Achieve Better Employment and Retention for Low-Wage Earners

2004 National Conference on

Employment Retention and Advancement Strategies for Low-Wage Workers

Achieving Self-Sufficiency for the Hard-to-Serve Population: Underemployed, Disabled and Ex-TANF Recipients

April 19-21, 2004

Washington, DC • Wyndham City Center Hotel



Presented by:

The Performance Institute

- ✔ **Utilize Internal and External Career Advancing Strategies**
  Overcome barriers to job retention and career advancement with "Career Ladders"
- ✔ **Improve Access to Work Supports**
  Identify support services to assist hard-to-serve clients in employment retention and advancement
- ✔ **Apply Innovations in Education and Training**
  Discover promising practices in education and training programs for post-employment advancement

PLUS Focus on Public/Private Partnerships
Partner with employers to promote worker retention

Promote Self-Sufficiency and Empowerment for All!

Address Barriers to Job Retention and Advancing the Underemployed

Help Employees Transition into Permanent Positions

Who Should Attend?

- Human Services Directors
- State Workforce Liaisons
- Social Security, Medicaid and VA Program Managers
- Social Workers
- Insurance Industry Analysts
- Rehabilitation Services Providers
- Disability Rights Leaders
- Disability Technology Experts
- Grassroots Advocates
- State Workforce Agency Administrator
- One-Stop Center System Leads
- State EO Offices
- Job Corps Contractors
- Job Corps Center Directors
- National Program Grantees

Dear Employment Services Professional,

Welfare recipients need more than just a job. Effective welfare reform requires a broader look at the challenges and issues facing welfare recipients and the low-income communities where they live. Few of the jobs held by former welfare recipients offered health care benefits and most paid only slightly more than minimum wage. While there's success moving clients off state caseloads, there is little success helping them out of poverty.

To help you improve matching workers to jobs and overcome barriers to long-term employment for clients, I invite you to join us for the ***2004 National Conference on Employment Retention and Advancement Strategies for Low-Wage Workers,*** April 19-21 in Washington, D.C.

Access Best-Practices and Innovations in Program Management Strategies
Identify support services to assist underemployed clients in employment retention and advancement. Utilize program innovations for Hard-to-Serve populations. Effective customer support enables members to navigate among multiple services and activities. Develop strategies for effectively serving the underemployed population in your community with sustained employment. Strategies for advancement serve both employer interests in reducing costly turnover from the loss of trained workers, as well as employee interests in better wages, work environments and job security.

Implement Training, Education Programs and Concepts
Many of the working poor desire additional education or training. In fact, the appropriate training might make the difference between their ability to work in a job they desire as opposed to one for which they have been forced to settle. Overcome barriers to gainful and permanent employment for the underemployed by identifying and implementing effective education and training programs. Develop and train staff to provide opportunities for underemployed populations to enter high-wage, high-skilled and nontraditional occupations. Implement programs to increase the number of individuals training for and placed in non-traditional employment.

Improve Employment Outcomes
Sustained employment is the key to self-sufficiency for the underemployed. Once a participant obtains unsubsidized work, post-employment follow up and support services can help improve job retention. Creation of transitional employment programs, stronger job training and other workforce development policies are integral in helping welfare recipients and low-wage workers achieve economic independence.

Innovations of leading stakeholders and employment administrators are waiting for your review! Space is limited, so sign up soon to ensure your organization and office is well represented. Register today by calling 703-894-0481 or visit us online at **www.PerformanceWeb.org**. I hope to see you this April in Washington, DC!

Sincerely,



Kara Farina
Director, Social Policy Center
The Performance Institute



Agenda & Speaking Faculty

Day One: *April 19, 2004*

8:00 **Registration & Continental Breakfast**

8:30 **Keynote Address: Closing the Revolving Door: Strategies to Sustained Employment**

Since the passage of the federal welfare law in 1996, states and local communities around the country have successfully implemented model programs that provide welfare recipients with transitional subsidized jobs. With the tremendous success achieved by welfare reform in moving large numbers of former recipients into jobs, the ability of these workers to move ahead in these jobs and achieve self-sufficiency is now a key concern. Increased interest has been motivated to some extent by the success of welfare reform in moving clients off state caseloads, but rarely out of poverty. This session will highlight the state of the low-wage workforce, underemployed and other hard-to-serve clients seeking better employment opportunities. Identify national initiatives and current agency activities surrounding sustained employment and career advancement.

John K. Maniha, *Project Director, Employment Retention and Advancement, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services*

9:30 **Leadership Panel: Challenges and Opportunities: Addressing Barriers and Strategies in Job Retention and Career Advancement for Low-Wage Workers**

Moving people beyond poverty to rewarding work remains a social goal. Public and private sector policies that extend health care benefits and earned income tax credits continue to be important mechanisms to help achieve these goals. Workforce programs ought to consider a continuum of strategies that are mindful of both retention and advancement objectives and can be adapted as individual clients' needs dictates. Identify and discuss:

- Barriers to job retention
- Job advancement strategies
- Assessing the "hard-to-serve" population

Michael Fishman, *The Lewin Group*

Dr. Harry Holzer, *Professor of Public Policy, Georgetown University*

Nanette Relave, *Welfare Information Network**

11:00 **Break & Refreshments**

11:15 **Successfully Implementing Internal Career Ladders**

Career ladders can help solve recruitment problems, reduce turnover and increase productivity. They have the potential to provide workers with the skills employers need. By doing so, they make it possible for employers to capitalize on skills acquired at lower levels of employment or through training that targets a business's particular skill requirements. Identify strategy and leading practices in successful implementation of internal career ladders.

