

Eastern Region Site Report

Introduction

In February 2011, the Kaiser Group, Inc. was hired by the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services to conduct an evaluation of the workforce investment system in Arkansas. The evaluation was designed to be a process review rather than a data or compliance review.

There were three primary components to the project:

- Regional site visits and Regional Site Reports
- A Workforce System Report
- A Workforce System Certification Process Review

This Site Report for the Eastern Region is intended to be used in conjunction with the Workforce System Report and the Workforce System Certification Process Review.

It is the hope of the Kaiser Group, Inc. that this report will be used as part of an active planning and continuous improvement process that will help further define and more completely implement the vision for the Arkansas Workforce System. We encourage the readers of this report to discuss these findings, pick and prioritize topical areas, and work together to improve services and outcomes for the customers of the Arkansas Workforce Centers.

The Kaiser Group, Inc. would like to thank all of the staff in the Eastern Region for their assistance in arranging and participating in the interviews and focus groups that were part of the research in this project.

Overview

In the Eastern Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA), the Workforce Investment Board of Eastern Arkansas is the Administrative Entity. The Service Education Rehabilitation Company of Arkansas, Inc. (SERCO) is the LWIA Title One Provider and the LWIA One Stop Operator.

In this region, visits were made to the Comprehensive Centers in Forrest City and West Memphis. There are five counties in this LWIA with Satellite Centers in Helena, Marianna, and Wynne. This site visit occurred April 4-7, 2011.

Organizations with full time partners at the Comprehensive Center in Forrest City include: SERCO, the Department of Workforce Services (DWS), and the Human Development Corporation. Services provided include: Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) and Work Pays, Resource Room coordination, Employment Services (Wagner-Peyser), Unemployment Insurance (UI), Veteran's Services, and Migrant and Seasonal Workers. All of the central elements to fulfilling the requirements for WIA are present.

Organizations with full time partners at the Comprehensive Center in West Memphis include: SERCO, DWS, and Mid-South Community College (MSCC). Services provided include: WIA, TEA and Work Pays, Resource Room coordination, Employment Services (Wagner-Peyser), Unemployment Insurance (UI), Adult Education, Literacy, and Employment and Training (SNAP). All of the central elements to fulfilling the requirements for WIA are present.

A total of fifteen interviews were conducted and included the Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) Executive Director, the One Stop Operator, DWS Office Managers, WIA manager, TEA supervisors, WIA case managers, TEA case managers, and Partner Agency staff. In addition, one focus group was held at the West Memphis Center with both Center and Partner Agency staff.

Organizational Structure

Findings

The One Stop Operator in this region is David Barch who is employed by the Service Education Rehabilitation Company of Arkansas, Inc (SERCO). The two Comprehensive Centers (Forrest City and West Memphis) have DWS office managers. The current Business Plan states that the centers are co-managed by the Program Manager of SERCO and the DWS office managers.

At both locations, there is a center wide expectation for quality customer service that crosses programmatic/employer lines.

It appears as if the roles of the One Stop Operator and DWS office managers are not clearly defined. There were some mixed messages regarding who definitively is in charge of the Centers.

This co-management structure may also unintentionally lend itself to an “us and them” mentality among staff, based upon programmatic lines. DWS staff stated that the DWS Office Manager was in charge of the Center while WIA and Partner Agency staff stated that the One Stop Operator was in charge of the Center. In more than one interview it was stated that even with a group effort (co-management) someone needs to be in charge.

LWIB staff coordinate the Certification process. LWIB staff and the Board chair conducted the Certification review. At Forrest City, there was a thorough review of the criteria, with confidence that the Center is meeting the Certification standards, At the West Memphis location, it was more of a “going through the motions” process, and some elements of the criteria are still not in place (i.e. name tags are not consistent).

It was reported that the Certification document itself is “fine”. They are not sure how beneficial it is on a day to day basis. However, it does give structure and sets standards which was reported as a good thing. There was a suggestion to scale it back, as it appears to be too grand and over reaching.

The LWIB has responsibility for developing the Business Plan. Day to day operations related to the Plan vary by location, but for the most part matches the philosophy of striving to meet customer needs. It was stated that the Plan needs to be reviewed each year for it to be useful. A DWS office manager shared that staff don’t know about the Plan because they don’t get involved in management duties, however, everyone knows what is required of the Center as a whole.

