Model	How does the business and industry my ESE operates in positively and negatively impact participant workers? Are there elements of business culture that I should prepare workers for?
Metrics to track	What are the metrics that my ESE should track to ensure that we're making progress towards supporting ESE workers? How will my ESE track this information?
Recruitment & Hiring	What are the qualifications to be hired at our ESE? What are the barriers that need to be addressed (if any) before starting to work? How job ready should workers be before starting?
Policies & Procedures	What are the policies and procedures that should be established? How are these policies and procedures informed by the lived experience of participant workers?

Wraparound Services Questions

Budget	What is the ESE budget for providing wraparound services?
Partnerships	What are the services that I can offer in house and which are the services I will need to partner on? Are there partners that offer the services participant workers need to be successful?
Typical barriers faced by workers	What are the most common barriers my participant works face in being able to achieve long term employment? How can I offer these services given my ESE's constraints?
Availability of Expertise	Given the barriers and goals of participant workers, does my ESE have the expertise in house or in partnership to successfully support workers?

Job Skills Considerations

Term Length / Promotion Path	What is the sufficient length of time and number of hours a participant worker should work at the ESE to improve their long term employment success? What is the pathway for promotion to ensure growth and continued skill attainment?
Labor Market Demand	What skills are in high demand in the labor market that will support participant workers be more competitive?
Wage Potential	What skills can a participant workers obtain while at the ESE to improve their wage potential as they advance in their careers?
ESE Compensation	What compensation can the ESE offer that will support participant workers self-sufficiency? What is the compensation our ESE can afford?
Training	What type of training is needed for participant workers before and during the time they are working with our ESE to ensure successful delivery of our product/service?
Skills @ Hire of Workers	What are the skills that a typical participant comes with when starting at the ESE?