Steve Wing, *Government Relations, CVS*

12:15 **Keynote Luncheon: Looking at Lessons Learned in Post-Employment Retention and Advancement**

Identify the rationale and lessons learned from state and local activities to improve employment retention and advancement for low-income parents. Join us for this luncheon session and discuss how to increase employment opportunities for low-wage parents and hard-to-employ populations.

Howard Rolston*, former Director, Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services*

1:15 **Implementing the Employment Retention and Advancement Project**

The federal welfare overhaul of 1996 ushered in myriad policy changes aimed at getting low-income parents off public assistance and into employment. These changes — especially cash welfare's transformation from an entitlement into a time-limited benefit contingent on work participation — intensify the need to help low-income families become economically self-sufficient and remain so in the long term. The Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) project is the most comprehensive effort thus far to discover what approaches help welfare recipients and other low-income people stay steadily employed and advance in their jobs.

Barbara Goldman, *Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC)**

2:15 **Break & Refreshments**

2:30 **Regional Skill Partnerships: An Employment Partnership**

Several states are implementing public-private partnerships that support skill development and advancement for workers needed in a region's most vibrant industries. These partnerships, called Regional Skill Partnerships (RSPs), are a consortia of firms, educational institutions and other community partners that tackle common problems facing a targeted industry in a region. RSPs provide a promising vehicle for preparing unemployed and low-income workers for entry-level and higher-level jobs in an industry, upgrading the skills of incumbent workers and tackling industry-based skill shortages. Join us to identify the lessons learned in forging partnerships.

- Use sound labor market and economic analysis as the basis for identifying target industries and employers
- Avoid duplicating the functions of existing institutions in the community, such as local workforce development boards and other public-private partnerships
- Support industry partnerships with strong staff capacity
- Build partnerships where there has been prior collaboration among firms within an industry

Neil Ridley, *Social, Economic and Workforce Programs Division, National Governors' Association Center for Best Practices*

Overcome Barriers to Job Retenti

3:30 **Case Study: Baltimore City: Job Training and Barrier-Removal Support Services to Transition Out of Poverty**
To help unemployed and underemployed residents obtain jobs, overcome these barriers and develop work skills, Baltimore City has a large number of public agencies, non-profit service providers and private organizations that provide life skills courses, industry-specific job training and barrier-removal support services. Many of these organizations are helping their participants find jobs, stay employed and plan for career advancement, but the challenges they face to transition people out of poverty are enormous. Baltimore's Workforce and Economic Development Program aims to overcome these barriers and improve the economic security of low-income Baltimore City residents and their ability to become active members of society.
Diane Bell, *President, Empower Baltimore Management Corp*

4:30 **Adjourn**

Day Two: *April 20, 2004*

8:30 **Continental Breakfast**

9:00 **Business Resource Centers**
Effectively partner to provide retention programs including training programs on ESL and financial literacy. These business resource centers help employers leverage federal and state financial resources that are underutilized by the business community. Identify how intermediaries become involved in providing employment solutions.
Thressa Connor-McMahon*, Welfare to Work Partnership*

10:00 **Improving Outreach and Access to Support Services**
Looking at the Hard-to-Serve, identify and assess the clients' needs and what services are needed to move them to self-sufficiency. People with barriers to employment, either the working poor or post-employment, face issues of outreach and access to such services as food stamps, Medicaid and others.
Jack Tweedie, *Director, Children & Families Services, National Conference of State Legislatures*

11:00 **Break & Refreshments**

11:15 **Examining the Roles of Postsecondary and Adult Education in Helping Low-Wage Workers Move Up in the Workforce**
We know that more education translates into higher employment and earnings in the labor market. However, helping those who didn't succeed in school initially to come back and gain marketable credentials is a more difficult proposition. This session will cover lessons from research and practice about what kinds of education and training can pay off and for whom. It will also highlight specific policies and programs that appear promising.
Julie Strawn, *Policy Associate, CLASP*

12:15 **Networking Luncheon**

*Invited

1:15 **Using Incentives to Promote Job Retention and Advancement: Guidance from the Performance Improvement Industry**
The ease with which low-skilled workers can find jobs in the current labor market has encouraged job search and job training providers to focus not only on helping their customers find jobs, but also on helping them keep the jobs they find and move into better jobs. With little research on what helps workers succeed in these areas, programs are being asked to develop innovative programmatic approaches. Incentives—monetary and non-monetary rewards used to encourage certain behaviors, activities or results—are among the options available to program administrators looking for creative strategies to improve job retention and advancement. Examine how the private sector's experience in designing and implementing incentive programs can be used by employment and training providers to improve job retention and advancement among disadvantaged workers.
LaDonna Pavetti, *Senior Fellow, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.*