There is not a Center wide policies and procedures manual. Center employees follow their employer's guidelines, some of which have caused some tension (i.e. time off and expected hours of work). There was discussion about developing one, but it never happened. There was a mixed message from management staff about whether one was needed or not, some felt like it would be a good management tool that would provide structure, others felt it was not needed.

Challenges

The turnover in DWS managers and supervisors in West Memphis has been a challenge. It is difficult to learn both their programmatic day to day responsibilities and how the Center needs to operate as a whole (i.e. their role as co-manager).

In West Memphis, there appeared to be a struggle with the decision making roles of DWS state staff, College Administrators, LWIB staff, and the One Stop Operator. DWS holds the lease agreement with the College while the One Stop Operator, through the direction of the LWIB, has responsibilities for the day to day operations within the Center. The challenge is to ensure that all entities are at the table with an equal voice when decisions are made that affect the operations of the Center.

Locating Arkansas Workforce Centers (AWCs) on Community College campuses is a relatively new concept. Incorporating College employees organizationally into the AWC structure, and as a partner in AWC decision making, will take time, effort, and compromise.

While a great deal of progress has been made in recent years related to communication among programmatic partners, including DWS state staff, there still appears to be a disconnect. Each program has their own mission, and it was reported that operations still feel too programmatically driven.

Because of the programmatic nature of the management structure, there can be the appearance of different treatment for different Center staff, based upon their programmatic function. While the reality can dictate differences based upon case load (TEA or WIA) or customer demand (UI), the challenge is to create a structure that supports the sharing of Center wide responsibilities (i.e. staffing the Resource Room).



Recommendations

- Clarify what is meant by Co-Management of the Centers. Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the management team. Create a consolidated organizational chart that illustrates this organizational structure of the Center and communicate this to staff.
- The current co-management leadership promotes the feeling of division and “us vs. them.” Consider the option of implementing a functional leadership approach from the top down.
- Identify and clarify the roles of DWS state staff, Community College administrators, the LWIB, and the One Stop Operator in the decision making processes that affect daily operations of the Center.
- Create a Center-wide policies and procedures manual that addresses professional behaviors in the workplace, a mutual code of professional ethics and practices for all partners, and a consistent holiday/days off schedule.

Service Integration and Collaboration

Findings

Throughout the discussions with staff at all levels and in both Centers, there was a consistent theme of putting customers first, and working together to meet customer needs. Staff appear to work well together related to serving all customers who enter the Center. A common referral form (Appendix A), is used to inform customers of all services in the Center and serves as a menu of services.

Staff know enough about each other's programs to make appropriate referrals. There was a consistent theme of the "walking referral". When customers need/request additional services, staff will often walk them over to the partner agency. In West Memphis, this appears to be especially effective with referrals to adult education services, including Career Pathways.

In Forrest City, the open layout, with the Resource Room in the center and staff offices around the perimeter, encourages collaboration just because of the physical layout. Staff reported that this layout encourages and supports their philosophy that all Center customers are everyone's customer.

In West Memphis, it appears they are taking full advantage of being located on a Community College campus. All staff reported the advantages of the full range of services available, from basic literacy to Career Pathways. Referrals are going back and forth between services very effectively.

Programmatic meetings are held regularly, as are "partner" meetings. Managers hold regular partner meetings that are well received and seen as valuable. However, for staff, the definition of "partner" often meant other DWS staff, rather than all Center staff. Regular Center wide meetings for staff do not appear to be happening in either location.

WIA staff have been cross trained on Key Train to promote the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC). This had been a DWS function, however, based on employer demand, staffing was adjusted to accommodate the greater need.

Currently, the focus on formal cross training is on TEA staff learning UI to help with staffing during peak times. There doesn't appear to be any other formal cross training efforts at this time. Informally, cross training is staff initiated, and usually occurs when staff seek one another out to answer customer questions.

In West Memphis, the Vocational Rehabilitation placement staff and AWC placement staff stay connected and work together to share job information and opportunities.



Challenges

Some managers and staff feel that DWS at the state level is not modeling acting as a single business. It appears to them that the AOCs and DWS managers and directors are not sharing information on a regular basis. DWS started having joint meetings, however, the agenda had programmatic breakouts that kept the program staff (DWS and WIA) separated. Although everyone was in the same location, it still felt like separate events.

