Transcript, Webinar on Outcome-driven Business Services in the Workforce Development System, September 14, 2011

ROBB SEWELL: Good afternoon. This is Robb Sewell. I would like to welcome you to today's webinar *Outcome-Driven Business Services in the Workforce Development System*. Today's webinar is being captioned in real time. To access the captioning you must enter the following URL into a separate Internet browser window. Simply copy and paste the URL into a separate web browser window to access the captioning. Let me just take one minute to describe today's webinar format. The presentation slides will appear on the right side of your screen. A chat feature on the left side will enable you to communicate with me should you have any questions or encounter any problems. Simply type your message and click send. Click hide chat to temporarily remove the chat feature and click show chat when you want to restore it. Click full screen so that the webinar occupies the complete width and height of your display. During today's presentation the only voices you'll hear are those of the presenters. We'll have time after the presentation for Q&A. Please feel free throughout the presentation to forward your question to me via the chat feature. I'll then relay the question during the Q&A.

This webinar is being recorded. A direct link to the webinar, including audio and webinar content will be available by noon eastern time September 15th. The entire web site can be accessed at ntarcenter.org. Please take a few minutes to complete that survey.

For those of you who may not be familiar with the NTAR Leadership Center we were established in September 2007 through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's office of disability employment policy. The center is a collaboration of partners with expertise in a variety of areas, including workforce and economic development, disability employment, financial education and asset building and leadership development. The NTAR Leadership Center was created to build capacity and leadership at the federal, state and local level to enable change across Workforce Development and disability-specific systems that will increase employment for adults with disabilities. Our mission and effort are grounded in a series of five principles that have been culled from the office of disability employment policy research. Specifically, increasing partnerships and collaboration among and across generic and disability-specific systems, increasing the use of self-direction and services and integration of funding across — and among systems, increasing economic self-sufficiency through leveraging work incentives, financial education or other strategies that promote profitable employment and asset building, increasing the use of universal design in employment services and as a framework for employment policy and finally increasing use the of customized and other form of flexible work options for those with disabilities and with others barriers to employment. At this point by like to introduce our turn things over to our two presenters. Cori DiBiase is the principal foreign Aperio Consulting group and David Hoff is at the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston. I'll turn things over to you and just in order to speak just press star 7 on your telephone keypads and you will be unmuted.

CORI DiBIASE: Great. Thank you so much, Robb. You can actual — thanks to everyone today for dialing in. We look forward to this opportunity to speak with you about what we believe is an extremely important aspect of Workforce Development. Robb, we can just go right onto the outline from here, I think. Some of the things we're going to talk about today just very, very briefly before we begin, we're going to begin with some of the common challenges we think about when we're thinking about business-related services, some of the challenges we have related to businesses, building relationships to businesses, some of the issue we all contend with as we're providing these services. We'll move from there to talk about attributes of what makes for good business customer service. What are the things we should do to view business as a customer, to be serving them with the highest possible quality we can. We're going to talk a lot about labor market information but not labor market so much in the abstract as trying to think about how do we use this as a practical tool. How do we turn this from sort of abstract data on a spreadsheet into something that we can go out, have as a tool in our toolkit, and use as a tool in serving businesses and in serving our career-seeker customers. Then finally, we really want to ground the entire conversation by talking about things that David and I have seen in our work in the field, things we've seen One-Stops doing, things we've seen other community-based organizations doing time prove the services they provide to businesses. So things we know can work, we know that the system will foster, we know will work within this context to help us serve businesses.

So we can jump right into the first slide, Robb.

When we think about the challenges, and I'm sure a lot of folks are aware of some of these in different contexts, but when we think about the challenges we face as we're trying to serve businesses, I think one of the first ones we're all aware of is the business community may or may not be aware of the Workforce Development system. It's sort of inconsistent. Some businesses know about us, some businesses don't. But throughout our community it's rather inconsistent. From there, in some cases, and we're taking a lot of this information from some research done by the GAO, a lot of businesses actually regard the One Stop Centers as a place where they can go for primarily lower skilled workers, whereas we know that we want to be — we want to view the One-Stops as places where you can work with folks with a range of talent, where career seekers with a range of different talents, skills and backgrounds can come and find employment opportunities, and we, of course, want to be able to engage the business community on that level.

We have seen consistently, and we heard this in the GAO report, seen this other research we've done and other services we've done, businesses often feel that the system doesn't respond quickly enough or consistently enough to their needs, that it's just running on a slightly different time line than the time line that they need to be successful.

Of course, 0 important, one of the challenges will always be making the appropriate referrals and thinking about how do we make the right match between what the business needs and what the career seeker offers, and in many cases, we're very good at making a match based on skills and talents, the sort of formal qualities of someone's career experience. So we can say, okay, we've made a great match between the talent that the business needs and that the career seeker has, but maybe we're not doing sometimes as good a job understanding the business's culture. So maybe we're sending someone who's just come out of an I.T. firm environment where it's very informal, it's all about let's just get the job done but we don't worry as much about how we dress, we don't worry as much about when we come into the office or how many coffee breaks we take. Maybe we've tried to put someone like that into a more wall street environment where everybody's wearing a pinstriped suit and everything is 9 to 5 and everything is very well defined. So there's sort of soft elements of how do we match the cultural expectations of the individual with the business are very, very important.

Then, finally, and Dave and I will both discuss this because we had a very interesting discussion leading into this call about this point, but the desire that businesses have to have a single point of contact within the system and fact that they often view the Workforce Development system as 20 different points of contact or more sometimes. They often see a lot of different agencies, a lot of different individuals, a lot of different phone numbers, and when they're calling to — to discuss an issue or to discuss a job open young or to really focus in on something, it can sometimes be very intimidating to have this range of contacts or range of phone numbers. So, how do we really give businesses the opportunity to have a single point of contact within this system.

And we can go onto the next slide.

I think one of the principal things that underlies everything we're talking about here that really is the source of a lot of the different challenges we have when we're trying to build relationships between businesses and the Workforce Development system, it's how we define success. In the Workforce Development system our definition of success is pretty straightforward. We have our performance measures. We have the services we want to provide to our career-seeking customers. We have other performance goals that are defined by our local area or by our state. Whereas the business is operating on a very different — on a very different mentality. They also have a clear set of goals and that's related to their efficiency, that's related to their bottom line, to their profit margin, and to a time line that they're keeping. Sometimes just the fact that we're both operating with our own sense of what constitutes success, that can be our number one issue. So really the capacity to communicate around that point can be an extremely important point in terms of how we build these relationships in the long term and how we build a strong relationship with the business community. So we can head right into, I believe, our first poll question, Robb. We wanted to send — before we got into the meat of this thing, we wanted to do a little poll question for all of our folks in the field here, and that is: Does your One-Stop, does your management, does your leadership, do you guys think of businesses as being a customer of your system? So, are they a customer of your system on equal footing with career seekers or do you think of yourself as a system that — we're here to serve the career seeker, we're here to build their skills, we're here to help them get jobs. That's what we're here to do. That's our first question. We'll give folks a second to log in your choice here and then we'll move on.

We're seeing a pretty strong favoring for the idea we're working with businesses and career seekers as equal systems of the — customers of the systems. A number of folks are saying, no, we're here to serve career seekers and that's our number one goal.

Of course, there's no right or wrong answer to this. Although we really do believe, and the purpose of this webinar, is really to talk about the importance of what we call a dual customer system, and I think, rob, we can move onto the next slide.

