**Workforce 3One**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**H-1B Ready to Work**

**How to Develop Internships and Paid Work Experience Opportunities**

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BRIAN KEATING: Welcome, everyone, to today's "H-1B Ready to Work, How to Develop Internships and Paid Work Experience Opportunities." You should see those slides on the left hand on your screen now.

So hopefully you're seeing those on your screen. We're going to go ahead and move right into our content. Like I said, though, if you haven't already done so, go ahead and let us know where you're from, your organization or group, and how many are joining you, if you happen to be attending in a group today, so that we have a better idea how many are joining us.

All right. And to kick us off today we're going to revisit a polling question. So I'm going to bring that right up on your screen again. Some of you have already voted here, but we'd like to know who you are. So in addition to identifying yourself in that welcome chat, using the poll window that's on your screen, go ahead and select the role that you play in your H-1B Ready to Work grant.

So for this grant initiative you might be an authorized representative. You might be a program manager or director. You could be IT or data manager or staff. Perhaps you're a training provider, an employer provider, or a service provider.

So again, everyone, it looks like most of us have voted, but if you haven't already done that, go ahead and click the radio button on your screen to select one of these options. Please go ahead and do that now, and we'll give you one more minute here or another few seconds to do that, if you haven't already done that. So please go ahead and vote now, if you haven't already done so.

And we'll be bringing our moderator on in a moment to comment on that, but again, just click the radio button on your screen. And we'll be having at least one more of these opportunities, and obviously we're going to have a chat window on your screen throughout today. So we encourage you to go ahead and chime in with any questions that you may have content-wise – questions or comments, and we'll be addressing as many of those as we can.

All right. Well, to kick things off I'm going to turn things over to our moderator, Ayreen Cadwallader. Ayreen is a workforce analyst with ETA's Division of Strategic Investments in Washington, D.C. Ayreen, hang on one sec. All right. Ayreen, why don't you go ahead and take it away?

AYREEN CADWALLADER: Thank you so much, Brian. Can everybody hear me OK?

MR. KEATING: We sure can.

MS. CADWALLADER: Great. Thanks, Brian. Welcome, everybody, to our H-1B grants technical assistance webinar today on how to develop internships and paid work experience opportunities for H-1B grantees. We're really excited about this topic to help grantees learn more about the unique training strategies that could be – that is available to your participants.

This is a range of TA activities that we have planned for you for year two of your Ready to Work grantees and really focusing on more customized and topic-specific technical assistance, specifically training design such as internships and coming along the pipeline talking about registered apprenticeships. Of course we'll still be talking more about employer partnerships and engagements and job placements, including additional resources to support the long-term unemployed worker.

So from our previous poll it looked like we had a range of participants attending today's call. We had a couple of authorized representatives, some training partners and service providers, and then the majority of those of you that are on the call are program managers and directors.

And so this is certainly – I think today's webinar will have a range of information that will be beneficial to everyone that is on this call today, really focusing on working with your training partners to develop internship programs and then how to engage employer partners to really promote an internship or a paid work experience opportunity to really get them on board to support your Ready to Work grants.

Also wanted to welcome – some of you might be H-1B Make It In America grantees. Really wanting to welcome you also to this webinar. Again, you're still part of our H-1B family. So we're happy to hear from you. Please ask any questions or make any comments to our TA providers when we get to the question and answer piece later this – later in today's presentation.

With that introduction, I'd like to turn it over now to Tressa Dorsey who is our – most of you know is our Ready to Work technical assistance coach. And, Tressa, over to you.

TRESSA DORSEY: Thank you, Ayreen. Welcome, everyone, to today's webinar. I would just like to say, as Ayreen mentioned, that I'd like to welcome both Ready to Work and Make It In America grantees.

It's so nice when we can have something that's pertinent to both of your programs, and this topic in particular, paid internships and other types of work experience, is something that is so important when we start looking at the work from the perspective of a long-term unemployed individual gaining that kind of entry back into the workforce. And there's so many fascinating caveats to this type of work and the program design itself that when we begin thinking about how to develop something like this, it really struck me that Dr. Russ Hamm, who is a friend and a colleague of mine, would have the background necessary to help us in this endeavor.