Strategic, formal cross training among all Center staff is not happening in this region. For staff that take the initiative, and are willing to find the time, it does happen informally. However, this makes cross training efforts ad hoc and potentially inconsistent. Center staff all have access to Arkansas Job Link (AJL), but haven't taken full advantage of having this access to coordinate and streamline Center services.

Adult education staff have not participated in any cross training. During the focus group, several adult education staff indicated that it has been a challenge for them to learn about all the AWC services, and they are especially confused by all the acronyms. For the adult education staff in West Memphis, this learning process will take time.

True financial integration has been difficult. This region attempted to create a Business Services Team that were Center employees (rather than programmatically focused), with salaries paid through allocations from each partner. This discussion became convoluted quickly regarding salaries, benefits, and seniority. There was frustration expressed that it's possible to do cost allocation for the facilities, but not for the staff in the facilities.

DWS invests significant time and money in training staff on new initiatives. Staff are grateful to have these opportunities, however, they're not clear about DWS's intent or expectations regarding how to best use the training received. There doesn't seem to be an action plan on maximizing the investment and encouraging staff to actually use what they've been trained in (i.e. Kudor, Career Development Facilitator training).

While it is clear that staff work well together and collaborate to meet customer needs, there is still a feeling of co-location rather than true integration. One Community College employee interviewed stated, "we are co-located and don't consider ourselves part of the AWC in any formal sense."

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) was going to co-locate in West Memphis, but had privacy concerns with conducting interviews in cubicles and decided not to have staff onsite in this Center. This decision was made by Arkansas Rehabilitation Services staff in Little Rock.



Recommendations

- During joint regional or statewide DWS/WIA meetings, develop agendas and sessions that include all staff to maximize “face time”, learning more about each other, and networking opportunities between the programs that promote Center success in addition to programmatic success.
- Continue monthly partner meetings for managers, and implement regular partner (all Center staff) meetings for line staff. Information to line staff can get lost in translation (from manager to supervisor to staff), and line staff could benefit from meeting regularly with each other to learn more about programs and about strategies and ideas regarding case practice and meeting customer needs.
- The original goal in this region was to conduct cross training for all Center staff that included training in Resource Room tasks, resume writing, taking job orders, and entering job orders. Create a training plan and process to implement this goal. This will provide more staffing options to meet customer needs and could help streamline Center processes.
- One of the biggest challenges in cross training partner staff is learning all of the acronyms used. Create an Acronym dictionary and put it online to help all staff learn and understand the terms used in the AWCs.
- Continue the practice of AWC staff speaking in adult education classes to inform those customers of AWC services and opportunities. This is potentially a new customer base of individuals who may not have known all of the AWC services available.
- Continue taking full advantage of all college campus services for AWC customers, especially UI customers. The fact that customers can apply for UI, be assessed for career and education needs, and potentially walk down the hall to Career Pathways to increase their re-employment options is a great opportunity.
- Re-start the conversation regarding cost allocation for staff in the Centers. The example of creating a Business Services team by sharing financial resources across programs could be a promising practice to better meet employer needs and increase the exposure of the AWC and its services.

Customer Satisfaction

Findings

There is no active process for soliciting customer feedback or measuring customer satisfaction in this region. There are comment boxes at both the Centers, however, both are voluntary, and the one in West Memphis is not very visible on the back of the resource table. The 800 number for TEA customers was also mentioned as a process for measuring customer satisfaction.

The Director of the WIBEA reported that the LWIB is “ecstatic” with their performance and how well they’ve done in this region in meeting performance standards. Board members and their families have taken advantage of the AWC services and have given very positive feedback, which gets shared with staff. In his opinion, it’s best when Board members experience the services first hand.

As was observed in several other regions, this region also had a prevalent attitude that as long as there were no complaints, everything must be good and everyone must be satisfied with the services provided.

In West Memphis, there is an informal process of checking with employers to see if their needs were met. Managers attend civic meetings which they also use to see if employer needs are being met.

Challenges

Currently there is not an active process for collecting and analyzing customer satisfaction. There is no systematic approach to evaluate if customers are satisfied with the services being provided.

Recommendations

- Since there is anecdotal feedback on good customer satisfaction, formalize it in a way that routinely collects, compiles and shares the information. Develop a consistent approach to routinely collect this data at all Centers in the region. There are many tools available to accomplish this task. One example is an electronic comment card system from Long Range Systems that collects the information from either the job seeking customer or employer in a consistent, anonymous manner. Reports are generated to the local office on a daily basis and can be compiled nearly real time. See Attachment B for more information on this unique approach.

