**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**H1-B Ready to Work Long-Term Unemployed
Subject Matter Expert Webinar Series

Re-engaging Older and Discouraged Workers Back into the Workforce**

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LAURA CASERTANO: All right. Welcome, everyone, to today's webinar. My name is Laura Casertano, and I will be here if you need anything technically speaking. Hopefully, though, you won't need to hear too much from me, but if you do have any technical questions or concerns, just go ahead and let me know in that chat window on the bottom left-hand corner of your screen.

Also in that chat window is where we'd like you to introduce yourself now. I do see that many of you have done so already, but if you haven't, just go ahead and let us know your name, the name of your organization, where you're located in the country, and how many are joining you, if you're joining in a group. That chat window is also where we'd like you to ask any questions or make any comments that you have throughout today's webinar, and we'll get to as many of them as we can and we'd love to hear from you.

You'll also notice that we have a copy of today's PowerPoint as well as a related resource uploaded in the file share window so you can download them at any time throughout today's presentation. Also, a copy of the PowerPoint as well as the recording of today's presentation will be made available in WorkforceGPS in about two business days.

Now, I'm going to go ahead and move us over into our presentation. Again, I want to welcome everyone to today's H-1B Ready to Work webinar. And again, if you haven't done so yet or if you're joining a little bit late, just go ahead and introduce yourself in that chat window in the bottom left-hand corner. Let us know your name, the name of your organization, where you're located in the country, and how many are joining you, if you're joining in a group.

And now, I'm going to give us into our first polling question. So if you guys can take a moment now and, using the poll, select the role you play in your H-1B Ready to Work grant. So for this grant I am either the authorized representative, the program director/manager, the IT/data manager or staff, training partner, employer partner, and service provider.

And it looks like, from those of you who have answered right now, you're leaning towards the program director/manager. Most of you are the program director/manager, but do take a moment now and select an answer by selecting one of those radio buttons. I'll give you just a couple more seconds, and then I'm going to move us right into today's presentation. All right. It looks like most of you have answered. So I'm going to move us over.

I'm going to turn things over to today's moderator, Megan Baird. She's the H-1B program manager. Megan?

MEGAN BAIRD: Great. Good afternoon or good morning, everyone, depending on where you are joining us from, and welcome to today's H-1B Ready to Work long-term unemployed subject matter expert webinar. It's one of many in a series of subject matter expert webinars for long-term unemployed workers. Again, thank you for joining us today, and we are excited for this event and to continue to support our Ready to Work grantees in the great work you are all doing.

Now that we are approaching the midpoint of your grants, we really wanted to make sure to focus on specific types of long-term unemployed workers, and we've heard from many of you that the type of long-term unemployed worker that you're serving may have changed since your grant first started.

I know some of you did specifically identify you would be targeting older worker long-term unemployed workers, but for many of you, looking at your performance data and your activities, it seems like you're also serving a large percentage of older workers that are long-term unemployed as well. And so we really wanted to make sure that we were honing in on some specific technical assistance around this population.

We wanted to be able to tap into this population and for you to learn more about how to engage them, and we're excited to share some guidance from two subject matter experts today which we'll interview in a little bit. And they will be sharing some outreach and recruitment strategies and reengaging older workers as well as dislocated workers back into the workforce. And before I turn things over, I did want to remind everyone that today's webinar is specifically focused on our Ready to Work grants that are serving long-term unemployed workers.

I know that we've shared this invite with some other grant programs that are also serving older workers and thank you for joining us and we welcome you but to please note that for the purposes of today's webinar, we'll only be answering questions that are specific to the topic, which is older workers and/or the Ready to Work grants as well as discouraged workers. So we won't be able to answer any questions to any other – that are grant-specific to any other grants but we hope that having some other grant programs join us will help infuse the conversation around this topic.

And with that I'm going to turn things over now to Angel Harlins from Performance Excellence Partners, our technical assistance provider for the Ready to Work grants. And Angel is going to get us started.

ANGEL HARLINS: Thanks, Megan, and good afternoon, good morning, everyone. I'm so honored to introduce today's subject matter experts as they will discuss some of the outreach and recruitment strategies for reengaging older and discouraged workers back into the workforce. I've gotten the opportunity to work with both of them, and they're very knowledgeable about this subject. So please feel free to ask questions throughout the presentation as the curiosity arises.

First up we have John Fugazzie who's also a former Ready to Work New Jersey grantee lead and now the founder and president of Neighbors-helping-Neighbors initiative, also the executive director of the Hudson County Workforce Development Board and adjunct professor at Petrocelli College Fairleigh Dickenson University. Whoa, that was a mouthful.

And we also have Chris Czarnik, which is the founder and CEO of the Career RESearch Group and author of the Human Search Engine for Career Search. So I'll let them introduce themselves and their organizations, and we'll move forward from there. So, John?

JOHN FUGAZZIE: Good morning and welcome, everybody. Again, my first entry into the workforce world was the founding of Neighbors-helping-Neighbors which has a few sub-brands under it. And again, we became involved with Ready to Work back two years ago when we partnered with the New Jersey group that made an application to win one of the Ready to Work grants.

But again, one of the groups we formed is Latinos-heling-Latinos. We have a very large Latino population in Northeastern New Jersey, New York area, and we also have a virtual group which brings resources to veterans, Neighbors – Veterans-helping-Veterans. Chris?