He will tell you a little bit more about his experience, but I would like to tell you that Russ is somebody who has a wealth of experience and knowledge in both education and from the ETA perspective, and I couldn't thank him more for helping us with this toolkit. I found things in there that were helpful to me in my work as a TA coach and also I think just in general of looking at the work world and how we bridge some of these opportunities and get folks back into the workplace and getting them up and on their feet again.

So I'm not going to go on and on about Russ and embarrass him, but I do want to thank you personally, Russ, for all of your contributions to this toolkit. And I'm looking forward to your presentation today. So with no further ado, Dr. Russ Hamm.

DR. RUSS HAMM: Well, Tressa, thank you so much for that kind introduction. Good morning for those of us on the upper left-hand corner of the country. Good afternoon to everyone else. I am Russ Hamm, and I'm joining you from central Oregon. I live right at the base of the wonderful Cascade Range. Looking out the window, it's a beautiful day today.

Allow me a moment to introduce myself as I relate to this particular topic. I've been a community college administrator with a long, long focus on career and technical education, and I also had the privilege of doing an executive loan program in the Department of Labor in ETA for four years working on joint programs with ETA and Department of Ed and other partners.

Finally, I've enjoyed authoring the newly released handbook that we're introducing in this webinar today, Creating and Conducting Successful Work-Based Learning Experiences. And it's going to be available to you today with a link at the end of our program.

So here is what we're going to focus on. We're going to consider three content areas in work-based learning. First, an introduction to and I hope a clarification about work-based learning in all its forms. Second, and I hope it's useful as well, to review a process or a set of steps for setting up an internship experience for your student. And in the event you have a good system, this will be useful to kind of check it, take a look at what others have been doing. Now, it's a seven-step process, and we'll go through that pretty quickly.

I know I have worked over the years in work-based learning, and I've determined, frankly, that there is very little clarity about what work-based learning is versus all kinds of the other learning on the job. So today, as in our agenda, we're going to introduce work-based learning, talk about the value of internships, which I think are sadly underused, talk about that design model I mentioned, and then I think critically spend some time talking about employers, how to get them, where to find them, and how to stay with them.

So let's try and clarify. First, work-based learning may be the oldest kind of skill learning that there is, and as far back as history, a non-skilled person would work with a skilled person to learn how to do something. I've heard of this kind of learning, especially relative to factory work, called go sit by John learning. In our country it formerly began as cooperative education in 1900s at the University of Cincinnati. So I'm [inaudible] that all of this learning while working does fall under the term we generally use called work-based learning, but there's so many types of it. It could be confusing.

Now, across the top of this chart, which by the way is my creation – it's not an official document. It doesn't represent any particular government policy. It is just a definitive chart to try to get our arms around all of these different kinds. You'll notice up at the top is paid work experience, and that is a loosely defined term that's often used to represent other types of work-based learning. Next is paid internship, and that's what we use here in the Ready to Work program. And I'm going to spend some more time showing you the differences on the next slide.

Next is shadowing, or sometimes it's called externships, and those are usually very brief. They're used to introduce a learner to a type of work. Generally, they are not paid, and there are no real work tasks that are assigned. Now, you may have even experienced the next one called a practicum. That's often called a one-task learning event. It's part of a course, usually from a college course. And then last we have of course the one we all are familiar with, and that's apprenticeship.

And here a learner is supervised by a master who teaches on the job and also in a classroom and it's often used in trades and you'll find plumbing apprentices or electrician apprentices and so forth. These are often under the direction of ETA's Bureau of Apprenticeship Training.

Now, back to internships versus the big old general paid work experience term. The internship, which we are focusing on, is much, much more planned and structured. Paid work experiences are often less planned where the students simply learned almost by accident or goes through some sort of an enlightenment experience by just being at work. An internship, as we're going to discover in a few minutes, is very collaboratively planned between the employer, the school, and the students, and there are no surprises.

