

Introduction to Integrated Resource Teams

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Objectives

➤ *Today's Presentation will Cover:*

- The definition of the Integrated Resource Team (IRT) strategy and how it helps job seekers with disabilities achieve their employment goals, including business ownership.
- The history behind IRTs and its many benefits.
- Goals of the IRT strategy.
- Who can participate in an IRT.
- The difference between the IRT and other disability-focused groups/committees.
- The IRT Flow of Services
- The Three Key Parameters for IRT Implementation/Reaching Consensus
- IRT Maintenance
- IRT Implementation for Self-Employment

The History of the IRT



Integrated Resource Teams & WIOA

An excerpt from WIOA:

“Program coordination standards might also include operational standards such as: Integrated Resource Teams such as those piloted in the Disability Employment Initiative or other methods are used to jointly fund services to meet the specific needs of individuals...”

Defining Integrated Resource Teams



What is an IRT?

- An IRT is initiated on behalf of an individual consumer who is experiencing multiple challenges to employment in order to address that individual's specific needs.
- It brings together a team of diverse service providers, including community and partner agencies and other core partners, who work together with the individual consumer to strategize on how services can be coordinated to reach and maintain an employment goal.
- The consumer and the team of service providers come together to establish three main parameters:
 - ✓ **Consumer-identified, mutually agreed upon, employment goal**
 - ✓ **Lines of Communication**
 - ✓ **Sequence of Services**

What is an IRT? (continued)

- The Integrated Resource Team is an ***informal*** agreement between a consumer and the systems providing services to that consumer, allowing the members to coordinate services at the individual consumer level around a shared employment goal.
- This ***team*** approach promotes greater systems collaboration and increases cross-agency education and accountability of all parties involved in the IRT, including the consumer.
- Additionally, all IRT members may ***collectively gain credit*** for the consumer's employment outcome.

IRT GOALS & BENEFITS



IRT Goals & Benefits (continued)

- Enhance cross-agency, cross-system collaboration and communication to better leverage available resources in a seamless way for an individual consumer.
- Help partnering agencies see the benefit of collaboration, which, in turn, makes everyone's job easier.
- Promotes informal collaboration and relationship building by bringing together public and private sector representatives from the community to work together to assist an individual in meeting their employment goal.
- Allows the members to coordinate resources, both financial and non-financial, at a consumer level around a shared employment goal.

Who Participates on an IRT?

An IRT may consist of members from a wide variety of community programs and service providers, including the following:

- The Workforce system
- Mental Health
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Independent Living Center
- Programs for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing
- Commission for the Blind
- Community Work Incentives Coordinator
- Supported Employment Specialist
- Housing Provider
- School or Post Secondary
- Employer
- TANF
- Advocates/Friends of Job Seeker
- Others?

What An IRT is & What an IRT is Not



What an IRT IS and What it IS NOT ...

1) The IRT is created for an **INDIVIDUAL** consumer.

- An IRT is **NOT** an interagency committee consisting of various disability/community agencies that focus on systems collaboration.

2) The main purpose of an IRT is **EMPLOYMENT**.

- The main purpose of an IRT is **NOT** resource mapping or to assist an individual to learn about various agency resources.

IRT vs. Interagency/Disability Action Committee

- Interagency Committees or a Disability Action Committees focus typically on ***systemic or community level issues*** (e.g. transportation, food insecurity, community homelessness) with the members of the Committee typically being static.
 - These committees work to serve an entire community.
- An IRT is different from an Interagency Committee or Disability Action Committee in that an IRT is focused on an ***individual consumer*** and their unique needs; as such, members of an IRT will change with each IRT formed.
 - Just like snowflakes, no two IRTs are exactly alike!
- Additionally, the goal of an IRT is ***employment***.
 - Interagency Committees focus on an array of systemic issues that may be related to employment, but employment itself is not the goal.

IRT vs. Person Centered Planning (PCP)

The Integrated Resource Team Approach shares common traits with Person-Centered Planning (PCP), including:

- **A person-centered focus on the needs of an individual jobseeker**
- A team approach that can incorporate multiple service providers
- The identification of both resources and resource gaps.