CHRIS CZARNIK: Well, good morning, everybody. My name is Chris Czarnik, and I'm calling in from beautiful but cold Appleton, Wisconsin. My work really started with job search about 15 years ago. I spent a lot of my time as an executive career search coach teaching outplacement, and then for the last about 12 years it's been all focused on community involvement and running free job search programs in the local colleges, implementing a very specific job search process.

And so what we do at Human Search Engine is teach an evidence-based job search curriculum, and it's really designed, as you'll see later on, to give an entirely different way to do a job search that the job seeker is in control of. And it's really focused 100 percent on proactive job search and getting people doing it themselves and reengaging them. So very, very proud and grateful to be here today.

MR. FUGAZZIE: OK. I guess I'll kick off today's objectives. Today our goal is to gain an understanding of innovative outreach and recruitment strategies. We want to learn how to educate the long-term unemployed, older and discouraged workers about their options and methods to get back to work. We want to explore topics and ways to outreach and recruit to this population.

As we know, it's a very difficult population. And we want to learn about social media methods that can be used and strategies to reengage the LTU older and discouraged workers. Social media efforts also can be directed at the employers who we want to be friendly to this category of jobseekers.

So today's agenda is split in two. I will start off taking the first section which is finding older – let me just – finding older and discouraged jobseekers. Chris will then follow up after my presentation is done talking about engaging the older and discouraged jobseekers.

MS. BAIRD: Great. Thanks, John, and we'll just go right ahead into the presentation.

MR. CZARNIK: OK. So John and I and all of us on the call have been talking about the very specific problem for a period of time, and there's some real conclusions we came to that the nature of being a discouraged worker says you can't just go to them and say, hey, let's use more traditional job search methods and let's change your resume three words and let's go network, whatever that means.

But really in working with this population for the last 10 years, the thing that's really important to understand, there's a reason they're discouraged. These discouraged and older jobseekers are by definition frustrated by the current job search process, the tools, and the system and, frankly, have given up.

It is rarely true that a person genuinely doesn't want to go back to work, but they're discouraged because they've tried everything they know how to do and have gotten no response, little response, or rejections along the way and therefore just say, I think the world has judged me and judged me as not worthy.

So with an entirely new way of going about connecting with them and reengaging them and then also putting them in charge of their job search, the people have no reason to do anything but to distrust the process and not engage with employers. They become discouraged not only by rejection but, frankly, they have a tremendous lack of control over their search.

They are looking at posted job ads, for the most part, either online or in workforce development facilities, and the really depressing thing with the people that I work with is it's not even the rejection but the vast majority of them get absolutely no feedback of any kind from the employer and also they get a rejection letter. It's kind of a good day because somebody actually acknowledges that they exist.

And so again, they believe that they have been judged by the world as unworthy and have no reason to think otherwise. And in our opinion, what we need to do after they're – reconnect with them is to give them a process that they can control and execute step by step, give them control over their job search, and, as you'll see, kind of do a research project on where they exist in the – where they need to exist in the world.

MR. FUGAZZIE: OK. Thank you, Chris. All right. So again, from starting in my section of the presentation, definitely one of the very important areas here is to really educate the jobseeker. For this population many of these people have not really looked for work in 15, 20 years in many cases.

So the job market and the market they face today is extremely different than the one last time they looked for work. So it's very important that everybody who is in contact with them really help engage them in a better understanding of the market they're facing. And again, it is a much more difficult market than what most people had faced in previous job search endeavors.

Step one really is a self-skills assessment. Again, jobseekers need to be honest with themselves as to what their skills level are for the jobs that they're targeting and the jobs they'd like to get back to.

We encourage everybody to build a personal plan to make sure there's a target and kind of a focus to what their job search is. Many people, again, in this category start getting discouraged, start feeling stressed, and depression comes into play, and they really start scattering their efforts in many different directions. So just as Chris will talk about later, the whole idea of the jobseeker, in this category especially, having a real plan to work off of is critical.

We also teach them to consider alternative employment. Our economy is transitioning from a traditional economy to one of a contractor nature. Small businesses are growing, and projections say that most jobs are going to be nontraditional employment in the future. So this is a good group who has tremendous experience, but that experience may not be a value for certain types of employers and traditional employment adventures. So we consider – we ask them to consider becoming consultants, to consider small business, and to look into some other alternative methods also because, again, that could be their path back to success.

The reality of the marketplace today, again, is the supply and demand is out of balance. So the reality of when you do get a job is you may not be getting the kind of salary that you had before. So we also encourage people to consider multiple jobs and maybe the combination of two jobs that really gets you back to where you need to be to cover your economic needs. And even myself as an example, I teach as an adjunct professor to supplement my main income. And again, I believe that's becoming more of a commonplace today than it's been in the past.

For older workers, many of the skills they have may be applying to industries and jobs that no longer exist, but what's very important is to know that the skills you have can apply to other industries that do have job demand and have some growth potential.

And the other key here is to really work with employers who are friendly towards this population. We know there's a lot of stereotypes and a lot of employers who just try to treat long-term unemployed similar to how long-term unemployed was years ago. And one of the things I speak to is that 15 years ago, if you were long-term unemployed, you probably were the reason why you were long-term unemployed.