The student is always aware of what's going on and what he or she will be learning. Uniquely, within our grant structure for the H-1B Ready to Work program, there's a lot of flexibility for planning and executing an internship. Now, I will advise, as always, when planning a learning event, be sure that it aligns with your overall program, more importantly with your program statement of work. And I think it's always a good idea to communicate what you're doing with your TAs and your grant managers.

As I have read and reviewed the Ready to Work program, I've found that there are – and frankly, they are very reasonable and flexible – very few requirements. Take a look at the list. You'll notice that you got to have learning goals. Those goals should reflect what's been included in the grant-funded learning or training experience. Got to be a limited time period. It should be flexible so it can support workplace and classroom learning, if that's part of the deal, and it should definitely prepare the individual for employment almost immediately after the internship.

And as you all know, it must be, for our program, a paid experience. Notice too that sometimes, especially when you're talking to employers as you're trying to recruit them, it's a good idea to take a look at the values that exist for all three of our groups, for students, for your employer partners, and then I think for your own program as well. Probably the greatest benefits go to the student of course.

Having been through a program, taking classes, maybe even had labs, the student is now assumed to have adequate knowledge but may not have really experienced what the use of that knowledge and those skill sets might be on a real job in a real work environment, which will differ greatly.

Classroom lab experiences focused on mastery lack the pressures of real production or working with teammates. The internship, however, provides that bridge between the classroom and reality of having to be responsive to issues in a real environment. In the least the internship provides that checklist reality between what the student believes the job is like and what it really is.

I bet you've all experienced or heard about the nursing student who loved the idea of helping and healing but failed the understand the pressures of a hospital, the difficulties that come with patients, or the fact that blood is involved. Yep. Internships give you the ultimate reality check. Little known is the fact that internships also really lead to job offers. Research supports the fact that 61 percent of interns have a job by the end of their senior year up from less than 40 something for those who don't try an internship. And of course internships are paid, and students can always use the income.

There's some other less obvious ones as well, and I'll rip through those in a hurry. Certainly, a student having been through an internship can bulk up their resume and their interviewing opportunities and skills because they know now what the job is like and what they've been doing. They're going to get confidence. They're going to develop the important soft skills working with others on a team, and of course they're going to end up with college credit as well.

So you take a look at why this would be something for an employer to consider because let's face it. It's asking them to do something above and beyond what normal business includes. You should mention these benefits, and I think the most important is the access to a pool of skilled candidates who have the specific skill and certificates and credentials that are required.

Also, an involved employer partner will be involved in designing training, helping you build that curriculum that ultimately will specifically meet their needs. And I think it's just a good idea, finally, too that they'll have a chance to take a look at the interns who are functioning in the work environment with other employees, and they're going to have a pretty good idea to understand if fit is really happening.

Now, let's take a look at why these would be particularly good programs for your program. What's most critical? Well, I think you can assure that your own program and your teaching curriculum is relevant. When you are actually working firsthand with employers, you're going to be able to watch the inflow of new technology and innovative processes, and you can upgrade and update your own program.

Not surprising is what flows from a strong employer-college relationship. The employer becomes a really powerful spokesperson for your program and provides credibility for you and your organization, especially important at the beginning of a program and you're trying to establish yourself. They are much more powerful in a better position to build your reputation than you are.

Finally, in the end good internships and effective management of internship partnerships is simply a win-win program for all the partners. Frankly, building a solid internship program within your organization is not complex. It does require time, patience, leadership, and effective ongoing communication.

Now, next I'm going to introduce this design model I mentioned before, but before we start I'd like to know how much you know about planning internships. So let's take the polling question number two.

MR. KEATING: All right. We're going to bring that up for you. So go ahead and make sure you vote here in this second question. We'd like to know if you have any previous experience with the internship design model. Choices are yes, no, or somewhat. It looks like several of you are voting. So go ahead and click one of those radio buttons on your screen to vote now. And, Russ, I'll turn it back to you to comment on what you're seeing.

DR. HAMM: Well, I'm watching a slit here of course. Looks like about half of you have no experience and about a third of you, you've been down this road. And that's helpful for you making some judgments about how your program is working as you look at some of the ideas that we'll be presenting here. All right. We're going to go on to the next slide here.