When we're thinking about how do we best serve a career seeker, if I say, okay, this system is about serving career seekers, it's about getting people jobs, it's the Workforce Investment Act, that's what we're here to do, then the only way to do that is going to be to provide effective services to businesses. Businesses, of course, are the folks who hire the career seekers we serve. Without a strong

partnership with the business community, it's going to be impossible to serve career seekers as well as we want to. So I think what's most important about this concept of a dual customer system, and a lot of cases I think we think, jeez, if I — if I have to suddenly say I've got two sets of customers, businesses on the one side, career seekers on the other, that's going to sort of erode, that's going to undermine the quality of the services that I provide to the career seekers that we serve. I'm going to have to really compromise those services. They're not going to be as good because you're taking half of my effort away from the career seekers and now we're putting that into business and that's not what we're here to do. In fact, it really doesn't work that way. What we're trying to emphasize through this webinar and through any conversation about business directed services, dual customer service, is that the services we provide to businesses, the partnerships we build with businesses, this is really the foundation on which we can provide the best possible services to the career seekers we serve. If we don't have — if we're not in a community where the business community knows about us, thinks about us as an important source of skills, if we're not working in a community where they know they can come to us for a wide range of talented folks with a wide range of interests, that means we're really not going to be able to connect as many of our career seeker customers to the same number of opportunities as we could previously, if we were really serving those businesses and building a wide range of partnerships on top of that. So that really is the emphasis here, is that we're not talking about let's serve career seekers less and let's serve businesses more. Let's say businesses are more important and then we'll say that career seekers are less important. Really, the idea is we've got to serve both of these groups extremely well if we're going to serve either group well at all. So it's really cyclical. We must serve both.
So we can move onto the next slide.

So, some of the things we think of attributes of good business customer service here. First is responsiveness and timeliness. We can't emphasize this enough. Of course, a business's attitude is, hey, look, listen I need everything yesterday, we need things to move, to be efficient. If I put a job opening out there, that means that I need a staff person on my team to help us meet the needs of our business, to help us meet our bottom line. So, everything is going to be, we want this to move as quickly as possible. We can't always move as quickly as our business customers might like, however, what we can always do, when we're talking to businesses, is provide them a clear and efficient and reliable time line for every service that we're going to provide. So if we're saying to a business, yes, we can provide this training to your incumbent staff, yes, we can provide a job fair, yes, we can provide space for you to interview some of our candidates, or, yes, we can prescreen and send to you five candidates that we believe will meet your needs, we need to give an accurate time line as to when that's going to happen. It needs to be realistic. It's far, far better to say, we'll do this for you and have it all done on — by next Wednesday and then actually get it done on the Friday before than it would be to say, well, we think we can get it done on Friday, but then, oops, it turns out we didn't get it until Wednesday. This really is an interest of trust, it's an issue of clarity and it's an issue of strong communication.

One-Stop staffs should be visible in the employer community. I think this is extremely important and we don't often think about it nearly as much as we should. We all have a better understanding, and we all have a greater degree of trust for people that we see on a regular basis, people that we recognize. So if we have staff whose job it is to serve business, those staff should be present in the business community, they should be out there at Chamber of Commerce events, out there at industry events, out there even visiting the businesses directly themselves. This is more than just networking and visibility and marketing, although, of course, you need to be in front of someone to talk to someone and to talk to a business, and that's very important. But beyond that, there's also just this issue of businesses want to know that you're invested in them, that you understand their needs, you understand the pressures that they're working under, and if they see you in on their turf as it were, then they're going to get a much stronger sense that, okay, here's a group that's really invested in us, invested in what we're going to need from this system. And that ties right in with businesses should feel that the One-Stop is there to meet their needs. They should feel that they're a valued customer. So as we're thinking about our marketing materials, as we're thinking about how we describe the One-Stop Career Center, the Workforce Development system, it's very important to say, hey, businesses are an important customer here. It's just important to make that point again and again and to have a clear sense of what businesses need and to speak to that as we're talking about the services we provide.

Finally, and this is a very simple one, but also very, very important. It's kind of on the theme of out of sight out of mind. So One-Stop staff should really ensure that we have regular contact with their business customers. Whether that's — that can be anything at all. If — because they have some — you're doing some work for them because you're trying to meet a deadline, that's great, that's contact there. If you're not doing anything with the business customer, you can still pick up the phone, maybe even more simply drop an e-mail to them, say, hey, we're still out here, hope the business is going well, hope you're growing, hope your customer base is strong, and, of course, you know where to find me if we can be of any assistance. It's just that simple, but it's very important in terms of maintaining your presence and your relationship with the business community. So we can move onto the next slide.

Single point of contact, and actually when I get down to the — to the bottom of the page here, David, I would love you to jump in and your give your perspective as well. We hear a lot about the single point of contact. It's kind of the flip side of saying, when we talk about seamless services, no wrong door for our career seeker customers. Of course, it's a wonderful thing that the Workforce Development system is made up of a wide range of different partners, provide different services, they offer different opportunities for both businesses and career seekers. However, while all those services are great, having all the different agency names, all the different acronyms, all the different phone numbers, all the different people, that can sometimes be very — very intimidating to a business. That can be also somewhat confusing and can seem sort of inconvenient. It's kind of like when you are you go and you're trying to get, just like I did this morning, you're trying to get some customer service from your bank and you go on the web site and you click the contact us page, and it comes up with 500 different phone numbers based on your exact particular circumstances, and I need to know exactly like, well, do I have this kind of account and this — act and this and then I dial this phone number and then I industrial to go through a phone tree of 25 different selections before I can actually talk to someone. It's the same idea. I want one phone number that I know I can dial it and I'm going to get someone on the other line who is going to know me, know my needs, know the business and say, okay, yes, if you've got an issue, if you've got a need, if you've got a problem, if you've got a question we can answer it for you because we have this personal relationship. So that's really what this single point of contact points to. It's, I think, very important that as we're building a relationship with a business that we really are able to say, here, here's David Hoff, he is going to be your single point of contact, he is going to work with you whenever there's an issue, whenever there's a problem, you can call David, and David will help you in any way you need. This is particularly important as we're talking about serving customers with more significant needs, some more significant barriers to employment. In many cases this is going to be — those individuals are going to require more support, and we want to be sure that the business knows that they have — that they have our support as well as the individual, and that again means one person that I can call, one person who will be accountable to what I'm looking for, what I need.

David, I know we talked about this a little bit before. Would you like to chime in with any thoughts on this point.

DAVID HOFF: Well, yeah, just a few thoughts on this idea of a single point of contact. I think it's become a very hot thing in the world of employment and Workforce Development. It's the kind of thing that every employer absolutely demand one single point of contact and all service providers, including One-Stops, should come together and work in a coordinated fashion with a single point of contact. And I think — what Cori just said is very true, particularly in a One-Stop setting, the one point of contact representing multiple partners is really — this is the seamless system that was envisioned under the Workforce Investment Act and frankly one of the things, and later we'll give examples of this, but as staff are representing the One-Stop, not representing, I'm with — I'm the voc. rehab remember, I'm the older workers representative. No, it's you represent the One-Stop and all those partners that that also requires they have good knowledge of the various job seekers and their skill levels and needs across those partners. Does staff have that knowledge. But I also think we need to be careful not taking this idea to the extreme where there's this idea out there that, not only should One-Stops have a single point of contact but every community agency in the area, whether it's a disability agency, immigrant/refugee agency, they should all be coming together to do a single point of contact, and I think that — I think we need to be very careful of that concept because I think there is some cases where employers are — do really want a more coordinated fashion among the various agencies representing job seekers, but the reality is sometimes there's a lot of different groups, people being represented out there, and a lot of different folks — there might be confidentiality issues and other things. If I'm running an agency, running XYZ agency, do I want somebody from another agency representing my customers? So I think we need to be a little carious this of making this so complicated or so — trying to coordinate every job developer in the local system.