Today the economy has really forced so much consolidation and so many jobs to be driven out of the marketplace that it's not necessarily the jobseeker to blame that they can't find employment in a reasonable period of time. From a marketing and outreach standpoint using traditional outreach platforms, you want to go where the older workers are.

Public libraries, churches, and houses of worship are very important. Again, when people start feeling discouraged, many of them will turn to their religious leaders to ask for help and some guidance to keep them motivated and to keep them being less depressed. Community organizations, there's all types and shapes of them out there. Again, in each of your local areas you really want to connect with these community organizations because, again, this is where this older population tends to be involved and this is where you can outreach to them to bring them into your grant services.

Adult schools, college, and alumni groups are very important. It's one of the most natural built-in networks, your college alumni or your high school alumni, where, for the most part, people who are part of the same school really have an extended view to want to help people who came from the same colleges and schools and other alumni-type organizations and want to be helpful to them.

Family members, again, as this population becomes depressed, you may need the family members to engage them and to re-encourage them because, again, as many of us know who have been through this, it can become a very isolated process to be a long-term unemployed. And the longer you're disconnected from a job, the more difficult it is for you to keep your motivation intact.

Using local media and of course working with your local workforce board organizations and various other grants that are in your area. The key today is to reach the people you need to reach, you need a very extended network. You must use your networking skills, even as an organization, to partner with other organizations who can all help you reach this population.

Networking to friends and family. And again, in some cases long-term unemployed require some referral to mental health – and this is a very difficult situation – to some counseling because once you get depressed and once you give up, you're not going to be able to present yourself in a way that employers are going to want to hire you. Friends can be very important to give support.

We encourage people to help connect long-term unemployed with mentors and people who can actually help keep them motivated. Many of the job search groups that I'm aware of have weekly meetings so that there's a continuity. It's not a once-a-month meeting. A jobseeker needs to be motivated every day to do the things they need to do in today's economy. Networks are essential. Again, I mentioned alumni groups before.

Elected officials. Again, it's in the elected officials' best interest to really make sure members of their community get back to work, and they're sometimes in a position to know who are the new companies that are coming in. And again, I think there's an ask here from a standpoint that companies who do hire long-term unemployed, just as with other unemployment barriers.

The companies really have to step up and do this partially for community service because it's good for everybody to keep people working and to keep money coming into the economy. The collateral damage of long-term unemployment can be dramatic, not only for the individual but even for the community. And of course religious elders can play a very important role here for the people of faith.

From an outreach and recruitment, you need to make major efforts in marketing. This is not something you post a flyer once in a while. It really has to be a continuity and a continuous flow Social media gives us that opportunity at a very low cost. It's just important to continue to be driving your message out there to connect with the jobseekers.

It also has a dual purpose of connecting your programs to the employers because, as we all know from workforce, most employers aren't even fully familiar with all the types of programs we have because there's so many and so many different organizations bringing them to the market. So social media can really help bring employers into the awareness level of helping this challenge population.

LinkedIn, I'm a huge believer in LinkedIn. It's a very powerful tool, and it's a business tool. It's not a social Facebook type of situation. It's a situation to meet professionals, and again, everyone in the group should have a very active LinkedIn group because that's really where you're going to, one, reach, again, employers who you need to connect these people with, but also for the people who are professionals and people who have gotten engaged in LinkedIn, it's a good place for them to be able to outreach to the people who are out of work long-term. You want to engage all stakeholders in your organizations and your network.

As I'm familiar with many of the grants, you have a large – a network of partners, many counties sometimes. Numerous community colleges are part of the network. You have to really work hard to make sure your entire network is doing outreach and it's not just the grant holder who's doing most of the work because, again, the whole idea of outreach is you need an extended network to be able to reach out to these people to get the kind of participation or program that you need to make the long-term unemployed successful.

(interruption-technical difficulties)

MR. CZARNIK: So kind of playing off what John was talking about, I see the polling question up there. So what John was talking about is that social media allows two things. Number one, it's obviously inexpensive, but if you really think about it, the older worker may or may not be actually on social media.

OK. So for example, I'm 54 and I don't really live in the world of social media that much, except when I'm doing job search, but their children do. And the children who are on those social media sites are looking for a way to help their discouraged or older worker but really don't have a clue how to do it. And so they're really looking for ways to do it and they're willing to help them but they feel currently unable to.

So one of the reasons that social media at first wouldn't seem like it's a good fit is that we don't have this picture in our mind of 55 or 60-year-old people on Facebook and LinkedIn. Some are, certainly, but our goal really is to help identify or help connect people who are willing to help them that are part of their network, part of their family, and they are – they don't know really where else to turn.

So I see the polling question up here that – asking people to say, what social media platforms are you utilizing most for your Ready to Work grant? And everybody is kind of – everyone is kind of weighing in. And it looks like –

MS. CASERTANO: Yeah. Let's give a few seconds for that. I think we got disconnected on the phone here, Chris.

MR. CZARNIK: OK.

MS. CASERTANO: We're going to get these polling questions up soon as well.

MR. CZARNIK: OK.

MS. CASERTANO: Let's go ahead and skip it, and let's just keep on going. And it looks like John got disconnected. So we can just – did you want to go ahead and just take over for him?