In my study I have found lots and lots of lists of things to do to build an internship program and so I took all of the stuff that I've read about over the last couple of years especially and I organized them into a fairly simple model. You can see that it's a seven-step model, and it begins obviously with number one and then moves around in a circle there.

My intent then is to use each of these steps and just engage you for a short time about what I had intended that to say. You will note too that step number five in preparing participants and designing training curriculum is where the heavy work is done. However, I really don't think it's any more important than all the other steps.

So let's take a look at number one, identify and train an internship leader. Almost all great programs have a great leader. An internship program requires the same, and as you note in slide number one, I believe it's important to have an educationally trained professional to be the coordinator or the program leader.

I say that because there are two big pieces of responsibility; one, to manage all the internship activities, which include planning and arranging and getting participant preparations, employer preparation, and then communication back and forth among all parties; and then second, there are legalities around internships. We'll talk more about those, but curriculum design, getting a curriculum approved means that someone needs to know his or her way around school processes.

While building your internship system, this individual won't necessarily carry all the responsibility but will keep track of the progress of next steps, advising key administrators, communicating, and I think being a cheerleader. Frankly, I wouldn't assign the program to an already overloaded administrator or a teaching faculty with a full load. Individual who may know also about business and may know employers already. Then you can move to step number two.

Now, you have somebody in charge, and it's time to begin to find students. Now, I will note that often steps number two and number three sort of work together. As a coordinator seeks individuals for internships, you really should be working very closely with the faculty in the training program or the staff and ask them to make solid recommendations, probably a student close to the end of their program, a student who is serious and ready to work, a student who also understands that he or she is a newbie and will be going into a new work environment where you'll have to work to be accepted.

I believe that choosing and accepting a student should be set up so that it requires the student to apply, also to have recommendations, and even a place where the participant has to explain in an interview why this internship or an internship is important.

As I mentioned, should also be seeking employers at the same time to match the student's experience. So we go to number three. Now, a little later on in our webinar we're going to talk about how to find and recruit employers, but keeping in mind that when you are working with employers, you want to come to them with a structured and planned learning experience that really assures the employer is going to be involved and engaged, be able to monitor and supervise this internship.

It also works a lot better if you can find employers where this program will be comfortable in what they do and safely work within their business model and their processes and procedures. And this is especially, especially true in a working factory where production is taking place. Also, if you can find employers that are able to absorb the costs that will probably be involved, that's good.

And also you're going to want to be sure that they can see how it's going to be done without necessarily disrupting what would be normal business for them. All in all, though, they need to understand the internship is about the student developing and completing their career education.

Now, once a student's been selected and vetted, it's time to do step four, and that's when you bring the employer up to speed. Now, I mentioned that you're going to be recruiting them and giving them a real open, clean look at what they're doing, but there are three things that you're going to have to do specifically with them. One of course is to build a schedule. That's simple.

When does the internship begin and end? What will the student's individual schedule be? When do they start? When do they finish each day and so on? Second, as you prepare the employer, it includes a frank discussion about student supervision, supervisory responsibility, and the methods to employ while supervising, a good discussion about legal responsibility.

And keep in mind these things, while less important to us on the training side, are really huge for the employer. That includes things like liability, insurance, possibility that criminal behavior could take place, company secrets and proprietary information on systems, the product, and so on. And this particular step will really differ with each company and maybe with each internship.

Now, following a good reality check and helping the employer understand the boundaries of internships comes the process of building a training curriculum, and this is often done in a meeting. It will include the student's faculty advisor. Sometimes it includes the student as well, but the goal in the end is to have a written scheduled plan which will reflect everything the student will be doing for the entire experience.

Yep. It takes time, but often after it's done it does not need to be redone, maybe adjusted a little, and I've found that it can often be applied to other students and even other employers. Now, I recommend a sort of form to fill out, and I will refer to the handbook that we are going to release today as a place where you'll find a lot more about curriculum building and scheduling and so forth.

Moving from step four to five is pretty smooth. In step four you've negotiated [inaudible] and the employer using the appropriate faculty. In step five you begin the process of preparing the student for a smooth entry into the internship. Now, while the student may have been part of the planning, at some point you're going to have to sit down and make sure the student has carefully reviewed everything he or she will do. And as important as setting that academic plan and clarifying everything is something that's very simple.