The other thing I might add on this also is I think sometimes employers say I have too many agencies, too many people knocking on my door. How many salespeople are there every day representing various communications companies? It's not like going to barrage — Verizon — I don't know what other ones there are out there, AT&T. They're not going to them and saying could have one of you represent all the various telecommunication companies. So I do think we need to say we don't necessarily represent all the same group of people. But I think some of the complaints from employers actually speak to the fact of some of the stuff Cori said earlier. I think some of the community agencies, One-Stops all knocking on the same door again and again. One employer announces they're hiring and everybody rushes to the door instead of thinking strategically, are we hitting the whole labor market or are we all going to the same employers. I'll talk about this late later in terms of labor market information. I also think when an employer is doing a mass hiring, which hopefully we'll start doing more of that at some point, when there's a mass hiring, like a new store opening, a new facility, I think there it's really, really great and One-Stops can play a great role. I think it's one of those things where a single point of contact, it's a great concept, I think it's something we need to keep playing around with and experiment with but it's not a one-size-fits-all for everything.

CORI DiBIASE: Great, thank you very much, David. I think we can move onto the next slide here.

Communication, we come back to this pretty frequent frequently. This relates to a single point of contact. Are we fostering a strong relationship or are we telling the business we're just going to answer when they call — when they call someone is going to answer the phone and they may or may not know anything about the business or how to help them. So when we think about communication, the first thing is jargon. I think we've all heard the message hopefully by now that when we go out to a business we do not necessarily want to go in talking about how we represent Inc. the WIA youth subpart B program that was authorized under a law signed in — we don't want to be going out talk young our sort of alphabet soup of bureaucratic jargon. That is the last thing a business wants to hear. However, it is not true that businesses do not use jargon. In fact, they have their own. This seems to be one of the great human instincts, whenever I know something I want to have a bunch of sort of clubby inside words to describe it. So businesses absolutely have jargon. They don't hire. They do onboarding. They don't do hiring events; they do recruitment. So there are all these different things. There are many, many more examples of the terminology that has been built up by the business community that really qualifies as their own kind of jargon.

Now, it is not absolutely essential that we learn every different piece of jargon that's out there, but one of the things I think will happen as we spend, if we have staff who can spend more time in the community, more time at business events, more time at business locations talking to leadership, talking to staff, talking to managers, talking to human resources, we will start to learn their jargon and we will start to be able to use it effectively, and we all know when we go to — we go to a conference or when we're on a teleconference or something like that, it's sort of comfortable to slip right into that jargon. We know we're amongst our own when we can start throwing back and forth and acronyms and everything we use in the Workforce Development system. The same is true of businesses. Just was their jargon does not mean you know a business but it's helpful in terms of establishing like, hey, we listen to you, we pay attention, we understand your needs, and we're kind of speaking in code to show that that's the case. And that's even true by sector and David will talk a little about sectors but each different sector — the healthcare sector has a different set of jargon and catch words and everything else, totally different than the I.T. sector uses, and, of course, both of those are totally different than finance or agriculture. So it's really just a matter of speaking a language, quote-unquote, that is going to make our business customers feel comfortable with us.

Always, whether we're speaking in jargon or not, we want to speak to the business's priorities. We want to talk about the talent they're looking for. We want to talk about the growth they're trying to foster within their company. And we want to talk about the industry that they represent. Just because we have a very clear sense of what, again, for example, an I.T. firm wants doesn't mean we can just kind of transpose that over and say, well, I've — I'm just going to assume a financial firm is going to want the exact same things. We need to be paying attention. The largest part of communication with businesses and with everyone, I guess, is always going to be about, are we listening or not? Are we understanding what businesses have to tell us?

All communication should, of course, be straightforward and professional. We should be defining our next steps, defining time lines, defining what the business can and cannot expect of us. Business may come in asking us for things we can't deliver. It's far better to say, no, we can't do that, than it is to say, well, we will — say yes and then try and figure it out, even though we know we can't provide the service they're asking for. So we want to be very tangible, straightforward. We want to talk about time lines. And we always, always, of course, want to address — we want to keep our good customer service principles in mind. We want to be very professional, very courteous and very responsive to the businesses that we're talking with.

We mentioned this before, One-Stop staff should be visible in the business common tea and at business and industry events. Finally, real knowledge of each industry that you serve. If we can really delve in a little bit and understand the different industries, again, not just what sort of talent do they need, but also what's the environment of the businesses within this industry. We know that a hospital and financial services firm are going to be very, very different environments. It's going to be two very, very different kinds of people who thrive in that environments. Even if the technical skills are the exact same skills on either side, the environments are going to be very different and we all know that that is absolutely key to our interest in our job and to our success within a job and really understanding industries is going to tell us a lot about those sort of soft factors.

I think we can go onto the next slide.

I'm going to hand this over to David to talk about labor market information.

>> DAVID HOFF: Thank you, Cori. I would imagine anyone in Workforce Development is obviously familiar with the concept of labor market information, and it's a key piece of Workforce Development. It's a key piece that every state puts together in terms of its Workforce Development system. I want to talk for a

few minutes about sort of how do you take all this various information and really utilize it in an effective and universal way.

There's three levels of a successful strategy. First off is making sure that the data is available. Again, I would assume that many people on this call today, on this webinar, are familiar with their state's labor market information system or LMI system. An alternative to that or supplement is America's Career InfoNet and there's obviously other sources of labor market information throughout. But the state system is probably going to be your primary one. I've also played around with America's Career InfoNet. I like the way they display the data better than the state's LMI systems. One take away is to become familiar with those source of information.

There's a ton of information out there, and most people who played around with labor market information like myself, I think one of our challenges is there's so much information it's almost overwhelming and not always in a format that's really user-friendly. I've looked around at a lot of different states' LMI systems and I've been interested to see — they're all kind of based on the same platform, but some states do a nice job translating information into more user-friendly ways and others really, it just seems to be basically information that probably is most useful to like labor economists and people like that. People on the ground really — it would be a struggle to kind of weed through it and figure out what's useful.

So it really is a need and I think this is something at the local level, state and local level, to take this data and put into it a format that is usable by the on the ground work force staff by the One-Stop Career Center staff, by the youth staff, by the partner staff, and then, really, this in combination, as Cori's spoken about, in combination with the work being done with businesses, you now have a very rich resource ability to respond to businesses and we'll talk about that more in a second.

Also, additionally, labor market information needs to be used as part of the strategic decision-making process by local and state workforce systems leadership. It's information that just needs to really how resources being used and it's critical. I know a lot of people use the information in that way but I think we need to say are there better ways to use it.

Robb, on to the next slide.

So, as I said, every state Department of Labor has a department that collects and analyzes information. So the questions are: Do you know where this data is made publicly available? Typically it's a web site. Almost every state has an LMI

web site. If you don't know where it is, type your state name and labor market information and do a search and you'll find the site almost immediately.
I think the second and third and fourth bullet points are the more specifics here. In terms of, do you know how to reach and work with the team that compiles it? Here are some critical things. Let's say you're trying to figure out what's going on in the local construction industry or your healthcare industry or you're trying to figure out the trend in your region. Do you have the ability to access the folks out there who compile this information and ask them questions, ask them to generate reports, or when you're looking for data or information, both short and long-term trend, whatever it might be do you have that ability to access them and get the information you need so you are literally not spending hours and hours on a web site sifting through information. If it's not readily available, do you know how to go get it from them?