MR. CZARNIK: I'm happy to continue. That's totally fine. When John comes back, I'm happy to let him right back in.

And what he's talking about, really it fits very neatly with the kind of work that we're going to be talking about that we do with long-term and elderly unemployed. But the first thing that they need to do is they have to identify a skills group. Now, you have to really understand that, when you ask somebody who's been unemployed or discouraged worker for a long period of time, if you ask them what skills they have and they've been working at some job that's not a good fit for them or is not reminiscent of the skills they've used in the past, that really doesn't make any sense.

And so what we really want to do is we want to take a look back at where they came from, and, as you'll see, there's a skills kind of inventory that we're going to go through to the second part of the presentation, but that going to education is certainly one of the ways not only to get them back up to speed but it's also a great networking thing.

So we think about going to education in terms of changing their skill set or their abilities, but education really is an incredible opportunity for them to reconnect and especially if they're doing education in industry-specific – and this is a really important thing – in industry-specific areas.

So if they're background used to be sales and they go to sales training or if they used to be a project manager and now they're going to groups and organizations that do that kind of work and those people are now, again, surrounded for the first time in a long time not looking for a job but with people who do the same work, use the same what we refer to as industry-specific terminology, and also get face-to-face conversations with them that they normally – that they wouldn't get in traditional job search.

MR. FUGAZZIE: All right. Chris?

MR. CZARNIK: Yes.

MR. FUGAZZIE: Yeah. I'm sorry. OK. So I'm going to jump back in here.

MR. CZARNIK: Please do, John. Welcome back.

MR. FUGAZZIE: Thank you. I don't know. The phone line went down. But anyway, one of the very important things to offer in education is online options too because for this population, again, it's very comfortable for them to start learning how to improve their skills through online learning. And this is one of the major growth areas where it can be done at their pace and be done in a less threatening manner.

Again, not all traditional educational methods are going to be appropriate for the long-term unemployed that may not feel comfortable being in the same setting as some of the younger training programs are. But again, it's one of the areas that clearly is an important growth area and, again, finding programs to help people get geared for small business. Some of the more employer-friendly categories tend to be government, education, and healthcare where they're willing to take all the workers and do some retraining to take the skill set that they have and move them along into a career path.

Encourage community involvement, and again, you really want to engage everybody you can to help encourage the workers to do volunteer work because that improves their networking, puts them out into the community so they're not sitting at home getting more depressed about this and, through these efforts, is going to put them in a position really to do some networking connections where people will get a sense for what their character is. It's very important today.

It's very hard to measure people's character, and I think, again, employers feel very strongly about people who are community-minded. So even though they're out of work, volunteering in community efforts of all types is a very good thing to encourage your long-term unemployed people to do. And also for the grants it's important to be at these kinds of organizations too because this is where you'll be able to reach out to the unemployed people that you're targeting.

You got to encourage your employers to really make that community service and to work with people with barriers, and while we're focused on long-term unemployed, there's quite a few categories of employment barriers who need that extra help where an employer says, I'm going to take the extra step to really help this population, of course 50-plus, and we have some major programs I know we'll talk about tomorrow with AARP, Easter Seals, United Way.

There's different organizations in different markets that are focused on helping the 50-plus population. Of course LTU, the groups that are on the phone today, but your veterans, your minority, disabled, language barriers, and economic and minority people all are in the same category. And when you're talking to your employers, really want to be able to get them to be more open to giving a chance to employer – to employees with barriers.

And align with the organizations in your area for all these different initiatives, the AARP, score, veterans groups, United Way, rotary clubs, the various religious charities and organizations that work in the state, your YMCAs/YWCAs, and, again, as I mentioned earlier, elected officials can be a very important network because for them to get elected they have a tremendous network. So if you can engage them to help with your long-term unemployed population, they can be of great value.

And then align with all the various workforce organizations. Help the jobseekers navigate through all the programs because, again, as a grant holder you're going to have more knowledge than the average jobseeker has, and when you get them to register for your program, individual training, one-on-one mentoring, building their job search skills. This is a big gap, and most jobseekers are not game ready when they haven't been looking for a job in 15 to 20 years.

Encouraging to join local job clubs and job groups, to work with non-profits that have job programs, and to deal with industry organizations. Again, if they have a target for the industry they want to get back to, this is where they're going to get to meet the people that they need to meet and to also work with the colleges who have a wide range of access to both employers and various training options.

The focus for older workers, again, is they need to sometimes rebrand themselves, and it's very important for them to have a comfort with technology because people are being judged today. No matter what job you're going to be asked to do, technology is an integral portion of that job. And we're not asking these people to be programmers and computer scientists, but we're asking them to have a basic skill set that they can show that basically they get social media.

They're on LinkedIn. They have a reasonable profile. You want to teach them networking skills, certainly LinkedIn. It's a very important tool for job search. Today most recruiters are finding all their people form LinkedIn, and you want them to understand all the technology issues that are driving the applicant tracking systems today and the key word searches, that, again, these are not things that existed 10 to 15 years ago. And a very basic understanding of how these systems interface with both resumes and LinkedIn profiles are very important for the jobseeker to understand.