You need to introduce the student to the new work environment. Almost sounds silly, but frankly, they're going to want to know all about the work site, meet the staff and the supervisor, take a tour, figure out simple things like where do I check in at the beginning of the day? How do I store my personal stuff? Where do I park? Where's the lunch room and so forth? All make the student ready and comfortable to begin because you have removed all the unknowns and no surprises.

Step number six is to place that student and monitor them. This continues throughout the internship, but it's really important at the beginning to be sure in the early stages that the student is settling in. And of course if something isn't fitting, if it's not right, then you must have a quick meeting that will include the coordinator, the employee staff, and the student to sort of discuss what changes need to be made. It's always a good idea, by the way, as you talk to employers earlier before the thing starts, to have a plan in place that talks about disasters or problems or things that simply don't fit.

Finally, as with all good educational systems, you're going to evaluate and document that evaluation. Just a good idea. This is something that I think should be part of the plan. As I said on my last point there, this shouldn't be a surprise to anybody. Should evaluate that student and his or her experience regularly, weekly at least. Use some kind of a standardized form so the student understands exactly what he or she is being evaluated against. It of course has to include the supervisor, but it should also be done with the appropriate school faculty or staff member, and in the end, it should result in a written final evaluation. Again, no surprises.

So excuse me there. That's the design model, which I would hope you would take a few minutes to kind of trot through when you take a look at our handbook. And I'd also love to have any comments that people would make in a critical way. Hey, Russ, you know what? I think four should be something else or whatever.

So far we have talked about work-based learning, talked about the value of internships, looked at a design model, and so it's now time to talk about employers. I found, like in any kind of a partnership, if you make friends of these folks and build mutual trust, it's going to work out so much better. The key of course lies with a well-integrated relationship, and that means communication and trust so that you, as a staff member running a program, can really work closely with the employer and you can talk in a way almost off record about how things are going and how to change the program when it's necessary.

A key for me is always employers are generally reluctant to immediately agree to be a place to do an internship. And the more they know specifically about what you expect of them, it's important for them to understand what their role will be, what kind of contribution they will have to make, what sort of time is involved, all of those things up front gives the employer a clean, clear picture. And when they say yes, you are on the road to a successful program.

Couple of tips. I think that there are two things that, if you keep these things in mind, you will always be on safe ground. Number one is to remember that your employer's in business. Every staff member, every employee in that business will first respond to the immediate needs of keeping that business in good shape. So hosting an intern will be subject to actions that are taken to meet – keep the business going environment.

Second – and I bet all of you would guess this – business environments move a lot faster than educational organizations. They make decisions faster. They employ them faster, and I've found that one of the things that you can do to be successful is just step up your own pace with these folks. Make it move.

And also keep in mind that patience is important. If you involve employers early, don't come in at the last minute and say, ooh, we have to have an internship. Would you help us? No. Start early. Talk about it months in advance. Obviously, expect changes because the business world change happens continually, and it may mean that you're going to have to adapt the internship or even your internship process.

I've also found that many employers have their own training processes that are going on within their plants or their businesses, and it's a good idea for you to know what those are so that your internship processes work with them.

Just a reminder, as you begin to seek internship sites, it's worth remembering that H-1B requires us to train and place individuals in the jobs within occupations and industries for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers because they can't find them in America. That's just a tip. So when you're looking for sites, make sure that those folks are hiring foreigners.

With that work to recruit employers, one of the most difficult steps is to identify who you want to approach first, given that you have this H-1B requirement, and for me it's kind of a three-step process. Again, in our handbook we spend more time talking about how you can systematically find them, but three steps. As a team talk about what employers you know, who you know, what they do, and if you think they'd be approachable.

Obviously, using labor market information – and I prefer only the real-time information now that is generated by computer surveys and by sites like Monster where you know exactly who and who's being hired to do what. The labor market information will give you a good sound look at what's going on economically in your area. And then third, I really found it useful to interview executives from local business organizations. Development organizations, or clubs or whatever who have employers as members really can tell you pretty quickly who's a good opportunity for you.

