Communities of Practice: Disability Resources for Human Resource Professionals

Jill Bezyak PhD, CRC
Fong Chan, PhD, CRC
Tim Tansey, PhD, CRC
Communities of practice encourage the translation of knowledge into action and provide a framework for information sharing, competence development, rich discussion, and mentoring and creates, organizes, revises, and shares knowledge among members of the community (Seaman, 2008).
Purpose

• The purpose of this project is to conduct the foundational research necessary to design and build a CoP for human resource professionals to assist in the employment of individuals with disabilities.
Method

• Mixed methods approach
• Initially, four focus groups with HR professionals were conducted throughout Colorado.
• A quantitative survey was developed based on the results from the focus groups.
• The survey was disseminated electronically through HR professional organizations in the Rocky Mountain region.
• The total sample from the survey was 190 HR professionals.
Results: Demographic Information

• Gender
  – 84% female and 16% male
• Ethnicity
  – 91% Caucasian
• Age
  – Range from 21-65 years with a mean of 45 years
• Job Title
  – 36% HR Director and 35% HR staff
• Hiring Decisions
  – 90% reported some or complete responsibility for hiring and/or firing staff.
Results: Knowledge and Interest

- 59% reported being unfamiliar with CoPs
- 66% indicated a need for a CoP to improve employment for people with disabilities.
- 46% reported interest in joining a CoP
- 45% indicated the purpose of the CoP should be to “increase knowledge of HR professionals regarding best practices”
Results: Areas for CoP Training

- ADA and ADA Amendments Act of 2008: 93%
- Recruitment and retention of PWDs: 87%
- Assistive Technology and Job Accommodations: 92%
- ADA Standards for Accessible Design: 76%
- Disability Etiquette: 87%
- Workplace Supports for PWDs: 83%
Results: Areas for CoP Training

- Interviewing PWDs: 81%
- Disability Sensitivity and Diversity Training: 82%
- Current Employment and Disability Research: 70%
- Disability Benefits and Work Incentives: 73%
- Tax Incentives: 74%
- VR/Community Resources: 69%
Results: Building a CoP for HR Professionals

- Resource Library: 89%
- External Links: 92%
- Virtual Conferences: 70%
- Webinar/Live Chat: 83%
- Newsletter: 73%
- FAQs: 92%
- CEU Credits: 78%
Next Steps

• Complete development of the CoP website
  – Increase participation
  – Improve CoP features

• [http://hrcop.rockymountainada.org/](http://hrcop.rockymountainada.org/)
The contents of this presentation were developed with support from the Rocky Mountain ADA Center, Colorado Springs, Colorado, under a grant from the Dept. of Health and Human Services, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) grant # 90DP0018-01-00 (formerly Dept. of Education grant # PR H133A110018).