Again, navigating them through, you really want to get to these jobseekers before the depression starts in. So any kind of connection you can make for them to continue their motivation, continue their hope is very important. They need to be motivated in this process. This is not a process that you can casually approach a job search in today's marketplace. One-on-one coaching, if you offer that, can be very important to many of these people. Psychological counseling might be needed.

Again, encouraging support group presentation, buddy system, getting somebody who has a job to really touch base with them on a regular basis to help keep motivating them and keep them from becoming depressed and discouraged. Family member outreach is really important because the family may be the most important link to this particular population. Building mentor systems, helping them understand the market, and helping them learn how to come up with out-of-box solutions to solve their job situation.

MS. CASERTANO: All right. (Inaudible.)

MS. BAIRD: And before we go over to Chris, we're going to go ahead and go back to our survey we had on a previous slide today. Laura, you can go ahead. OK. So the polling question is, what social media platforms are you utilizing the most for your Ready to Work grant program? Facebook, LinkedIn groups, your LinkedIn company pages, some local online news sites, Twitter, Pinterest, and also your grant's websites.

So so far looks like a majority of people are using their LinkedIn groups, which is great to know. Also Facebook. Some have reported that they have a company LinkedIn page, and in the chat box, the main chat box below tell us how that has been working for you. How has using Facebook been working for you or LinkedIn? Let us know some of your successes here so that some of the other grantees on the call can kind of see which platform might actually work for them.

I mean, I see one person using Pinterest. How are you using Pinterest for your program, and also how are you using Twitter? So yes. Looks like a great majority of people are using these social media platforms; great to know. OK. I'll turn it right back over to you, Chris, and if you have any other feedback on that as well. Thanks, Laura.

MS. CASERTANO: Chris, are you on the line?

MR. CZARNIK: Oh, yes. I am. So before I move on to the next slide, I want to talk a little bit about two initiatives that we used up here that really were pretty successful. So what we did is we really spent a lot of time trying to figure out and we talked to people who used to be unemployed and now were reemployed and said to them, where were you spending your time when you weren't working and when you were struggling with your job search?

And of course initially the answers were, well, I was looking for a job or I was on – I was at workforce development. But there were two real places that were really important.

Number one is we took a look at the YMCA, of all places. So I'm a 54-year-old guy, and when I don't have time, my social network really boils down to a lot of the people that I hang out at the YMCA, play racquet ball with, play tennis with. And so a surprising number of people who are unemployed or discouraged are still doing something with their time when it has to do with their health, whether it's a running club, whether it's a racquet ball club, whether they're playing basketball in the morning, or whatever.

And so we really approach the YMCA and the YWCA and ask them to kind of disseminate some information for us, give us an opportunity to make short promotional videos. And so really thinking about where they live when they're discouraged and what are they doing with their time is a really important thing to do. And so really we got that from polling people who used to be unemployed and became reemployed through our process.

The second thing that we did was more in the area of discouraged workers, and that is even though some of them were working, we had people who were very skilled and had executive roles or significant manager roles in the past but because they became discouraged, they would go what we call life raft jobs, Home Depot, Menards. I don't know if you guys have Menards out there, but they would go to those kind of jobs that are – once you realize or once you believe that you can't get back to where you were, you have this default job just to pay the bills.

Well, surprisingly, what we found out was that a lot of the HR managers of those types of organizations, the service retail organizations, knew that some of the people that they hired probably belonged in a different world and were surprisingly willing to let us put up some information in their store, around their employees to talk about this.

And it's a little counterintuitive because you'd think, well, they don't want to lose their employees, but what they really know is that people, when they're a square peg in a round hold, they don't service other customers as well. They're not as happy. They don't stay as long. They have a tendency to jump from job to job. So anyway, just those two ideas very quickly about how to engage discouraged workers or workers who had kind of given up altogether.

So when we go into my part and if we could move to the next slide 27, I think what you'll find out is that there's some really significant problems with job search. Now, I spent almost all my time with 50- to 65-year-olds, 2,000 of them in the last 10 years, and every single one of them has the exact same problem. So number one is that the jobseekers are currently unaware of at least 85 percent of the organizations that could hire them in their geographic radius. So what you find is, especially people who have very traditional ideas about job search and where they go, they very often want to run immediately to the largest employers in the area.

Well, I don't know if this is exactly the right way to say it, but in our area those very large organizations when we were growing up, those were the gold watch places, those were the places where you went to work there and you stayed there 30 years, and so this real mindset that you go back to these places.

And what I have to explain to these 55- to 65-year-old people is, listen. Because of the great recession, they just spent five years getting rid of people who look like you and I, and so to knock on their door really doesn't make a lot of sense. It kind of guarantees rejection. So they're heading in a direction of applying to places that are almost guaranteed to not respond to them or respond to them negatively because they've just spent a lot of time changing it to a younger workforce, if you will.

The second thing that we found is that at the exact same time that the jobseeker's discouraged, frustrated, and unemployed, that the HR people in organizations are desperately looking for people, but they don't have any idea how to find them. And so in the work that I do, it's really all about putting the jobseeker in some kind of research project, a very structured research project we'll talk about in a second, that really makes them easier to find but doing it in a non-aggressive, a non-do-you-have-a-job-for-me way, which serves a lot of purposes.