Now, I'm jumping through a lot right here on this particular slide because there's quite a lot to do before you even meet your employer for the first time. I hope that you will do a lot of preparation work, that you just don't go to that first meeting and kind of wing it, that as you prepare for your first meeting you have already taken the time to learn a lot about this business, learn as much as you can about the individuals with whom you will be working. As I said earlier, know something about how they already train their employees so that you go in comfortable to be able to talk to them about how your intern might fit in their system.

Point number two, in the handbook I have prepared an agenda for that meeting. Now, obviously, you'll change that around to make it useful for your companies, but at least you go in with a prepared list of things to talk about and what you want to get over time. We also talk about commitments because some time is likely to pass before an employer will actually say, OK, we're in.

Sometimes it's just simply because they're too busy to think about what needs to be considered or to find the right staff member. When it's dragging a little bit, all you can do as a staff person for the program is to simply and not too frequently send them an e-mail or make a phone call and say, hey, how's it going? Are there any questions? Eventually, though, you will want to get some kind of a written agreement. That doesn't have to be a contract. It can be a memorandum of understanding, but you do want to prepare yourself with a list of things that we do and you do and also, if there are problems, how we resolve them.

So as I wrap up today I'm going to give you what I have believed – and I've assembled these over a while. I've been given some of them by others, but these are the things that, if you wanted to make a list, shorten it, stick it on your wall, these are the 10 things that you will do to manage a relationship that will always be successful. I've already told you about number one, find these people before you get too far down the road because when you make that connection earlier, it gives them time to feel that they're part of the design of the internship and the internship process and they just feel much more valuable.

The best way that I have found is to hardwire your employers to your program, and that means you want them at your meetings, not too often but regularly. You want to visit them in their plants. You want to respond to their ideas. You want to know exactly what their problems are as well. As you work with them side by side you build a friendship, a trust, and that means that they will take the extra steps to make sure that you are being served and your students are getting a good internship.

Obviously, to get there you're going to have to meet with them because those employers would like to know what they're going to get out of it as well. And that's when you talk to them about a chance to look at employees, to watch them work, and to be involved in building curriculum that best serves their training needs.

This is probably the most frustrating thing for all of us involved, and that is managing time. And for the most part that means our meetings with them. You really do have to schedule meetings far in advance, and I suggest a very reliable and consistent schedule so they know that it's always at 7:30 in the morning on the second Tuesday of every month. They just put it in their calendars, and they attend because when you start changing meeting times and places, especially on a short notice, they will miss your meeting.

Number five, be sure to meet your own deadlines, complete the actions that are expected, be predicable, be reliable, and most importantly, keep your promises and be careful when you make them so that you know that you can deliver.

We talked about communication systems a moment ago, and I'll just clarify it here. I think that you should use the same vehicle all the time. Maybe it's an e-mail. Maybe it's a text. I don't know, but make sure that your communications look the same, feel the same, always have your logo on it so that they can immediately recognize it's coming from your Ready to Work program.

Obviously, number seven, on a routine basis – I mean quarterly – have the chair of your team have a phone or even a luncheon with the employer where you can kind of talk about how things are going. Give them updates, compliment them, buy the lunch, of course, and then be sure that you return their phone calls and their e-mails. And good heavens. They know more about what's going on in that plant than you do. So you listen, listen, listen.

Thank yous go a long, long way, and it's also important to make sure that as you thank the supervisor of your intern, that you also thank his supervisor and maybe even his supervisor's supervisor. And it's not just a quick, hey, thanks, but it's a good idea to be able to describe how they have been helpful. A couple things about their individual contributions makes that thank you so much more valid.

Number nine is what I love and that is you just have parties from time to time and I mean at least annually and maybe at the beginning and at the end of the school year. Bring those employers in. Make sure that you have faculty from your program there as well. Make sure that there's food, and let people kind of mingle a little bit. And then have a very short program where, once again, you say thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Now, last I think is kind of a spill out from number nine, but that is on a routine basis, as you do your communications out, bulletins and blogs and news releases and so forth that show up in a local newspaper or in a local newscast, make sure that you name the names of the companies and the names of the individuals and you highlight and thank profusely those employers. And make it clear that they are the reason that things are working so well.

