

The WorkNet Model – An Overview

Career Development & Job Placement for People with Barriers

More than 20 years of front-line research has gone into developing the WorkNet Model of Career Development & Job Placement for People with Barriers. As a model of Career Development, the focus is not merely job placement and retention but on long-term, sustainable economic self-sufficiency, as well as career success and satisfaction. As a model of Job Placement, extensive focus and support is also given to candidates as they market themselves to employers who offer their career path. The result is an employee with a better attitude who learns quicker and works harder and a community member whose career clarity and know-how allows them to be career resilient throughout their working life, making them more valuable to employers and able to maintain self-sufficiency and career success.

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MODEL GOAL, DISTINCTIONS & KEY OBJECTIVES

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Here are the most important things that define and distinguish the WorkNet Model:

- It is based on solid Career Development theory and practices but is designed to be practical, user-friendly and applicable for job seekers and career changers at all levels.
- Its authors have a special passion and proven ability to help people facing significant barriers to employment including a history of government dependence, poverty, incarceration, mental instability, drug and alcohol abuse, immigration or refugee status, limited education, and more.
- It is the chosen model of the largest providers of employment services to the “difficult-to-place” in Australia, New Zealand, England and Scotland and has touched more than 1 million lives across the globe in the last two decades.
- It is developed by Christians who understand that each of us is uniquely created by God, who loves us and has a wonderful plan for our lives, and that work is a vital part of becoming and expressing who He created us to be. You will not find scripture in our curriculum, but our faith is our motivation and our “Theology of Work” presents the Biblical scriptures from which these ideas come.

The key objectives that facilitate the goal of the model include helping candidates:

- Discover their “what’s in it for me?” to begin and succeed in a career and using their natural motivation to engage them to the career development and job search processes.
- Clarify the most important fascinations, skills, and values they want to incorporate into their career decision-making process.
- Identify their career goals, explore possible career paths, choose a career direction, and select the job(s) they will pursue next.
- Identify and overcome the barriers that keep them from getting and succeeding in the job they are pursuing next and to do so in a way that equips them to overcome barriers that could keep them from succeeding and advancing throughout their careers.
- Understand how employers think and how to succeed in today’s business culture, allow them to identify their “what’s in it for them?” to embrace these ideas, and support them in becoming “bi-cultural” throughout their working lives.
- Learn to advance their careers by pursuing a raise or promotion within their company or making a planned move to another company.

- Design and implement an individualized job search strategy that allows them to quickly secure a job that moves them closer to their career goals.
- Manage their life/work balance and job performance once hired, mentor them on career success strategies, and support them in making at least one planned career move.

PROVEN SUCCESS

The WorkNet Model produces excellent measurable results.

Job Placement	90%+
Job Retention at 1-Year	64%
Job Upgrade within 1 Year	29%

VITAL COMPONENTS OF THE MODEL

The comprehensive WorkNet Model covers the entire career development process, from stabilization beyond job placement. These five vital components represent the content of the model, the lessons offered to candidates. The WorkNet job seeker curriculum covers these components, and we offer staff training on each of them.

Foundations for Success

There are dynamics that are constantly in play throughout the career development process and a person's career. WorkNet's unique approach includes identifying and reducing fear surrounding change, new expectations and responsibilities, failure, success, and more, as well as identifying and mobilizing a person's motivation in life and toward work, and teaching and supporting decision-making and personal responsibility. These concepts run throughout the model, from recruitment, engagement and orientation, through job placement, and into post-placement support, and we use a 50/50 approach to the partnership that allows these lessons to be taught, practiced and integrated.

Life/Work Planning

... How can I do work that works for me?

Life/Work Planning, also called career planning, deals with issues such as exploring career options, choosing a career direction that supports the person's values and allows them to do work they love, developing career plans, and balancing work and life. WorkNet's unique approach also deals with redefining "work" and the role it can play in life, the difference between jobs and careers, why everyone can have a career and begin immediately, dreams and motivations, as well as fear, internal and external sabotage, past patterns and triggers to watch for, and how to integrate career development with other important dynamics, like addiction recovery, faith, family and values, parole conditions, mental illness and health, compliance in government programs, healthy relationships, etc.