And lastly, what we're going to talk about right now is that, for the most part, if you're a discouraged jobseeker, by your nature HR is – if you say to somebody, we're going to help you by changing four words on your resume and sending it out to HR, that's the nature of the problem. That's why they're discouraged. And so what we're going to do is teach them how to do a job search and avoid HR every possible turn, and that usually is a pretty popular thing because, again, they feel like they have been judged by HR.

So what we do is we create a research project. So the discouraged worker has likely used only traditional reactive forms of job search because, frankly, the vast majority of them grew up that way and they posted job ads or they see a posted job ad. They send a resume and cover letter and cross their fingers and hope something good happens. But really if you think about the way that people find everything else other than a job of value in their lives – and really think about it.

Think of one other way or one other thing you look for in your life the same way you look for a job. And I ask that question at every meeting and every seminar, and people are stunned. They're like, well, wait a second. That's not how I found the mechanic I trust. That's not how I found my OB/GYN, my doctor. It's now how I found the mechanic I trust. And so it's very confusing to them that there's this whole different way of doing job search, resumes, cover letters, and posted job ads.

And so our task is to really say, well, let's create a research project the same way you've done a job search every other way in the world – or for every other thing in the world. And we're going to do it not to find a job. I actually tell them, stop doing a job search today because the job search is why they're discouraged. And so in their mind what we really have to change this to is, stop doing a job search today because, frankly, you don't have enough information and knowledge yet to accept a job.

What you really need to do is a research project around who you are, your skill set, where you fit in the world, the problems that you can solve, who has those problems, and how do we get in front of them? So we want to do that by starting in a very friendly place, talking with people who have had the same issues or learning from their experiences, and identifying both organizations and possibilities they never knew existed.

Now, before we go on to the next slide, I want to say something really general about networking. Everybody says, go network. Well, the last 10 years of my life have been all about, what does that mean? I mean, who do I talk to and why would they meet with me and what's the conversation and what's the goal of the meeting and how do I get a job from it? And so to say, go network, to somebody is really meaningless unless we give them a step-by-step process that they can do in a non-aggressive, a non-do-you-have-a-job-for-me way starting with people that they already know and trust.

So what we do is we introduce a logical, linear, project-based job search process. We turn the job search into a research project that they are in charge of. So if you worked with jobseekers at any period of time, one workforce development person or one career counselor to 150 or 300 unemployed jobseekers is a ridiculous number.

So instead of having one person responsible for 300 people, we're going to have 300 people responsible for themselves and having the counselor or the workforce development worker guide them through a process and actually take a look at the work that they do and make sure they're doing the work, that they're coming to certain conclusions, and that it's leading them to conversations really, again, just for advice, guidance, and feedback. And what we're going to do is we're going to exclusively focus on the 75 percent of jobs that are never advertised anywhere.

And so the reason we do this, before I even move on, is, if you don't give discouraged workers – and say there's an entirely different way of doing job search that you never heard of, you never considered, you've never been taught to do. If you don't tell them that there's an entirely different way that you can lead them through, why would they think the end result will be different from the last six months or six years of their traditional job search?

So the first outreach to them is to say, yes. There's an entirely different way we'd like to teach it to you, which gets them interested enough to come into the office or start having a conversation, and very often that idea needs to be on the flyer or needs to be on any of the promotional material because without that they will come to the conclusion that it's just another place to change a few words on your resume and give you two more websites to take a look at.

So everybody knows that there are 75 percent of jobs that are landed through networking and 75 percent of jobs that are never advertised. How do we go about it? And so this step-by-step process is what we teach those jobseekers.

So our goal is not a job. If you look at the second part, our goal in this research project is not a job. A job ends up being the end result of your interactions with people who live in the world you want to live in as you're getting advice, guidance, and feedback from them along the way.

And we're going to start this process first and foremost with definition who they are, but we need to assure them that they're going to start their networking with scripts. We're going to teach them exactly how to do it, but we're going to start with people who are just willing to help them. If you think of traditional job search as sending a resume to somebody who is able to help you but they don't know you, they have no motivation, and they're frankly not willing to help you.

And so we're going to convince them that we're going to start with people are willing to help you and they will help you get to the people who are able to help you. We're also going to focus our initial conversations on people who will give them incredibly positive feedback. The other thing we know about the long-term unemployed is that the longer they're unemployed, the more they've convinced their self that their skill sets don't matter anymore, that nobody needs them, that the world has judged them and has judged them as not good enough and not smart enough and they don't really need them.

Well, if we focus our initial conversations after we have them do this definition with former bosses, hiring managers, mentors, salespeople, vendors, and peers, all who had – they had incredibly positive conversations and interactions with through their whole work life, we know two things for sure.

Number one, those people will meet with them because they haven't talked with them in a number of years and they want to catch up, and because they were good friends or good counterparts or good peers along the way, getting a meeting with them is not three weeks from Tuesday. It's, oh, my gosh. How have you been? Can you get together lunch tomorrow?

And the really important thing is that this conversation will have nothing to do with asking them for a job, nothing to do with helping them find a direct path to a job. It's just advice, guidance, and feedback from people who have already judged you personally and professionally and judged you in a positive way, and the conversation should all focused on advice, not a job.

So we really in the process have broken it down for the 2,000 people who have been through it to three phases, definition, research, and marketing. And if that looks familiar – it looks familiar, it's because it's the way billion dollar companies have been selling anything throughout our entire lives. What they do is they create a product first by defining it. What is it, and what is it not? What problem does it – is it designed to solve before they ever go out into the market?