Are you able to feed them information from the field and get behind the scenes information on the work they do? So you — if you have the capacity to say to them, here's what we're seeing out there, here are some of the trends we're seeing from working with employers, and really also feed them what we're seeing maybe doesn't necessarily completely reflect what the data is telling them and so interesting discussions can go from there.

Also I think getting help from them in terms of how are they compiling the information, how is it being analyzed and those kind of things.

I think part of this also is encouraging them to make the information available more user-friendly formats, to work with them and say, here is our need, here's our need in terms of labor market data, how can we work together to make sure it's available if that finally is this information made available to job seekers? I do know in some systems, specifically to WIA training, job trainers are required to do labor market information and the tools to do so. I think the ability to do the searches, the ability to provide information to job seekers so they understand what's going on out there in the labor market is also a critical piece.
So, recognizing this is not always an easy undertaking but is your system is user-friendly and — you can make that information available, it's going to be critical.

I also think in terms of job seekers, and this is just a quick story on this, a gentleman is named Paul Harrington who worked here — used to work up here at northeastern University, a national expert on labor market information and one day he was going through all this about labor market information, all the trends and everything, but he did say something at the end which really struck me. This guy is a labor market economist. He said it's still about the job seeker, it's still about what they need, it's still about what makes them tick. People should not just be going after a job because it's a growth field in the labor market. That is not the reason they should go after it. They should go after it because it's something they want to do and something they're good at and something that reflects who they are personally. At the same time, the labor market information can help guide that process. It can also help open up eyes in terms of the possibilities that are out there. So — next slide, please. Albert Einstein said information is not knowledge. You can have all data in the world, you can have all the labor market information in the world, but if you don't kind of analyze it and utilize it and think about it, that's where you get the knowledge, in terms of reflecting back, what does this mean, how do we use it? That's the importance here.

Next slide.

On the ground, if you're basically out there on the front lines talking to employers, talking to businesses, this is what the labor market information can be really helpful with. Awareness of industry and hiring trends. This is the core knowledge that's out there. Just the pure numbers. How many people are being hired. What are the trends in terms of being hired? What are the skill needs? Labor market information provides a lot of basics about what are the skills available, what are the wages, what are the training requirements for specific positions. And many, many — assuming a lot of you are familiar with them — a lot of labor market — state labor market offices put out some wonderful publications on various industry sectors. If you are not aware of those and if you're not using them, I would encourage you to start to get those reports because they can really tell you so much. I just was actually looking at the New Jersey site last week, and they had a number of wonderful reports, really kind of well done and very user-friendly, about different industry sectors in New Jersey. Just by going through that and — that's just going — you're going to be able to have a much more informed discussion with employers. You're also just going to be able to have a much richer understanding of where you should be focusing your business outreach efforts.

The other thing that's out there in labor market information — actually when I played around with this, this is the stuff I find kind of neat, you can look at an industry and find out every employer that is in that industry in your region. Basically by plugging in child care, for example, you will get a list of every employer and it will tell you how big they are, just — just plugging that information into your labor market system. That can tell you so much about, okay, if I'm responsible for the child care field or the healthcare field or the high-tech field or whatever it might be, I now have a list of all those employers. I know who I should be targeting. I know where I should be going. That's really critical.

Also, most systems have — literally have, if you're not aware of this, they literally have specific employer information. They have the size of the business, they have the — an actual contact name, and other information that's available. Now, we all know the best way to get contacts is through networking and through really being out there in the community, but at least if there's an industry you're trying to get in the door of or expand your scope in the industry, if you have the basic information, you have a name to do outreach to and start a relationship, that could be extremely helpful.

The other thing labor market information helps with, obviously is the current perspective, which in some cases are not great today, but there's also future perspective. What are the future needs? Obviously these are economic trends. It's a crystal ball. It's certainly not — nobody knows absolutely what's going to happen but at least you have some sense of what the future is bringing. By having that kind of information, if you can go into a business and just again — it's not spending days and daze going through reams of data but if you are reading some of the reports, when you go into an employer you can have a much more informed discussion. I see that the — even being able to inform the employer about what the future labor trends under their field. They may not even be aware of that stuff because they're so busy dealing with the day to day. That.

So this information can be so helpful, really speaking their language, having an understanding of the needs of their industry and being able to respond to it.

Next slide, please.

Then there's the big picture. I think in my view quality Workforce Development systems have full knowledge of the local region. They really understand who the sectors are. This is the kind of information that — not that everybody who works in the field should have all the details of this, but the leaders and those really running the system really — and the staff working out there with employers, really should have a good understanding of some real basic facts. One is the composition of the industry sectors in your region. Which industries are out there? Which are the big industries? Which are the small industries? Who are the biggest employers. Something I do when I present labor market information, I do this exercise, I ask the people in the room, what are the biggest industries in your region? And people often don't know that, or they guess wrong. And who are the biggest employers? And again often people don't know. What's interesting also with the biggest employers, sometimes government is the biggest employer because people don't realize, particular eye in certain areas of the country, how involved government is with hiring. So it's really important we have a strong awareness of the sectors but also who are the largest employers who employ the most people and do the most hiring. That's who we should be targeting and making sure that we have linkages with them. Obviously, then, having the overall hiring trends within the sectors, the businesses, what's growing, what's emerging sectors, what are growth industries, green jobs are very big right now, obviously high-tech has been big for a while in a lot of areas, healthcare seems to be growing everywhere, and all those — that's information that frankly should be pretty much at the tip of our tongue in terms of our ability to at least understand some of those things and have a conversation. I also say the other things that should be really critical that's a given is just what are the trends in terms of skill needs and in terms of education requirements, in terms of positions. An interesting piece of data that's out there in many areas, and I know this is certainly true in Massachusetts, is what they're finding frankly is there's plenty of college graduates — basically there's enough jobs out — maybe not right now in 2011, but generally there's enough jobs out there for college graduates to meet the demand. So it's basically between — even between college graduates and jobs. People with high school degrees it's less. There's a much greater supply of folks than jobs available typically. Because those are — most skilled jobs are just not highly available in many areas. Particularly a state like Massachusetts. So there's a way oversupply. Where there is a disconnect is in that middle ground, in the folks who frankly, some vocational school training, some short-term training, maybe commune community college, there is not enough of those folks out there in terms our state in terms of long-term employer demands. There is a real gap. Sometimes, again, that's — so what do you do with that kind of information? What it tells us is we need to first off start getting some of the high school folks just with high school degrees into short-term training and maybe sometimes we need to start harping so much everybody needs a bachelor's degree. Maybe there's needs out there that could be met for folks who don't need to invest in a bachelor's degree where there will be jobs available, particularly in certain fields. Again, that's going to really tell us where should we be focusing our training dollars, where should we focus our development of our customers and really also identifying those jobs that are throughout in those areas. So — again, these are the things that we see as a given. There's probably some others that you should be thinking about, but I just — we really feel very strongly that in a universal — you should be pretty well-versed in that if you're in the Workforce Development field.

Next slide, please, Robb.