★ *However, there are some marked differences*

1. The main goal of an IRT is employment.

- This differs from Person-Centered Planning in that PCP is a more generic approach to service delivery that can be applied across multiple systems and can include goals that are not specific to Employment.

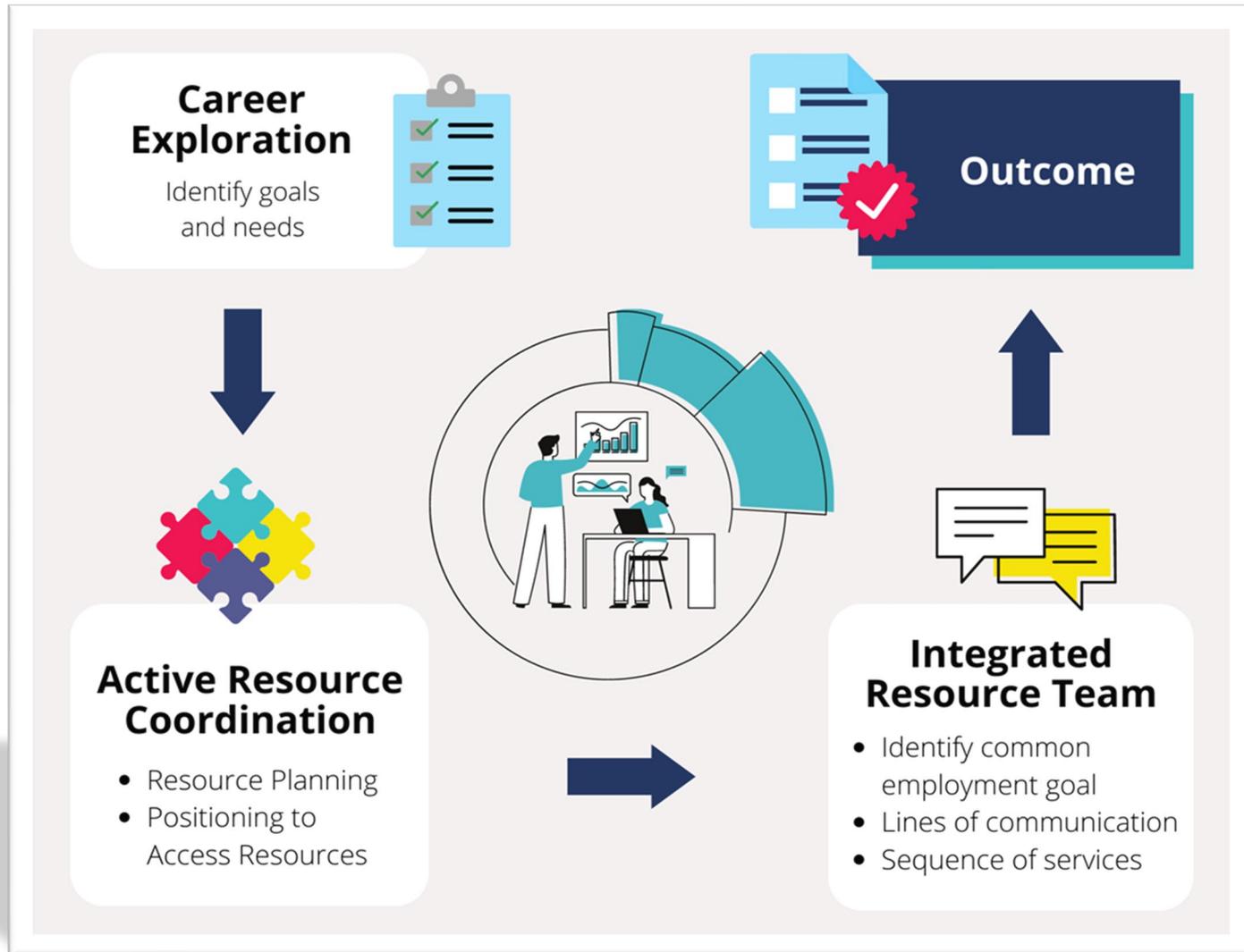
2. How barriers are addressed differs.