And so what we're doing is we're having the jobseeker start a research project on themselves by talking about who they are, writing out their achievements, identifying from those achievements the values, the skills, and the interests that are around where they were in a successful place and really defined around the question where do I belong in the world of work, which really means what problems do I have that I know I can solve and have solved them successfully in the past?

As you might imagine, the first step of the definition research project is twofold. Yes. It's creating messaging, but it's also really getting them to believe that they're worthy again after getting beaten down or rejected for the last six months.

The second thing is research. So if we have identified what problems you can solve, the first thing that keeps you away from is applying for jobs that don't fit. So we actually have them create not an objective. I really refer to it more as a hypothesis, and that hypothesis says, based on what I've done in the past, based on the problems that I've solved so far, my belief is that the kind of problems I can solve and the companies that have that problems should be the focus of my research and the research is through conversations with people who I've met in the past, live in that world to either confirm or deny my hypothesis.

So the research has everything to do with identifying who has the problems that I can solve, what do those companies value, and matching their needs with the – (inaudible) – of hiring managers. And again, if this looks familiar, it's the exact way that companies do research so that that end cap with the exact kind of tomato soup that you've always been looking for shows up right in front of you before you turn down the soup aisle. That's exactly what we're going to do with them.

And the other thing that's not on the screen but I think is super important is that the first part of their research should be around finding great employers. And that's one of the things that really is uplifting to people because after they have been beaten down or they've had a bad experience – some people are discouraged workers because they had a bad work experience and they frankly just don't want to go back in the barrel.

And so our first thing is for them to do research through people and through the chamber to just plain identify, regardless of industry, regardless of size, organizations that are well-known for treating employees well and having a positive work environment. We have to convince them that they are actually great places to work that still exist in the world.

And then marketing. How can I reach the people that have the problems that I can solve, and how can I get advice, guidance, and feedback about my search from people in that industry? And we'll talk about that right now. There we go. Definition. So what we do is we have them write out their work-related achievements in a very specific way. What did you do, how did you do it, and what was the result?

And again, as they write those out, they remember how talented they are, and they remember how they created value in the world. We have them systematically refine skills from those achievements and identify skills that are very often associated with their achievements, and we create what we refer to as a dynamic skill set, which is their preferred skill set and a list of tasks to be performed.

And as we talked about, we create a hypothesis around the type of organization that needs a skill set like that, and the rest of their research project is actually talking to people who work at or used to work at those types of organizations and getting to them through people that they already know and trust.

So this hypothesis that we have them create sounds something like this. I'm looking for a blank position involving blank, blank, and blank for a blank organization focused on blank. I'm going to step back just for a second because the other thing we know about discouraged jobseekers is at some point they decided that it's the world's fault that they don't have a job, that there's nothing they can do about it.

And what we need to do is we really need to figure out if they're either unwilling or they're unable to do this job search. And so right now, without a method that they control or that they can act on day by day, they can simply say, I'm unable. There are no jobs; see? They can show all their resumes that got rejected. But if we give them something to do on a daily basis and a step-by-step way to do it, whether they're unwilling or unable to press their job search forward becomes incredibly clear and very quickly.

And some people who just aren't willing to do the work, I'd love to say that this process saves everyone all the time, but frankly, if they're not interested enough in their own job search to do this research project that is at no cost to them, has them talking to people they already know and trust, if they're not willing to do that, then I think there's a different reason that they're unemployed.

The second thing is that it makes them make a choice. When they're discouraged, they've started applying for jobs that don't fit them, they don't have a skill set for, is not appropriate for them. And so what we're seeing is, if you could have what you wanted – we don't know if you can have what you want, but if you could have what you wanted, what would it look and sound like?

And so that example of sales position involving creating customer profiles, aggressive prospecting, and creating market share for a manufacturing company focused on the paper industry. Now, with that hypothesis we can focus our research around company research, SIC codes, industry research, and use tools like LinkedIn to identify people who work at or used to work at those types of organizations to start a conversation.

And that's what we're talking about here in the research. Who needs my skills? They create a profile of the type of organization that they search, that they're going to focus on, and in this case the most important list is really to take look at their last employers and identify customers, competitors, and vendors of that organization because they know they fit in that type of organization already.

And just because their customer, competitor, or vendor organizations don't have jobs posted, don't mean there aren't opportunities. Lastly, they use research tools and SIC codes and databases to identify target organizations in their geographical radius. They identify what I refer to as flux. There's a whole concept about what is the event that happens right before somebody needs them.

And then as we've attached, there's also a networking brief that allows them to identify or to communicate to people what they're looking for in their next job, even people who know them well personally that they'll start with, but those people likely don't know them professionally almost at all.

I see the time is getting tight. So I'm going to push forward. Our goal in this research project is not a job. A job will come from being in front of people who value the skills and abilities that you have.

But for those people who are going to get in front of them from their industry and ask them only for advice, guidance, and feedback on their search and from people who live in the world or have lived in that world in the past, we're going to get advice from people and walk that path before you so we can identify people who have been unemployed in the last five years and are now reemployed and figure out what strategies that they use and what organizations did they target.

