

The Madera County Workforce Investment Corporation has undergone a significant transformation as it continues to transition to WIOA. Over the course of several months, workgroups were created for Business Services and Job Seekers that provided staff the opportunity to dialogue and develop strategies to deliver a myriad of services; thus, positioning our local workforce development system to better serve both employers and jobseekers as our customers. These changes included staffing titles, roles, and responsibilities from staff through management.

The redesign of our service delivery model was built on the Human Centered Design approach. This customer centered model removed the “hoops” that a job seeker must jump through in order to access our services under WIA, thus, minimizing the length of time it takes to get job seekers through the upfront process. Additionally, we have eliminated group orientations and now provide job seekers a menu of options when they walk through our doors. When a jobseeker checks in with staff at the front desk, he/she is: 1) provided forms such as UI application, state disability, etc., 2) referred to outside or partner agencies, 3) referred to the resource room for self service activities, or 4) referred to the Specialist of the Day if interested in job placement assistance or training.

The Specialist of the Day is available Monday through Thursdays from 8:15am to 4pm. There are no Specialists available on Fridays. When a job seeker meets with the Specialist of the Day, an Initial Questionnaire is used to assess and refer the job seeker to the appropriate services based on the job seeker’s needs. The job seeker may be referred to a partner/outside agency, the resource room if not interested in one on one services, or scheduled for an eligibility appointment. If an individual is interested in eligibility, the Specialist reviews the list of required documents for eligibility and may schedule the eligibility appointment for the same day, next day, or days out using the CalJOBS calendar of events. All individuals scheduled for eligibility must be registered in CalJOBS. Job seekers that do not have a HS diploma or GED may be referred to the Madera and/or Fresno Adult Schools for classes. Upon eligibility determination and approval, the job seeker is assigned to a Career Specialist. A TABE assessment is administered to identify basic skills deficiency. Depending on the needs of the job seeker, he/she may be referred to a menu of activities that include Workkeys assessment, skills training, job placement, job readiness, direct placement, or a panel interview.

We have also redesigned a more comprehensive business services plan for Madera County. We identified a Business Services team comprised of 4 Business Specialists, who

have further developed strategies and processes to actively engage employers and bridge job seekers to employment. Our business services portfolio received a complete makeover. Brochures were simplified into 1 page handouts that included business jargon, an employer resource directory was created, business cards were redesigned, and new folders were purchased with our embossed logo. Additionally, two employer surveys were developed. The first is an initial survey for new businesses that captures demographic information about the business. The second is a follow-up survey that measures specific needs and challenges that the business may be experiencing. Business Specialists have also started using Constant Contact to further market our business services. Staff have populated Constant Contact with employer contacts and will be using this marketing tool to further outreach and engage employers. The business services team will look at other social media platforms to market our business services.

Business Specialists have also worked closely with Career Specialists to develop a referral process for on-the-job training and direct placement. Panel interviews consisting of Business and Career Specialists are used to determine whether a job seeker is job ready. An interview tool was developed and will be used to rank job seekers' responses on various behavioral based questions. A calendar for panel interviews is available in CaJobs and Career Specialists can schedule any job seeker that they feel is job ready. A resume and application must also be submitted for consideration. Job seekers who are considered job ready by the interview panel are added to a database for referral. Job seekers who are less than job ready are referred to a soft skill workshop and/or back to their assigned Career Specialist for further mentoring.

The Business Specialists have identified industry sectors that will become their assigned area of expertise, which will determine the businesses they will work with. As we continue to fine tune internal processes, the Business Specialists have been actively participating in as many employer related events and trainings as possible. We are excited and look forward to the long term relationships that our business services team will develop with our business community.