

Employer Engagement Strategies and Effective Job Development: A Multidimensional Approach

Nancy Brooks-Lane, MS, LPC, LMFT

Senior Consultant

Griffin-Hammis Associates, Inc.

Grounding In:

- **Philosophy**
- **Methodology**

What creates a meaningful life?

- *This becomes tied to the values that ground us in our work...*

When asked “What makes life good?” almost all people identify the same core components.

- Freedom of **choice**
- **Relationships** with family and friends
- **Safe home** in a safe neighborhood
- Being **respected**
- Included in and a **member of community**
- Good **health** and access to good **health care**
- Enjoying one’s personal choice of **hobbies, recreation and leisure activities**
- *Satisfying employment and the economic benefits of contributing through work.*

THE 21ST CENTURY WORKPLACE

- Job sharing, creation, carving
- Flexible work hours
- Impact of Technology
- Results-based work environment

Millennials are now the largest generation in the workforce and typically promote and support more work place flexibility

Over 28% of millennials are in management positions. (Pew Research Center)

**This means we must do business
differently!**

STAFF AS COMMUNITY BUILDERS USING **PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING**

- **Assisting an individual with identifying their interests**
- **Helping the individual find their niche to participate in and contribute to community**
- **Planning with the individual ways to develop meaningful community roles and relationships**

Let's Talk About Community!

social involvement, social participation = Social Engagement

- one's degree of participation in community
- getting out of buildings "facilities" and traditional disability systems
- spending time connecting with business owners

Social Capital?

Social Capital



**INVESTMENT IN SOCIAL
RELATIONSHIPS AND THE
VALUE OF THESE
RELATIONSHIPS TO DO
“THINGS” FOR EACH OTHER.**

*Consider the importance of
social capital in your life and
work.*

- **Build partnerships and
capitalize on relationships
and networks.**

the positive effects of social capital...

- “people in relationships can reach goals that would have been far beyond the grasp of individuals in isolation”
- Better Together

REQUIRED SKILL SETS

- **Community-based**
- **Person centered**
- **Strengths-based**
- ***Building Social Capital***
- **Team-Based**
- **Outcomes-Based**
- **Supporting staff to be accountable**
- ***Bridging Natural Supports***

An Economic Development Model

- **Community exploration to understand business owner needs**
- **Job negotiation is mutually beneficial to the job seeker and employer.**
- *Utilizes social capital and community connections!*

Small Business Owners VS Corporations

Small Business

- More accessible
- In control of hiring and decision making
- Can be flexible and creative
- Generally have an interest in the community and ways to ensure it thrives
- Tend to be less encumbered by policies, procedures and bureaucracy (ex. Artsy Beads)

Corporation

- Rigid hierarchy regarding who one can talk to
- Rely on stringent HR policies and procedures which are generally not flexible
- Jobs are based on job descriptions that do not allow for creativity in job negotiation
- Pre-hiring processes tend to rule people out instead of looking at possibilities for hiring

**SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS are
typically :**

individuals with vision and passion

open to new approaches and ideas

Informational Interviews

- *A Customized Employment technique that increases employer engagement, produces greater outcomes related to job seekers preferences, and provides opportunities to address employer needs.*

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

- **ARE ARRANGED WITH A MANAGER, OWNER, KEY PERSON**
- **EXPLORE CURRENT NEEDS OF THE BUSINESS**
- **MATCH BUSINESS NEEDS WITH THE SKILLS OF THE JOB SEEKER**
- **REQUIRE CREATIVITY TO RECOGNIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CUSTOMIZED JOBS**

The Questions

- *What are you most proud of regarding your business?*
(Ex. Family Culture Low turnover)
- *What are the stressors that you are currently experiencing?* (Ex. Marketing using Social Media and Technology)
- *What keeps your work flow from going smoothly?*
(Ex. No central person to answer phone from 10 am – 3 pm)
- *What is currently not getting done?* (Ex. Sheriff House)

Asking about needs and expansion goals – *not are you hiring*

- *What product or service do you currently not provide that you would like to provide?*
- *What resources are needed to provide this product or service?*

(Ex. Kerry)



The Questions Asked During Informational Interviews *Focus on the Business and the Business Needs.*

HOW ARE YOU MAKING INNOVATIONS TO YOUR BUSINESS?

WHO IS LEADING THE CHARGE OF INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENTS?

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST BARRIER TO GROWING YOUR BUSINESS?

Research Businesses before the Informational Interview

- History of the Company
- Culture of the company
- Dress code
- Community Involvement
- Products/Services
- Recognition/Awards

Research Businesses before the Informational Interview

- ✓ Know specifics about the company - this will impress
- ✓ Use your connections
- ✓ Use search engines to find out about the company
- ✓ Review the Company's Website

- Review of A
- BUSINESS WEBSITE

Rural Sourcing

Rural Sourcing Inc. | The Future of
Outsourcing in America

www.ruralsourcing.com **Rural Sourcing** makes
outsourcing smarter. We have a vision for the
future of IT outsourcing in America and how to
bridge the gap between domestic IT
professionals and ...