2:15 **Achieving Financial Literacy for Low-Wage Workers**
Americans willing to work and save, regardless of income, have an opportunity to build assets. Understanding and working toward better financial literacy can further the potential for job retention. Practical work-life issues can be resolved with appropriate accessibility to support services. Identify the importance of such supportive services to keep employees in their jobs as the Earned Income Tax Credit. Successfully train participants to receive training, counseling and assist low-wage workers in building assets.
Olivia Biggs, *Government Relations, CVS*

3:15 **Break & Refreshments**

3:30 **Retention and Advancement: An Organizational Change Perspective**
An understanding of the larger business context is critical for the successful implementation of retention and career advancement initiatives focused on low-wage employees. Such programs create major organizational change for employers. Successful organizational change requires an understanding of the history and culture of the organization, analysis of key stakeholders (including leadership, HR, unions, and employees), alignment with other HR programs and policies and an assessment of change readiness. Identify effective strategies for aligning organizational culture with the marketing and implementation of career advancement programs.
Susan R. Crandall*, PhD, President, Workforce Results*

4:30 **Adjourn**

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on and Employment Advancement

Post-Conference Workshop:
April 21, 2004

8:30 **Workshop Registration & Continental Breakfast**

9:00 **Application Workshop: Public/Private Partnerships: Effectively Working with Employers to Promote Worker Retention**

This interactive workshop will highlight promising practices in partnering with employers to improve employee retention. Access the nationally recognized employer retention program called Achieve, one of the promising innovations that support low-income working families. Achieve applies the partnership strategy to address issues facing workers. Employees need to be supported in coping with work and family issues as well as learning workplace skills such as punctuality, cooperation, communication and conflict resolution. Educating employers on the value in implementing work support services is beneficial to the employer as well as employee. The lessons learned in this workshop include:

- Providing support and services at the workplace
- Reducing absenteeism and turnover
- Providing employers with a stable workforce while reducing costly turnover

***Walter Ginn**, Executive Director, Towards Employment*

12:00 **Workshop Adjourns**

Bring this Program In-House!



The Performance Institute offers customized one, two and three day training programs to state, federal and local agencies, tailored specifically to your program. Applying the Logic Model and other Institute methodologies, our experts will work with you and your team to develop cost-effective performance measures for your program implementation. For more information on in-house training sessions, please contact James Simpson at 703-894-0481 or Simpson@PerformanceWeb.org.

Top Five Reasons to Attend:

1. **Integrate** performance measurements into the implementation of your program
2. **Reach** pools of low-wage workers that are at risk of entering or re-entering the TANF system
3. **Develop** strategies for providing effective outreach to the underemployed
4. **Identify** and disseminate best practices for effective support services
5. **Provide** integrated training programs

Venue and Hotel Information:



The *2004 National Conference on Employment Retention and Advancement Strategies for Low-Wage Workers* will be held at the Wyndham City Center Hotel in Washington, D.C. The Wyndham City Center is situated just minutes from the national monuments, downtown shops and restaurants.

A limited number of rooms have been reserved at the Wyndham at the rate of $150. Please contact the hotel by March 19th to receive the discounted rate and be sure to ask for the Performance Institute conference rate. The hotel will ensure that your conference experience is not only educational, but also comfortable and enjoyable in every aspect.

Wyndham City Center Hotel
1143 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037
202-775-0800

Exhibiting and Sponsorship Information:

To learn more about exhibit and sponsorship opportunities at Performance Institute educational seminars and conferences, please contact Dana DeMilio at 703-894-0481 or email her at DeMilio@PerformanceWeb.org.

Tuition Rates:

Fees for the *2004 National Conference on Employment Retention and Advancement Strategies for Low-Wage Workers are:*

Conference Only:	$ 1,095
Workshop:	$ 395

Group Discounts:

Group discounts are available for your agency! For more information, contact James Simpson at Simpson@PerformanceWeb.org or 703-894-0481 to inquire and register.

***Administrative Note:** A 10% cancellation fee on registration will be charged for cancellations received less than three weeks from the date of the conference. As speakers are confirmed 6 months before the event, some speaker changes or topic changes may occur in the program. The Performance Institute is not responsible for speaker changes, but will work to ensure a comparable speaker is located to participate in the program.

The Performance Institute
1515 N. Courthouse Rd. Suite 600
Arlington, VA. 22201

Improve Employment and Retention for Low-Wage Earners

Registration Form for the 2004 National Conference on Employment Retention and Advancement Strategies for Low-Wage Workers

Call 703-894-0481; Fax this Form to: 703-894-0482; or Visit www.PerformanceWeb.org

☐ **Yes!** Register me for the conference.

☐ **Yes!** Register me for the conference and workshop.

☐ **Yes!** Sign me up for the Social Services Management Newsletter! (My e-mail address is below)

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