



NATIONAL COALITION *for* HOMELESS VETERANS

At Your Service

HVRP Grantee Best Practices

Creating Job-Driven Training Opportunities

What makes job training for veterans effective can vary from organization to organization, depending on the local labor market and the capabilities of the HVRP. Some HVRPs create training programs geared toward specific industries in their area, while others will combine multiple types of training to make a veteran client more marketable.

In today's technology-driven job market, computer skills can be incredibly valuable. Tim Meserve of Veterans Multi-Service Center listed digital literacy classes and computer labs as two of the ways his organization works to meet the employment needs of veterans. Similarly, Dana Niemela of Denver Department of Human Services notes that many HVRP consumers need computer training.

Beyond computer skills, Meserve recommended what he called an "a la carte" approach, noting wide range of training options available through his organization, ranging from forklift operation and food service to manufacturing and automotive work. Meserve suggested that an HVRP will be best served by avoiding a one size fits all approach to job readiness and training.

Doreen Straka of Jericho Project also advocates for multi-layered training, "We'll send people out to security training, but we'll supplement it with a fireguard training which we found just isn't as readily available and is something that gives them an extra chance and opportunity on their [resumes]." Straka added that longer-term training is not as desirable for her clients as they prefer to secure employment as quickly as possible. HVRPs should work with their local AJC to identify appropriate registered apprenticeships and on-the-job training opportunities.

Companies searching for high-quality job applicants can work in collaboration with an HVRP to identify workers who match the job needs, and to train workers for jobs. Rolanda Clements-Martin of Goodwill Industries of Houston explained that pre-screening and applicant volume can pose challenges to many employers. "They put the ball in our court and said, 'look, we want you to do pre-screening, we want them ready, we want them dressed, we want them prepared.' " Reducing the amount of screening that the employer must conduct can increase that employer's interest in working with an HVRP. Her organization's willingness to engage in these activities, with the help of groups such as Dress For Success and Career Gear, improved job placement for veterans.