The — then the leadership, these are the folks, the heads of the workforce boards, the workforce board members. You know, this is really important information for them to utilize. How are you going to manage the resources? How are you going to manage the WIA funds? How are you going to manage your other training dollars? Whatever that might be. How are you going to use the resources you have available to respond to both the current needs and the future needs? Part of it also is making sure — leadership making sure, are we hitting the full labor market? I think it's really critical for Workforce Development to sit down with the business representatives and sit down and say, okay, let's talk about the businesses that we're hitting, both the individual businesses and the sectors. Is there a match there? Are there sectors we're not hitting? Are there large employers we're not hitting at all? How can we get in the door there and start presenting our services to them? That's really critical. I feel that analysis — my observation is that's not done enough. We're still anecdotal in terms of the businesses we outreach to, in terms of not thinking strategically enough in how to use business outreach. I just got back from Lubbock, Texas, this morning, mid-day, and we were talking yesterday with them, and I nope many systems use labor market information as a guide to their training dollars. That's kind of a given. I think sometimes we want to be able to also think more expansively sometimes with using that labor market information in terms of, okay, we've got our standard WIA training dollars and things like that, but are there other things, do we need to create new training services, do we need to work is W some our partners as well in terms of responding to the training needs and making sure we're using those resources in the proper industries in the proper way to respond to the demand that's out there. The other piece of this is also, you know, we keep being told there's going to be a labor shortage in the future. I think we keep hoping those days would come back soon. But there is a long-term trend. There is no doubt. Baby-Boomers are retiring. There is going to be some long-term labor shortages as well as surpluses in other areas, both in our — and both a wage and skill gap. So, again, thinking long term, how are we going to set up our system. Oftentimes we feel like we're running in place to keep up. How do we in long term address how — how do we address those longer term needs. The other thing that workforce leadership should be doing, how do we translate this information to be used by employers, by Workforce Development staff, by job seekers, by partners. I'll give you a simple example. For employers, for example, is it possible to take some of the labor market information that's out there and put into it a two-page handout that when you meet with an employer you share with them the data that's happening in their industry? That's really helpful. That shows a value add to do an employer. You're giving them data they don't he readily have. Similarly with everybody else, making sure that everybody's got access to this information in a way that is useful, that is user friend, that they can respond to and act on.

Next slide, Robb. This is my last one and then I turn it over to Cori.

The other thing is it's a hot thing in our field,, there's this whole thing about job growth, job growth versus job replacement, and I think that job growth is clearly something you really need to pay attention to, where are new jobs coming in.

But about 75% of total job openings are due to replacement and about 25% are due to job growth. What that means is most job openings are because somebody left that job. They retired. They moved onto another job. Whatever it might be. So while the growth industries are important, it's also important to maybe pay attention to our kind of bread and butter industries, not just focus on the hot trend because, really, most those openings are due to replacements. So that's pretty much my summary of the labor market information, how to respond to it. I'll turn it back over to Cori. Next slide.

CORI DiBIASE: Thank you, David. Now we're going to sort of transition into — based on the information we've gotten so far, some of the strategies we've seen in the field that we believe are — support a lot of what we've been talking about, things we've seen we know work and that I think really will help foster a more demand-driven, business-driven environment within the One-Stop Career Centers. The first of these is dedicated business service teams. This is getting more and more common. It's more and more common we see within the One-Stop there is a group there whose role it is to go out and spend their time in the business community, to serve the business community and meet their needs. There are a number of different ways we can go about setting it up. Some of the key things we see as aspects of this, again, they're there to be that single point of contact for the business community. They are often the primary liaison between either career counselors or career seekers and the businesses. So they're primarily in charge of working with the business and sort of helping the business connect to the career seekers or to other resources within the One-Stop. Finally, they are typically representing the multiple agencies that constitute the One-Stops. So as David was saying before, you don't have a team of people who say, well, I'm the business services rep for the youth department, I'm the businesses rep for the older works, I'm the businesses republic for... it's much more universal in terms of their representing the entire One-Stop, representing all the different partners within the One-Stop, even on as simple a level as saying that on their business cards as they're introducing themselves, they're saying "I'm with the work source Columbia Basin," or identifying the One-Stop as the brand that they're working under.

If we can go to the next slide, please.

So one of the great business services teams we worked with out there is in Tri-Cities area in southeast Washington. Just a couple observations about that team and some of the great work that they're doing, first of all, it was really notable when we met them that we could only ever meet a couple of the folks at a time because they spent most of their time out in the field doing the work, working directly with businesses, being out there working at events, certainly a very important aspect of what they were doing. Again, operated under the

One-Stops brand name, not under any individual agency. As they were out there talking to businesses and working in the common tea.

Beyond just acting as a referral source, so beyond just connecting a business to career seeker and saying, okay, here are some good candidates for the job opening you have here, they really acted as resource coordinators, almost like navigators for the businesses that they served. So it's a lot more — actually a lot more like the way we think about how we serve our customers. We all know if we're going to serve a career seeker, creak-seeking customer in the One-Stop, we're not just going to say, okay, here are some job listings, look at the job listings and away you go. It's not just about the job. It's about all the other things that are going to make someone more successful in the job. It's about connecting them to training. It's sometimes about connecting them to social services. It's about connecting them to resume development and interviewing skills. So it's all these other resources that we have that we know are going to, if we make the right referrals and the right connections for the career seeker, we're really going to support their — it's going to be much easier for them to make that connection and be successful in their career search. The same is true of businesses. There are a lot of resources that we have to offer them. Some of them we've — some of them we know and they're very explicit. Others are a little more subtle and we'll talk about in that a little bit. But, really, the key is to act as we're there to sort of determine what the business needs, determine what the business wants, and act as the coordinator who is going to help deliver those services to that business and meet the variety of needs that they have.

Finally, and I think this is very interesting, and we see more and more of this as well, we see One-Stops dividing their business service staff along sectoral lines. That really comes back to what David was just talking about, understanding in our communities who are the businesses that we should really be paying attention to. Who are the high growth businesses in our community, but also who are just the large stable big employers that are in our community and are going to present the most opportunities for the career seekers we serve? And then if we take that information and we — we legally look at how we can divide up folks along sectoral lines, we can increase the effectiveness of our services.
So as we're talking about sectoral approaches, dividing our staff along sectoral lines or industry lines, this again comes back to, it's — this really helps us meet a variety of needs but the — on the most basic level, once again it's about communication and it's about knowing, it's about showing the business community that we understand their needs, it's about understanding the industries, understanding the business. If I'm out there trying to serve five different industries, if I'm in a hospital in the morning, if I go and meet — go and meet with a large agricultural firm for lunch and then — in the afternoon I'm over to an I.T. firm, by the end of the day I'm not really going to have learned that much

because there will be so much information, so many different ideas thrown at me, so many different jargons and ways of doing business, that I'm really not going to be able to pick out all the different themes that I might want to understand to provide better services to all those businesses. However, if I spend my whole day going from one I.T. firm to another, there are going to be differences, of course, but I'm going to begin to see like, okay, all of these firms are really looking for this kind of candidate. All of these firms are really worried about this particular change in the marketplace that could possibly have a very negative effect on them. All of these firms are — are really having a hard time meeting this particular human resource need. By understanding those teams, by really being able to get close to one particular industry, one or two, rather than trying to cover the entire waterfront of all the different industries that are out there, we get a much deeper, much more thorough sense of what an industry is all about and again that means going beyond just the solid skills, the formal skills that someone needs that are going to be on the resume, and it's a lot more about knowing like, okay, what kind of person really thrives in this field? It's just like we all know, it takes a certain kind of person to really thrive in Workforce Development, and we all know that like some people are just — are just really going to be great at it and other people it's just not going to be their cup of tea. The same is true in every industry and you have to be close to the industry to really understand what those sort of soft factors are that are going to lead into that. Again, this also gives staff a lot more time to spend their time at industry specific events. So instead of just going to a Chamber of Commerce event, maybe I can also go to — to a trade fair for I.T. folks. Maybe I can also go to a symposium being held by the healthcare industry in my local area and, first of all, get to meet people, get to network, but, really, more than that, get to know these industries, get to know what makes them tick. I think one of the other thing that really we need to say again and again about labor market information, we sometimes get the sense that labor market information is this thing that's generated from these web sites. Of course, there's great information available from our state departments of labor but labor market information is also stuff that those of us who are out there in the field, talking to businesses, we are also great sources of labor market information. The more time we spend, the more experience we have in working with these businesses, the more thorough our sense of those industries and what those markets are all about, the more thorough that's going to become. So, finally, again, as we're talking about — if we're going to divide up our staff and assign them to different sectors, of course, we're really going to try to assign them based on what are the prominent sectors within our community, including both those high-growth firms, as David was saying, as well as just the bread and butter firms, the industries that we know, have been in our communities for decades and are very important, very prominent.