- To address the needs of the internal customer, conduct a climate survey on an annual basis to gather feedback from staff. The survey results will help pinpoint areas needing improvement and will provide an opportunity for all staff and partners to anonymously offer suggestions and ideas on improving the Workforce system. Models of climate surveys used in Workforce Centers can be provided upon request.

Performance Management

Findings

There are no performance goals for the Centers as a whole. However, the consistent theme from all those interviewed was that the goal for the Center was based on customer service – do the best you can to meet the needs of every customer that comes into a Center.

There is not much awareness of partner goals. However, staff know enough about each other's services, and in their efforts to serve customers to the best of their ability, they inform and refer customers to the services that will best meet their needs.

The Career Pathways program is working well in West Memphis. They are exceeding their goals, in particular the number of TEA enrollments. Being co-located was cited as a primary reason for this because TEA case managers can walk the customer to the Career Pathways offices. This decreases the likelihood of losing referrals between the actual referral from a case manager and traveling to a different location to receive the service.

One key element to meeting WIA performance in this region may be the performance specialist that works with WIA case managers and other staff. By being pro-active on upcoming changes (i.e. staff knew common measures were coming), staff pre-planned and were prepared when DWS made the decision to move to the common measures.

The quality assurance efforts consist mostly of file monitoring and compliance issues. In both WIA and TEA, supervisors review cases and files to ensure that programmatic policies and procedures are being followed and that cases are being managed to meet programmatic goals.

Challenges

The high WIA performance measures are driving practice decisions. This reduces the overall number of customers being served in the WIA program in this region.

Quality assurance practices consist of file monitoring for compliance. This focus on compliance limits the ability for continuous quality improvement in practice. It is difficult to concentrate on modifying or improving processes when the focus is on finding errors in records and fixing them before they become an audit issue. State DWS quality assurance monitors reinforce this focus during their monitoring reviews.

There is a perception that state DWS staff are not open to innovative process improvements on the local level. The example cited was an attempt to implement a swipe card system for customers that would track customer flow based on usage and services received. The system could be used to track and report on all of the services, ITAs, costs, and outcomes associated with helping customers receive training and get jobs. This system would also provide the LWIB with a clear picture of the customers, services provided and outcomes in the LWIA. Due to state concerns that this was a duplicative process, they were not able to move forward with this initiative. Real or imagined, this perception may limit the generation of new, innovative ideas on the local level.



Recommendations

- Programmatic goals are all different. Share programmatic goals with all staff and provide monthly reports at staff meetings with progress on achieving those goals. Develop a regional profile that captures the performance goals of all Center programs and any additional system performance goals for the region. See Attachment C for one example. Focus discussions on how partners can work together to help each other achieve their goals.
- While it is important that case records are in compliance with policies and procedures, it is equally important to spend time on continuous quality improvements in practice. Work collaboratively with both state and local staff to develop a continuous quality improvement team that focuses on process and practice improvements that will improve customer outcomes and help them achieve their goals.
- Generating new and innovative ideas at the local level is a critical piece of continuous quality improvement. Dialogue between state DWS staff and local staff needs to occur on an ongoing basis to ensure all involved understand the pros and cons of new ideas, and the rationale behind the decision to move forward with implementation or not.

The AWC Brand

Findings

Internally, the AWC brand is known and understood. While staff still speak about themselves in programmatic terms rather than AWC terms, they consistently focus on meeting the needs of the customer. This focus on meeting customer needs will continue to help build the brand identity over time because quality services were provided at an AWC.

Externally, many people still see the AWCs as the Unemployment Office. In Forrest City, it was reported that the UI office had a bad reputation in the past. They feel they are slowly changing those perceptions, but this process takes time.

Customers are still confused about the AWC and they continue to come in for a specific program (i.e. UI) purpose. Once they are in the Centers, they are often surprised at the number of other services offered and available.

The concept of operating as a single business gets mixed responses depending on perspective. While management reported that partners are operating as separate businesses (DWS and WIA), there is a singular focus on customer service and providing what customers need across programmatic lines. From the customer's perspective, things may seem like a single business even if it may not be working that way behind the scenes.

Products and services are currently marketed through brochures, wearing AWC labeled shirts when out at events, and being active members in civic groups.