And most importantly, teaching people who are willing to help them with their search to get them in front of people who are able with their search.

And the next slide are the type of lists – and I'm sure we'll have a conversation about this tomorrow, but we can have them create this list and identify very quickly people who are willing to help them, the who thinks you're awesome list, people that you worked with in the past that think you're great at what you do in every capacity, managers, HR managers, peers, customers, vendors.

And then the ABC list, anyone you know with hiring authority or owns a business, anyone in your area of expertise or industry without hiring authority, and the C list, if you were looking for advice on anything other than a job, who would you go talk to in these areas. And they'll be faced, after they make this list, with a list of people to go network with that is not intimidating at all. As a matter of fact, if they do it correctly, kind of creates, well, a family reunion and a very positive experience for them.

So we're running really short, and so there's all kinds of information on informational interviews and networking. We use scripts and examples and having practice inside of accountability groups or use the workforce development person or the career professional to walk them through that group. And they're able to do a job search without ever asking for a job, which is really what they want.

So most importantly, as I end we use a standardized approach that anybody can execute. It really creates an individualized result for every person. It is a process, but the inputs will be different. The outcomes will be different. It guarantees exposure not only to people who like them but people in the industry, focuses on advice, guidance, and feedback.

Their research and the conversations make them aware of businesses that they never would have found without this type of research, and they control – they have something that they can do and they should do traditional job search as well but it gives them something to actively work on while they're waiting for somebody to respond to their resume.

And then there's a quick slide, and I'm going to turn it back to John and the rest of the group because I'm probably going a little bit over. But here's a list of things to actually start doing tomorrow and talk about how to get them done.

So, John, I'll turn it back to you for the takeaways.

MR. FUGAZZIE: OK. Thank you and thanks for that presentation, Chris. It was very enlightening.

So the presentation takeaways in engaging with older and discouraged workers, educate with modern methods of job search. Use testimonials of success stories to help motivate them. Use traditional and non-traditional methods of outreach. Utilize family and friends to reach this population. Suggest alternative employment options.

Encourage technology use and understanding and its role in job search, and mobilize your entire network of partners to help reach this population. Search for a job the same way you find everything else of value in your life, and networking is about gaining help, support, and guidance from people who already think you are great at what you do, kind of your cheerleading squad.

MS. BAIRD: Great. Thank you so much, Chris and John. Very, very informative conversation between the two of you on this topic on how to re-engage older and discouraged workers. So we'll do a quick – looks like we only have about a minute left. So what I'll do is I'll just discuss the roundtable discussion that is for tomorrow, October 7th.

The roundtable discussion will take place at I believe it's 12:00 o'clock tomorrow, and it will feature Ready to Work grantee Anne Arundel and you'll discuss their partnership with AARP and also you guys will have the opportunity to talk to some of the subject matter experts and ask them additional questions to discuss this in a little bit more detail.

Go ahead and skip that slide. And of course some of the resources we have for our H-1B Ready to Work program is our community of practice, which is on the WorkforceGPS site right here. Also, have you joined our LinkedIn page? This will provide you with some of the latest updates on Ready to Work and also be an open forum for grantees to discuss amongst each other some of the challenges, some of the successes that the programs have been going through, and kind of how to get that peer-to-peer mentoring without a more formalized meeting or discussion.

As you know, you're always welcome to e-mail us at the Ready to Work grantee mailbox, RTW@dol.gov, and also reach out to your federal project officer if you have any questions about compliance, your statement of work, or any other questions that you have pertaining to your grantee program.

So we're at the hour right now. We'll just – I'm going to ask you guys for a post-webinar feedback. Just please take a minute to take this brief feedback tool. It's going to pop up in about a second now. We'll just ask for your input on today's activities. It will ask you how well the presentation was and if there are any other ways for improving our session.

And we look forward to seeing you guys tomorrow on the discussion. I sent out an e-mail Outlook update to the grantees, and if you haven't received the e-mail, please feel free to e-mail the Ready to Work box so that you can get the e-mail and the Outlook invitation so that you can log into the discussion tomorrow, which will be very informative.

And then I guess I'll turn it over to John and Chris. Did you have anything else that you wanted to say?

MR. FUGAZZIE: (Inaudible.)

MR. CZARNIK: Oh, I'm sorry, John. I – (inaudible). So for me it's – I think the really important thing to understand is that people either, A, are unwilling or unable. So we have to first determine which one it is in their job search. Do they really want to go back to work, or they don't?

And second of all, we have to understand that unless we give them some process to work through, that really the psychological part of getting people back to work is much more important initially than the tactical way to help them get back to work because, by their nature, they have been rejected by society and by the world and we need to get them back to that place.

MR. FUGAZZIE: And my biggest comment is really to mobilize all your partners. Again, the people in this category are really going through a difficult time. Certainly this is a lot different than somebody who's recently unemployed or who does not have all the barriers. So it's really important that you drive the passion to add your entire partner network, to get everybody to cooperate to reach this population and to help this population. They really need your help.

MS. BAIRD: Great. And once again, thank you so much, Chris and John, and we look forward to talking with you again tomorrow. And we hope that everyone has a great rest of the day. Thank you for joining us.

MR. FUGAZZIE: Thank you.

MR. CZARNIK: Thank you very much.

MS. BAIRD: Bye-bye.

(END)