So that's the 10. I know. Quite a bit. I have often believed that maintaining a good employer relationship is something you do daily. You don't call every employer daily but you call one every day or every other day and you go down your list and you just maintain that smooth relationship all of the time. Now, at this point I'm going to say thanks so much for listening. Tressa, if you will be managing the questions, take it off.

MS. DORSEY: Thanks so much, Russ, and thank you for walking through some of those key points and how we can start establishing some of these paid work experience opportunities. One thing I want to point out before I get to the questions is one of the things that I found the most helpful with this toolkit was that chart that you broke down in the very beginning.

I think a lot of the times when we begin using different terms and we're approaching employers, oftentimes it's – one employer may accept the term internship while another may accept PWE or paid work experience, work-based learning, or something similar. And so kind of understanding the differences and defining those can oftentimes help the grantees with and even – the grantees and even some of the participants understand a little bit better what's involved in each of those things and why one is called one thing and why one is called something else.

So I just personally found that chart to be incredibly helpful mainly because I think that clarifying some of those definitions can actually improve how you are I think approaching and doing your outreach to both participants and to the employers. So I just wanted to point out that chart was incredibly helpful to me because it kind of spoke to a different – couple different types of outreach and recruitment I think avenues that some of us are still and continuously working on.

So with that being said, I do want to get to the questions here. The one question I believe we had from Lee, he says, at one time a much higher percentage of workers, especially in our local area, were employed by large businesses. That was also prior to the monetization of public corporations, and those employers had a robust internship program.

And today it looks like they have a large number of smaller businesses, which of course smaller businesses typically mean smaller budgets. And the challenge really is both the recruitment and for establishing internships and work experiences with some of these smaller businesses. And when I read that, I think my question to you, based off of that, was going to be, A, are there differences when you're approaching a larger corporation versus a small business in how we propose things like paid work experience and paid internship programs? And how can we make it easy?

And part two of that is how can we make it more easily adoptable for smaller businesses who maybe don't have the same level of experience as some of our larger corporations? So if you had any insight on that.

DR. HAMM: Well, yeah. First of all, I think you stay with the seven-step design process, whether it's a larger company or a smaller company. The difference is – well, there are two perhaps. In a small business staff tend to be doing many, many things, not just one job. And it's a little harder to get them to focus on building an internship process, and it probably would be just for one intern or two at the most in a small business.

So you need to take time with them and bring them a fairly complete model so they see that you're going to be helping them or even suggesting for them the curriculum. Show them how it has worked in other small businesses. The biggest concern I find with small businesses, they're just afraid that an intern – let's say a small business of a dozen people, an intern could really come in and leave things in disarray or ask too many questions or whatever.

(Inaudible) – can be matched, though – (inaudible) – you prepare a good learning scheme and a learning plan so that both the student and the small business owner can see precisely what's going to happen and, if it doesn't work out, how we're going to fix it.

MS. DORSEY: Yeah. That's great. One of the questions that I think that I actually thought of as you were going through this and it had more to do with kind of reaching out to and utilizing some of the more successful internship programs as a marketing tool towards getting other employers on board. Is there anything specific that you would recommend capturing from those employers? Obviously, we talked about the evaluations of the participant and their – what they were doing during their internship, but is there anything specifically when we're going back to employers once we've done an internship or paid work – other type of paid work experience that we would want to capture so we could then turn it into a marketing tool?

DR. HAMM: Clearly, I think we go back to the point I made early on, and that is the biggest benefit for an employer is a chance to find quality employees – new employees. So the more that you're able to point out how that's worked successfully in other businesses A or B or C and how successful it's been for them, it just becomes a terrific marketing tool.

MS. DORSEY: Got it. And then we have another question here. As far as – we talked about some of the questions that may come up from employers around workman's comp or how do they get paid, how does this work, what would the impact be on my payroll system or my human resources. Are there any things that you could offer, any strategies that you could offer as far as how we can streamline or make the process of paying the interns or participants a little bit easier on the employer to kind of eliminate some of the – what could be perceived as a stress or undue kind of workload on their existing staff to bring these folks on board?