RECENT PRESS RELEASES

[Alex Bruce Joins Rural Sourcing Inc. As New Chief Sales Officer](#)

[Rural Sourcing Inc. Named to Inc. 5000 List of Fastest Growing Companies for Third Consecutive Year](#)

[Rural Sourcing Inc. Named One of Georgia's Best Places to Work](#)

[Rural Sourcing Receives 2016 Flying 40 Award as a High-Tech Growth Leader](#)

[Rural Sourcing Inc. Again Named to Atlanta's Best and Brightest Companies to Work For®](#)

Culture

- “Are you looking for a **fun place to work**? RSI encourages a work hard/play hard culture with team outings and fun activities around the office.”
- “The **culture at Rural Sourcing Inc. is truly one-of-a-kind**. RSI values our employees and their desire for a work/life balance, embraces a work hard/play hard mentality and strongly **encourages family-like relationships**. We celebrate the achievements of our colleagues and believe that **working can be fun!** RSI enables our colleagues to do the work they love and live in low cost of living, high quality of life locations. **We’ve created an environment with highly engaged employees who don’t miss the trials and tribulations of weekly travel, or the wasted hours stuck in traffic trying to get to work or home.**”

Training

- “We value our colleagues and **the development of their personal and professional skills**. We continually offer training and cross training in today’s highly-demanded skills.”
- “RSI prides itself on ensuring colleagues’ skills stay up to date in the most cutting edge technologies. **We provide hands on training and self-study materials** to help you meet your prerequisites for promotion and we sponsor off site training in applicable technologies. **Every RSI colleague has a mentor and manager who helps guide them along their training and growth path.**”
- *(This is natural supports!)*

BLOG

- “While an undergraduate computer science degree may be a good starting place for learning how to be a successful developer, it’s the real-life application of these skills that will set you apart from a typical graduate. Although I don’t expect the university setting to be able to teach everything, there are still some areas that I found my education to be lacking. Here are three skills that I consider fundamental to software development that I ended up teaching myself outside of the classroom...”
- “Overall, I’m very happy with the knowledge that I obtained as part of my undergraduate education, but I encourage those in school now to take the opportunity to be open to beyond what they hear in lectures and labs “and continue to learn outside the classroom.”
- “The culture at Rural Sourcing Inc. is truly one-of-a-kind. RSI values our employees and their desire for a work/life balance, embraces a work hard/play hard mentality and strongly encourages family-like relationships. We celebrate the achievements of our colleagues and believe that working can be fun! RSI enables our colleagues to do the work they love and live in low cost of living, high quality of life locations. We’ve created an environment with highly engaged employees who don’t miss the trials and tribulations of weekly travel, or the wasted hours stuck in traffic trying to get to work or home.”

Values

- “it’s the **real-life application** of these skills that will set you apart from a typical graduate”
- “continue to **learn outside the classroom**”

Nick, Business Owner –
BuckHead Thread Company
www.buckheadthread.co



- **The Store**

- **The Thread – Blog**

- **Threadfest 2017**

Threadfest is a one day event bringing together Art, Fashion, Style, Music, & local culinary arts. Tickets will be going on sale soon, as well as more & more information in the coming months.

- **The Buck Club**

Join the Buck Club today and receive coupons, free give-aways, access to the latest gear, & info on Atlanta Life provided by Buckhead Thread Co.

**Buckhead
Thread**



**BUCK
CLUB** 

JOIN THE TEAM

We are now accepting inquiries for internship and part-time opportunities. Fill out this contact form if you are interested in working with the most exciting clothing company in Atlanta. Tweets by [@BuckheadThread](https://twitter.com/BuckheadThread)



***INFORMATIONAL
INTERVIEW***

***VIDEO
with Nick***

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

- **Listen more than you speak**
– *the key is listening not talking. Show you are genuinely interested by focusing on the person talking. Ask follow up questions to obtain more detail.*
- **Do your research and be clear on your purpose**
- **Do not engage in monologues or dominate the conversation** –
conversation is an exchange between those involved
- **Think before you speak**
- **Avoid judgments**
- **Do not interrupt**
- **Do not over share**
- **Be relaxed and be yourself**
- **Have a friendly attitude**
- **Maintain good eye contact**
- **Dress for the business dress code**

Tips for Improving Employer Engagement

- Spend more time face-to-face with businesses.
- Find a simple way to track employer contacts
- Decide upon a Performance Improvement Feedback Loop.
- Team up. De-brief.
- Look for ways to connect with civic committees and organizations to build social capital and business connections.
- Schedule informational interview activities into your week.
- Track Employer Contacts for a month, analyze the results with the team.
- Set up an internal scenario where you work to ask a specific department about its needs using the Informational Interview questions

DO NOT FORGET THE SUPPLY CHAIN

- A supply chain is a system of businesses, people, activities, information, and resources involved in moving a product or service from supplier to customer.



CUSTOMIZED JOB DEVELOPMENT REQUIRES THAT:

- We avoid Big Sign Syndrome
- We Get to Know our Communities
- We Create Opportunities thru Economic Development
- We quit going where:
Every Other Job Developer Goes!

What does it take?

- **Looking at a community differently**
- **Creating social capital by actually getting outside of one's office**
- **Moving toward economic development**
- **Spending more time with local businesses and less time inside traditional systems**

What does it take?

- **Collaborating around the notion of person-centered approaches, driven by the interests, preferences, and strengths, of one person---not a program,**
- **Understanding that “disability” does not occur in a vacuum but rather is part of a local community and economy,**
- **Having a positive and open approach to life!**

CAUTIONS – YOU KNOW SOMETHING IS A BAD IDEA IF IT:

- INCREASES STIGMA
- REINFORCES STEREOTYPES
- DECREASES THE OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION
- INCREASES STIGMA
- DECREASES THE OPPORTUNITY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TYPICAL FRIENDSHIPS AND RELATIONSHIPS
- IS NOT INDIVIDUALIZED