- The IRT does take a holistic approach to working with an individual, as does PCP; but with the IRT, barriers are all addressed relative to helping the consumer achieve a specific and mutually agreed upon employment goal.

Breaking Down the IRT Strategy



The IRT Flow of Services



Step 1: Career Exploration and Need

★ ***As was noted in the previous section, the purpose of an IRT is to help the consumer attain their specific employment goal.***

- ▶ Career Exploration serves as the first step in developing an IRT. The career exploration should result in a ***proposed*** employment goal that is:
 - ✓ Self-determined
 - ✓ Strength-based
 - ✓ Concrete enough to build a plan around
 - ✓ Meets the required outcomes of the systems accessed.

Step 2: Active Resource Coordination (ARC)

- Active Resource Coordination (ARC) is the process of identifying needed resources and appropriate and prioritized action steps to address specific, targeted barriers to employment experienced by an individual consumer.
- ARC is likely something already taking place during the process of intake and plan development.
- Compared with the current service delivery model, this may just be an enhanced and more intentional step under the IRT approach.

ARC is more than just a referral to multiple service providers.

ARC is the process of helping the consumer create a goal-specific (hint: employment goal) resource plan.

Step 3: The Integrated Resource Team Meeting

- ▶ *The goal of the Integrated Resource Team Meeting is to reach consensus around the following three key elements:*

*A Common
Employment Goal
(as identified by
the consumer)*

*Lines of
Communication*

*Sequence of
Services*

3 Key Elements to Reach Consensus

1. A Common Employment Goal

- ✓ Most service providers will have some sort of employment goal as an outcome to services.
- ✓ Each provider will have specific parameters as to HOW an employment outcome is defined.
- ✓ Discuss what outcomes are linked to resources accessed.

2. Lines of Communication

- ✓ The consumer agrees to communication between partners.
- ✓ Identify what information will be communicated.
- ✓ Identify how partners will be informed of progress or needs.

**ASK: Who is the
Point of
Contact?**

3. Sequence of Services

- ✓ Determine which services are necessary at each point in a plan.
- ✓ Link services to milestones within a plan.
- ✓ Find out when services stop for each provider.

IRT Maintenance

➤ ***Maintain Consensus***

- Does the Common Employment Goal Need to Be Modified?
- Do the Lines of Communication Need to Be Updated?

➤ ***When to Close a File***

- Revisit Sequence of Services
- Milestones Attained?

➤ ***Unexpected Challenges***

- Can the need be addressed through existing team members and the current consensus?
- Does the need require an additional IRT Meeting to resolve by reaching out to additional partners or modifying the consensus reached at previous meetings?



IRT = Self-Employment Success Story: Tara*



The IRT Strategy & Self-Employment

➤ Career Exploration

- Determination of Self employment path.
- Research for business planning

➤ Active Resource Coordination

- Identification of business planning resources
- Identification of vocational supports
- Identification of funding opportunities

➤ IRT Meeting

- Coordination of multiple resources and services as per business plan
- Identification of and planning steps toward plan milestones

➤ IRT Maintenance

- Continuing resource coordination
- Ability to be flexible as events develop

Questions?



NDI's Inclusive Employment Solutions Team

- Our [Inclusive Employment Solutions \(IES\) team](#) offers technical assistance, tools and resources to improve employment services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.
- IES solutions and services are informed by more than 15 years of subject matter expertise in national disability and employment technical assistance centers.



Learn more:

For more information on our areas of intensive and targeted services and how IES can support your work:

Contact us at:
[**IES@ndi-inc.org**](mailto:IES@ndi-inc.org).

Community Navigator Pilot Program Goals

- Support Entrepreneurs and Small Business owners with disabilities at any point of the Business Life-Cycle.
- Reduce barriers accessing needed programs to recover, grow, or start a business.
- Increase coordination of the DMV area ecosystem of entrepreneurial support organizations to be responsive and accessible to the needs of entrepreneurs and small business owners with disabilities.
- The ecosystem includes financial assistance, access to capital, contracting and procurement assistance, marketing and communications, operations, management and business development, legal assistance preferred contracting status.
- For more information, contact our Community Navigator, Ruth Chavez at Rchavez@ndi-inc.org.