So we can move on to the next slide, please.

Offering other value-added services beyond just candidate referrals within our One-Stop, and I think we all do this, but there's a lot of different things we can think about here. Of course, candidate referrals are the bedrock — that's the business of the One-Stop, is to connect career seekers with businesses. That's the most important service we provide to career seekers, is assisting them in making those connections, and it's the most important service that we provide to businesses as well, is connecting them with the right talent in our community, meeting their human resource needs. But we can go beyond that. We can build much stronger business relationships. When we look at becoming a full-service business solutions center. That means really looking at a wide range of needs and — that we can meet with the services that we offer. Value-added services create additional trust and relationship-building tools with the businesses. It makes us — just like the name, it makes us their One-Stop shop. This is the same reason why for whatever reason when I go to buy my coffee at Starbucks, I can also buy a CD of whatever music playing while I'm standing in the line. Suddenly, standing in the line, oh, no, no, that's not inconvenient for you. That's an opportunity for you to hear and buy new music. Aren't you happy you got to stand in that line. So now I go to Starbucks, I can buy my muffin, I can buy my coffee, I can buy some gift items for folks from out of town that have, oh, NY, NY insignias on it. And I can buy some music as well as getting my coffee. The most important thing to me was my coffee but then there are all these other things that Starbucks is looking to provide for me and, thus, making me an even more loyal customer, making me want to come back for all these other things as well.

Also, finally, it gives the One-Stop an opportunity — some of these different services we can offer gives us the opportunity to learn a lot more about that business, to really understand the full width and breadth of their needs and to really understand what it is they need, what it is we can be doing to meet their needs, and just giving us more time to be in contact with them, understanding what how it is they operate, how it is they work.

So we can go onto the next slide.

Just a quick "yes" or "no" poll here before we get into some examples. Does your center offer services to businesses in addition to candidate referral?
All righty. We're seeing a very large percentage of folks saying that, yes, absolutely we do offer a range of other services aside from candidate referrals.
I think we can jump to the next slide, Robb.

It's great to see there is a commitment there, to see there is much more than we can do aside from just candidate referrals. I think some of these examples that we have are going to — some of them will ring true, some are things you're already doing. Other cases they might be things that can be — that can get us thinking about new directions, new services that we can offer.

First of all, acting in a human resource advisor to business, and what do we mean by this? This really — when we think about it, and I think we — as One-Stop Career Center staff, I don't think we always give ourselves enough credit. What we do all the time is think about businesses and the talent they need and how to make that connection, how to make the right connection between the career seekers that are out there in your community looking for opportunities and the businesses that are there looking for talented folks to help drive their bottom line.

When we think about particularly smaller entrepreneurs in our communities, small businesses to even sometimes sort of small to mid-size businesses, very often what we have are entrepreneurs who are very good at one thing. Maybe they were very good at designing a software program. Or maybe they're very good at creating marketing materials for other businesses. But just being good at making — at designing the next biotech innovation or designing the next computer innovation, that doesn't necessarily mean we're going to be very good at managing the human resource capacity of our business. That's sometimes something that having some insight on can really be of a lot of assistance to us, and there are a lot of things that I think we as folks who spend our entire professional lives thinking about making the connection between talent and human resource needs, I think there's a lot we can teach to businesses there. There are also, and we'll talk a little more about this later on in the webinar, there are also other resources that we can connect folks to if we have the connections, like the small business development centers, like the small business administration, sometimes like chambers of commerce in our community, sometimes there are even other resources that are just local resources, that those folks are throughout to provide even more support, even more training, even more information to businesses, and we can sometimes act as — again, as a resource coordinator who can refer these businesses to these other resources in the communities.

A very simple one, allowing business to use space in the One-Stop for meetings, interviews, events. This can be hiring events. Or sometimes this can be like, I have a very small business and I don't have room for large meetings and I need someplace in the community where I can go that's a professional environment where I can get everyone gathered around a boardroom table and we can have a meeting and really discuss things in person, even though you usually do thing virtually. Or maybe I have a big client meeting. There are actually One-Stops who actually open their doors to all these kinds of meetings in addition to just making candidate referrals, just because they know this is going to give them more of a chance to interact with these businesses. It's going to give them more of a chance to meet these business's needs, build relationships with them.

Of course, we all think about prescreening candidates for businesses. We all think about that we can sometimes take on the role of saying, okay, we'll put career seekers through that first layer of screening, of applicants to really determine who is going to really make the best match. That can be very helpful to businesses, of course. We can provide training to the business and its staff that can sometimes take the form of incumbent worker training to help them upgrade their skills, and that can also take the form of just more general things. Some of the things that we as One-Stop staff understand very well, whether it's — maybe it's labor market information to help them think about their own growth. Maybe it's human resource trends. Maybe it's how to manage a human resource department. Maybe it's just connecting businesses with other trainings being offered by small business development centers or other resources in the community. And finally, as I mentioned a couple times here, acting as a resource navigator for the other resources that exist in our community. We can't say this enough, how important it is to be able to say not necessarily to perfectly represent every other resource that's out there, but if you are viewed as someone who is knowledgeable the community, knowledgeable of the resources in the community, and you say, well, okay, one of the things that's out there is there's a training being done by the small business association or there's an I.T. event being held by the Chamber of Commerce, all of these things show that you are knowledgeable, show you are knowledgeable of the business and its concerns and show you're really in touch when what he is what's happening in the community. It increases your perceived value to the businesses that you're working with.

Finally, just a few more of these. On-site recruitment. Again, the idea of using the space at the One-Stop or sending One-Stop staff to a business to assist with recruiting efforts. Information on employee supports even for current employees. Again, One-Stop staff. We do tend to know all the different resources that are out there whether it's transportation, child care, training, all those other resource, if we're able to provide that information to business, that can often help businesses retain their current employees, can help keep their current employees morale very high. Here's — we've got the last one, is, of course, layoff response, that is very important, and that's not necessarily the situation we want to be in, but under those very trying circumstances of a business needing to do a layoff, if we handle that well and we're doing that work the way we need to, I think that can really help build our strong relationship with the business. But then there's in last point of assisting the business in meeting its