DR. HAMM: That's a hard one for me to answer because it's not yet clear to me where funds can come from. I think it's important to note, though, that an intern is not an employee. They can be paid as employees. They can get a check, but that the funds may come from the program side itself. So I'm going to have to take a dodge on that one, Tressa. I'm just not clear. My guess is that our colleagues back in the main office probably know more about that than I do.

MS. DORSEY: Right. Right. Yeah. And I think these are just some of the questions that come up from the grantees. So I was just curious. These were kind of some things that popped up as you were going through. So I appreciate you going through that process.

And I think with that being said, I think that we're at the place now we're about five minutes to the top of the hour, and I want to be thoughtful of everyone's time. I know that we have a few more slides that we do want to get through here and just kind of talk about some upcoming opportunities as well as provide the link to this wonderful toolkit. You'll see it here on the slide. You can also I believe download it from today's presentation, and we will be posting this information on WorkforceGPS as well as our LinkedIn platform for our Ready to Work folks. So here's the link there on this slide.

Some of the things – this is what we were talking about, the H-1B community of practice. Here's the link to the WorkforceGPS platform so you can access this and all other webinars and resource materials that are being developed. If you haven't joined our LinkedIn platform to date, I encourage you to do so.

One of the things that we've been encouraging folks to do is, if you join our LinkedIn group, in the event – and I noticed both Jesse and Lee were having some good conversation back and forth. The LinkedIn platform will really be able to let you all as grantees continue to have these conversations outside of what I think our technical assistance can provide in real time.

Obviously, we can connect you guys but you may have a question that comes up in a meeting that you would like somebody to answer right away and we may not have a call scheduled for another few weeks.

And so utilize this LinkedIn platform to continue these conversations with your fellow grantees. Both Lee and Jesse I think started a good conversation here. Would be great to get that posted to our LinkedIn platform and see what some of the other grantees may have to contribute to that conversation.

Some of our upcoming technical assistance that might interest you, we do have some small group coaching coming up specifically around social media and internet marketing. And again, this is just another tool and strategy type session to talk about how we can recruit both employers and participants. And Russ's toolkit that he has helped us develop will be kind of our muse for that discussion.

So we'll be referencing that as well. The peer-to-peer learning exchanges are always ongoing, and we're going to be talking again about how we can really engage and recruit our participants from the field and reach out to our long-term unemployed communities and find out what's working from the field from those that are doing the work.

And then of course we have our long-term unemployed subject matter expert webinar series, which is going to – I think this will be of interest to many of you who talked to me at least about this, but talking about employer engagement specifically for the IT industry.

As we know, some of us are doing multiple industries, but this one is going to be specific to how we engage our IT community, which will I think dovetail nicely into the toolkit as well when we start talking about internships and paid work experiences as kind of in-roads into the IT industry. And so that's going to be coming up in the next month.

As always, if you have any questions at all, you can go to the Ready to Work rtw@dol.gov mailbox to talk to your federal project officer, reach out to the national office typically around policy questions or any other questions regarding your statement of work or the grant policy and guidelines themselves. And of course all of you know that you can reach out directly to your technical assistance coach via e-mail or phone call, if you have any programmatic and technical assistance questions that you would like addressed.

And we do have some feedback questions that we would like to include here. If you want to take a brief few minutes to go ahead and answer some of these polling questions that will be popping up, your feedback is welcomed, and it helps us improve our TA services and provisions to you. So please feel free to move forward and take those polls.

And now that we are about one minute out, I would just like to thank Russ again for your effort, your time, and your energy that you put into this toolkit. I really, really appreciate everything that you did, and I believe that it will be of great benefit now and on down the road for our Ready to Work grantees. And of course our Make It In America grantees now have that information as well, which is wonderful.

So thank you again, Russ. Thank you all for joining today, and I hope you have a wonderful rest of your week.

DR. HAMM: Thank you. Thank you.

MR. KEATING: All right. Sounds good.

(END)