Overcoming Barriers

... How can I overcome what's keeping me from getting, keeping and advancing in work I want?

We all have barriers to employment, and most employment approaches include traditional strategies for overcoming them. However, if your program seeks to serve people with especially challenging barriers, traditional approaches don't go far enough. WorkNet's unique and long-term approach teaches a reliable, memorable way for candidates to think like the employer to identify their own barriers and a proven process for overcoming any barrier with our five "SOLAR Solution Tools." Candidates can use this knowledge immediately and throughout their working life to develop long-term, career enhancing solutions that respect who they are and satisfy the employer (and they can pass this knowledge onto others).

Succeeding in Today's Business Culture

... How can I enter & succeed in today's world of work?

The U.S. business culture is ever-changing, even for natives who are recently unemployed or currently working! Those who have been unemployed for more than a year, people changing fields, immigrants, and people who did not grow up in working families are at a particular disadvantage. WorkNet takes an engaging, respectful "cultural" approach that helps people quickly buy in and gear up so they can feel comfortable on the job and meet employer expectations. To help candidates fit in without selling out, they learn the foreign culture of Today's Business Culture, explore what's in it for them to become "bi-cultural," and add this skill in a way that doesn't take away from who they are and where they come from. Both external expectations and behaviors for success, as well as attitudes for success are covered.

Individualized Job Search from the Employer's Perspective

... How Can I Present Myself So Employers See My Value & Hire Me?

Most approaches to employment or career development offer fairly traditional advice about job searching. WorkNet's unique twists include a heavy dose of the employer's perspective, how to develop a personal marketing strategy, how to use unpaid experiences to prove they can do the job, and approaches to help people with barriers design and execute an individualized and effective job search that quickly results in an Entry-career Job.

FOUR-PHASE MODEL STRUCTURE

The comprehensive WorkNet Model is structured into four phases in order to move candidates through preparation, placement and career success. Here is an introduction to the four phases, including the focus and key activities, our recommended requirement for a candidate to move to the next phase, and a timeframe. These phases can be customized to design a WorkNet Model-based program that meets your goals and is integrated into your existing program. The length of each phase will depend on several factors including which WorkNet curriculum you use. Section III: Designing Your WorkNet Model-Based Program will walk you through each of these phases in detail so you can tailor the model to your goals, clientele, and resource.



PHASE 1: Stabilization (Length depends)

Program Referral Requirements:

- Housing (45+days)
- Mental Stability (6+ months on medication)
- Safety from Domestic Violence (away from abuser)
- Clean/Sober (90+ days, in program, 4th step)

PHASE 2: Career Exploration & Planning (2 to 3 weeks)

Requirement for Successful Participation: Basic Stability

Focus:

- Engagement & Motivation
- Life/Work Planning
- Overcoming Barriers to Employment
- Succeeding In Today's Business Culture

PHASE 3: Entry-Career Job Search – Prep, Search & Placement (2 weeks, plus jobs search)

Requirement for Successful Participation: Know the Entry-Career Job to pursue Next

Focus:

- Job Search from the Employer’s Perspective for People with Barriers
- One-Week Structured Job Search
- Full-time Supported Job-Search until Job Start (preferably Entry-Career)

PHASE 4: Career Success Mentoring - On-going support for Job Retention, Success & Advancement once a candidate is working (1 year+)

Requirement for Participation: Job Placement (preferably Entry-Career)

Focus:

- Stabilization – to the working lifestyle, balancing work & life
- Acculturation – to their specific work environment so they can succeed
- Advancement – toward economic independence, career success and satisfaction

MODEL SNAPSHOT

This graphic shows how the four phases of the model structure and the five vital components of the model content fit together. Phase 1: Stabilization continues throughout the model. Realizing that stabilization may be a long-term process, and that the average person must deal with “life” even as they pursue work, Phase 2: Career Exploration & Planning begins once basic stabilization has occurred (see page ***). Phase 2 includes the four of the vital components, while Phase 3 focuses on Job Search alone, and Phase 4 includes only Post-Placement Career Success Mentoring.