diversity goals, and I want to go onto the next slide and talk a little more about this. More and more we see, particularly corporate America, particularly in larger forms, we see a real commitment to the idea that we want a diverse staff. We want our staff and our business, our leadership in our business, our middle management in our business to look like and represent the communities that we exist in. So if we want to sell our product to — in Los Angeles or we want to sell our product in New York City or sell our product in Los Angeles, or El Paso, Texas, we want our company to reflect the people that we want to be our customers. We don't want there to be a big difference there. We want our company to be invested in the folks that we also want to be our customers. I think this is something we have — we've heard this countless times in the field working with businesses, working with — working with consumer groups. As consumers we spend our money with the businesses that we believe represent us. As such, businesses want staff that reflect the communities they are selling to. The businesses want a relationship with their customers and they want customers to see that they value diversity, they value the diversity that's in the communities where they exist. So I think we very often fall into the trap as One-Stop folks of thinking of diversity as something of a challenge, of thinking that this is something we've almost got to sell to businesses, whereas, in fact, I believe diversity is becoming more and more of an apparent value add to everyone, to the business, to the One-Stops, to everyone involved. And if we can position ourselves as the place where you can not only come to have your human resource needs met but where you can really access a talented pool of career seekers that reflects the diversity of our community, I think that makes us all the more valuable to businesses. That makes us all the more valuable to businesses who are really looking to reflect the communities that they're in, really looking to show that they're in vested in the communities that they're in so that they can benefit — ultimately benefit their bottom line by building a stronger relationship with their customer base. So I think that's a very important thing to keep in mind, and I think that as we see more and more businesses coming up with affinity groups and diversity marketing strategies and diversity strategies within their human resource department, I think we need to remember that we at the One-Stop Career Center, we've been thinking about this for a very long time and we can really be of great value to the business community as they try and think about this as well. So, I believe we can go onto the next slide.
As we're thinking about, even perceived barriers, thing we think of as challenges to placement, these represent — these do represent aspects of diversity to a business, and they can be shown to be aspects of a real value add to the business and it diversity planning. Just finally, as we are looking at our business outreach materials, as we're looking at all of our marketing materials, I think we really want to emphasize this aspect of diversity and emphasize the true diversity of the staff — of the career seekers that are available to businesses through the One-Stop Career Center, the diversity of the talent, the diversity of background,

the diversity of all the various individuals that we work with, I really do believe that is a great value to the businesses that we're working with.

And so we can move on to, I believe, the last slide.

That's just our contact information, which I believe, David, unless you have any parting shots or last thoughts —

DAVID HOFF: I was going to say, on the representing the full range of job seekers, again, I think it's going to — part of that is simple things but it's really important. The visuals that are on your web site, the visuals on your market young brochures, is it a well representation. Again, that includes folks with disabilities, older workers, immigrants, that it's really reflective of the job seekers representing, and that the business representatives when talking to employers — I know lot of them are doing general kind of outreach, not representing specific job seekers, but as they're talking to employers that they are making sure that they are really representing a full range there. That includes — the important factor is N this is that the partners are making sure the business representatives understand the diversity of potential job seekers and their skills and abilities and how they can meet employer needs.

I would add one thing on that, which is really critical to understand in terms of disability, is that employers — you cannot reveal to an employer that a specific job seeker has a disability. You may say you represent job seekers with disabilities in your pool of job seekers, you could say that, or that you represent — in writing or pictures or even discussing it that you represent a full range of job seekers but when it comes down to a specify you can job seeker, a One-Stop staff cannot disclose to the employer without that individual's permission, and at least in my view, that would be a relatively rare thing, but you should not ever — it's actually under the Americans with disabilities act it is not permissible to disclose disability without the individual's permission and the employer cannot make inquiry about disability. Again, that's probably a whole another hour and a half webinar but I did want to mention that at least in passing that that something to bear in mind. So, anything from you, Cori?

CORI DiBIASE: No, I think that's a very, very important point. And I think that closes us out for the formal aspect of the presentation. Robb, if we want to do some questions.

ROBB SEWELL: Most definitely. We actually have had a couple questions that were sent in via chat. I'll rely those in a minute or so, but if folks have questions, you really have two options to let us — to alert us. One is you can use the chat box to send your question to me and then I'll relay it on to Cori and David. Or you can click the raise hand button, which is in the upper left-hand side of your screen. If you click raise hand, I'll be able to see on my screen that you want to raise a question, and then I'll inform you about how you can unmute your line. So in the interim, the first question we have is: Could you share some strategies for individuals to learn the jargon of a variety of business customers?

CORI DiBIASE: Well, sure. I'll start with that, and, David, you can definitely jump in. I think it's some of the things we've discussed. Are we spending our time, again, with businesses, talking to businesses? Are we going to conferences that are hosted by and for businesses? Are we spending time at Chamber of Commerce events? I don't think there's — well, there might shall dim I am certainly not aware of an urban dictionary on businesses out there and business jargon, but I think it really comes down to are we spending our time talking to these folks and are we listening very attentively for not only the words that they're using, but also I think more importantly the needs that those word express and the interest and the — what is compelling businesses, what's worrying businesses, what business are hopeful for in the upcoming period. I think labor market information to some extent plays a role in that as well. That would be my sense, is just like anything, we just need to spend our time with folks and get a sense of how they're using language and, more importantly, get a sense of what is concerning them and that's going to really guide us in that communication piece.

David, would you like —

DAVID HOFF: These are obviously — if you go online, read company web sites, go to company reports, you're going to start to see some of the terminology that you'll get familiar with. That just kind of helps getting immersed through that. I think industry reports, some of the labor market stuff. I also think not a bad strategy sometimes is going to industry events and industry conferences. I think it's not a bad strategy also to sit down with business, we're trying to understand what your needs are, can you tell us what your business — more about your business and through that understanding some of the jargon, we're trying to respond, we want to understand what — we're here to learn about you. I think it's part of the business outreach in general which is always hard to find the time for because it's so important. It's always send us your job listings instead of saying, we're here to be a long-term service. We want to be a long-term partner. We need to understand you better and frankly you need to understand us better, and so let's start to have that conversation. I think certainly that can help in terms of some of that jargon. I've worked in — it was interesting, because I jumped between the disability world and the Workforce Development world, which there are some similarities, obviously, but it was interesting when — the jargon going from one to another and also had a previous life in the private sector. Again, I found it quite interesting, you have to pick up that jargon here or there. But it's really important in terms of understanding and credibility.

ROBB SEWELL: Another question is: Corporations are very focused on corporate social responsibility reports. They want to incorporate the positive economic impact of hiring decisions. Do you know of any plug N play models or excel spreadsheets available that can be — that would be able to — present the economic impact for particular sectors or employment groups?

CORI DiBIASE: I'm not — nothing is coming to me.

DAVID HOFF: I know — there's a couple questions within there. One is it's a hot thing right now, which is kind of social responsibility report cards and things like that, which is an interesting trend, I think. I don't profess to sort of know a lot about that other than sort of — I only know what I read in the papers as they say. I know it's out there and we can do a little research and find out what might be out there in terms of that. In terms of the economic impact, I know again of certain groups. Nothing is readily coming to mind, although I do know that — I guess part of the question, I guess, he's asking, is what is the economic impact of hiring from certain groups or certain sectors — I think that's kind of the question that's being asked. I'm scratching my head a little bit about how best to go about that. I don't know if the person who is asking can sort of clarify. Clearly — we've seen it, sort of the spending power of people with disabilities and how, for example — in the disability world there's often concern about accommodations and how most accommodations cost nothing and typically they are less than $500. Those kind of kind of numbers are floating around out there. That's what I'm grasping at. Maybe I'm not answering the question.

CORI DiBIASE: The only other indicators I can think of and I don't know of any sort of formal preset spreadsheets out there ready to go but when we think about some of the tax credits available for businesses to promote hiring amongst certain career seeker groups, I think that the calculus is always — there is, okay, we'll offer a tax incentive to ensure that businesses are hiring from certain groups because we know that that's going to end up cutting down on government spending or spending on benefits, resources, that kind of thing. So I think certainly understanding — I think — so whenever we look at those tax incentives, whenever we look at who is eligible for those, I think that will give us a pretty strong indication as to not only what the — who the groups are that are perceived as being part of that equation but also give us a sense of what are some of the values statistics. Like if we — statistics. Like if we look online at some of the tax incentive information. There are typically statistics what are the costs saved by hiring someone, for example, who is on Social Security or who is a TANF recipient or something of that respect. I think lot of that information available. I don't know of anything that's a ready-made calculator.

DAVID HOFF: I also think, and again this may be my own anecdotal view of the world, but my view is — businesses are there to make money, a for-profit business, but — economics are certainly part of the equation, but I think that sometimes there is this kind of sense of, well, employers are just completely bottom line oriented and everything's got to be a meet a bottom line — they calculate the economic return on everything, and I just am not — I think my own experience in the private sector, that's not the way businesses typically think about hiring. They clearly — if you can make a case it's going to be of economic benefit, that of help, but I think fundamentally it's is this going to meet a human resource need. I think — businesses I used to run, I actually worked in the hospitality field, and I would hire people — people have this notion of job readiness or work readiness and I had some people who were good in study, not particularly fast but they were there every day. The value was they were there every day. I had people who were highly talented, skilled, what they did, sometimes their personalities were such — they made my day a bit challenging but I could put up with that because they brought an effectiveness in terms of their efficient work style. In some cases I had people whose reliable was a little suspect but they were such good quality workers I could deal with that. I was thinking more how does this effectively help me run a business. I just think we need to be careful — I think it's important if we can make an economic case to a business about why diversity is important but I think it's not something that employers are as — think about as much as sometimes we think they do.

ROBB SEWELL: We have a couple other questions that have been sent in. One of our participants says she has a difficult time aligning the single point of contact premise with the need to stay in touch with businesses. How do you balance being a nuisance or a pest yet stay on the radar of businesses?

CORI DiBIASE: I think, first of all, there are inobtrusive ways to stay on the business' radar. That can be just sending out an e-mail every month. I would say there's a big, big difference between sending out a BLOG e-mail or a newsletter or something like that that you get the sense, oh, great, I'm one of the 5,000 people this person really cares about. That's so endearing to me. It's much different to say, this is Cori at Brooklyn works, just wanted to say, wanted to sell hello, hope everything is going well, and leave it at that. I think you get the sense this is another thing it's always going to be a balancing act and it's going to be about knowing the business, know young the person in question. Some people will absolutely — have no interest whatsoever in hearing from you. It's don't call us, we'll call you scenario. In those cases you probably don't want to sort of try and hunt them down under any circumstances to send out information. But I think in most cases there's nothing all that obtrusive about an e-mail, but as long as it's a personal e-mail from you to them, not to your mailing list, but to an individual that you've had contact with. I think people will — the time it takes to read that, to seep you've checked in, it shows you're concerned, but it's not so much time taken out of someone's day that they're going to go, oh, jeez, this is so imposing I had to read this two-line e-mail on Monday morning.

DAVID HOFF: I would say the other part is clearly obviously — and the things you talked about, if you have value-added services, it's not just about checking for job openings. How sit going with your business? What's going on? Are there ways we can assist you. The more you can present that as a service to a — okay, there's real value in this. Then this sort of marketing 101 which you're not always using the same method. They might be getting the periodic newsletter from a One-Stop, a phone call here, e-mail here, but your name is there regularly but it's not so obtrusive that it's — you're being obnoxious. We're all going to gravitate towards those employers who are responsive who we're getting relationships with, and I also think that's a part of it.

CORI DiBIASE: I guess the balancing of a single point of contact, the single point of contact, one of the purposes of single point of contact is to reduce how much the employer is being contacted by multiple entities, that there really is only one person they have a relationship with who can act on behalf of multiple partners within the Workforce Development system.

ROBB SEWELL: At this point we just really have one question, unless anyone else has additional questions one of our participants asks: What do you think holds employers back from hiring individuals with disabilities?

DAVID HOFF: I think —

CORI DiBIASE: I think David and I will have thoughts on this. I'll start out and ask you to jump in as well.

I certainly think there's a lot of misinformation involved. I think there's a sort of sense of not knowing how to tell the difference between a particular disability and sort of the entire scope of like, well, if they can't do this piece of a job that means that they just — I think employers have — some people just aren't as aware of the disable field have a sense in their mind that, well, this person is just not going to be able to perform any of the tasks that are going to be of value to me on the job. So the antidote to that is sort of demonstrating, yes, this individual is not going to be able to perform — is not going to be appropriate to this task, but they can actually be — are extremely talented in this aspect, this aspect, and this aspect. So it's really a matter of breaking down and showing that disability — sort of breaking some of those myths about disability and making it very clear that disability is not at all about a lack of talent or a lack of value in the workplace. David, would you like to add anything?

DAVID HOFF: Sure. It's interesting, actually, Cori worked on a survey with a national organization on disability, and it was also in the Kessler foundation, it was done by Harris, and they looked at sort — they asked employers why — about hiring people with disability and using among other things Workforce Development, and interestingly, a lot of employers said — first off, we have tough time finding qualified people with disabilities. And we also field that we have an interest doing so but we're having trouble making that match. I think that speaks to sort — I felt like frankly a lot of the entities representing people with disabilities could be more responsive. So what do those findings mean and what does it say to this question? To me, it's a matter of, first off, not hiring person with a disability but hiring a qualified individual. It sound sort of flippant and simplistic but it doesn't mean it's not true, that the same strategies that work for any job seeker work for a person with a disability. You may need to do some tweaking of that, you may need to do some extra enhancements, you might need to provide a little extra support if the disability is obvious or going to impact the employment situation, clearly accommodation issues and disclosure might come into play, there are specific things but it should be always ultimately — and the job seeker should know about this, it's got to be about your skills, your abilities. That's what you lead with like any good employ employee. And I think we're slowly evolving with employers as well in terms of their receptive tea and openness, but I think part — and the employers in the survey said we need help in understanding how to support people with disabilities. I think this is where your partnership with public vocation rehabilitation is really key, as well as other entities who are experts on disability issues who have the funding to provide accommodations as necessary, those are key in terms of helping with some of the more technical areas. So it's really about having again — again, our whole theme of our project we're working on is a universal approach to job seekers that includes a diversity of job seekers, including people with disabilities. So it really is sort of that. I'm actually personally — I know that there's a real hot thing in terms of doing employer awareness about hiring people with disabilities, and there's lots of materials throughout and some of it is good and using that as part of your strategy can be helpful, but I'm not a big fan of the massive employer awareness campaigns. It makes everybody feel good but I'm not sure it necessarily leads to hiring. What leads to hiring is much more an individual bays. Those campaigns can lay sort of a little bit of groundwork but I think sometimes we emphasize those too much instead of let's figure out on an individual basis how we can get somebody with a disability hired, figure out what the qualifications are and provide support.

CORI DiBIASE: The last thing I would add is related to the NOD study, national organization on disabilities, doing a lot of work working with large corporate employers who have really said, you know, we want to find a way to make disability hiring, retention, promotion a part of the way we handle all the diversity that we do, and what they've said is very much echoed the findings of that report, is that we need to find the right partners in the community to help us do this. We need to find — to be able to find the right talented folks. We know they're out there. It's just a matter of we need to make — matter of we need to make those connections and we need contacts in the community that can be our go-to in helping us build this aspect of the way we hire, the way retain and promote our staff.

DAVID HOFF: If you're looking for the that survey, you could go to www.2010disabilitysurveys.org. You can find it there.

ROBB SEWELL: Great. Thank you so much. At this point we don't really have any additional questions, so I want to thank both David and Cori for such a great and insightful presentation. As I mentioned earlier, this presentation, a recording of this presentation will be available on the NTAR web site by noon tomorrow. The presentation itself will be available there in PowerPoint and in Rich Text Format. We'll also have a transcript of the webinar available on the NTAR web site. At this point we'll close things out and I want to thank everyone for participating today and we'll wish you a great and happy day. Thanks.

DAVID HOFF: Thank you, Robb.