Partner staff (i.e. Arkansas Rehabilitation) sees the relationship with the AWCs as important and benefits from the positive brand image.

The Eastern website (<http://www.onestop.org/index.html>) displays the AWC brand very prominently. There are many services listed for job seekers with some interactive links available for more information. However, some of this information is inaccurate (i.e. stating you can apply for TEA at the AWCs). There are currently no partner services listed, nor is there any information available on the site for employers.

Challenges

There are still certain elements of promoting the brand (i.e. in West Memphis Community College staff wear their own nametags) that are lacking. One MSCC staff stated that a strength of the Center is that customers can't tell the difference between Center staff and College staff (even though they wear different name tags).

There are staff perceptions that UI customers are handled as a separate business. It doesn't seem as if they are getting evaluated for career interests, career planning and educational opportunities. They come in, file their claim, have their interview and leave. Due to the high volume of UI customers coming into the AWCs, the focus is on getting them in and out with the least possible wait times.

In Satellite AWCs where not all partner agencies are available, there is confusion from the general public. Many customers come in to these Centers and want to apply for UI but can't because there are no UI staff present.

Recommendations

- Develop a written menu of services that is branded with the logo, includes all partner services, is clearly visible at the entrance to the Centers, and is available in a take home version.
- Ensure that the AWC brand is used on all internal and external communications. Develop a style guide so there is a consistency in format for AWC written materials. Ensure that all elements (including business cards and name tags) of promoting the brand are in place.
- Include all staff in discussions on how to better maximize all AWC services for UI customers. This will involve additional collaboration among and between staff due to the high volume of UI customers. When UI customers take advantage of the extensive services available and achieve positive outcomes, this data can be used to continue to spread the message that AWCs are more than the "UI Office" even for UI customers.
- Update the Eastern website to correct any inaccurate information. Add partner agency information and information for employers.

Business Services/Services to Employers

Findings

The Business Plan outlines the responsibilities of a Business Services team. There is currently no Business Services team or single point of contact for employers at either Center, although the Director of the WIBEA believes there should be. Staff that carry out the Business Services function vary by location, but in general include ES staff, Veteran's Representatives, WIA staff, and TEA staff. Managers talk about their role in contacting employers mainly through participating in civic organizations.

Employment Services (ES) staff may occasionally go out and visit employers, however, there is no coherent Business Services strategy. The Veteran's Representative is required to go out and visit employers at least two times a week. There is a common theme among TEA staff that they are mainly contacting employers to develop work experience sites.

In Forrest City, it was reported that job fairs are held almost every week. Job leads are emailed to all staff, as they are in West Memphis. All job leads, unless the employer requests differently, are entered into AJL. Outside of the common use of AJL, there is little collaboration occurring in the Business Services area.

The CRC is the big push right now with employers and customers. Some employers are requiring this in Forrest City. It is growing in the employer community, and several managers and staff felt it was a wonderful tool for employers.

Collaboration is occurring with partner agencies (i.e. Arkansas Rehabilitation) in promoting the CRC. Partner agencies are referring their customers to the AWC to take the CRC because they see it as a positive for their clients and for their own programs.

Challenges

There is a perception among staff that marketing to employers has to be done by staff separately for their specific program services because of the differences in program policies (i.e. WIA Work Experience can be paid, in TEA it cannot). This is one indication that when out in the employer community, AWC staff are not marketing the AWC, but are instead marketing their own programmatic services.

Without a dedicated, strategic approach to business services, employment opportunities may be missed. There may also be a duplication of effort in job development activities since many staff are involved and no one is coordinating their activities. There is also the potential to be over contacting employers because of the lack of coordination.

There appears to be some confusion between DWS and WIA staff in the business services area. For example, depending on which staff you ask, different staff are named as the coordinators of job fairs.

In Forrest City, TEA case managers can register customers in AJL, look up leads, and make referrals. In West Memphis, it was reported that TEA case managers don't have access to AJL. All AWC staff need to maximize this common data base of customer and employer information.



Recommendations

- Re-start the conversation regarding cost allocation for staff in the Centers. The example of creating a Business Services team by sharing financial resources across programs could be a promising practice to better meet employer needs and increase the exposure of the AWC and its services.
- Identify a coordinator for Business Services outreach. Identify and clarify roles and responsibilities of each person doing outreach. Use AJL to track employer contacts to ensure there is no over contacting of employers.
- Create materials for the staff that are contacting employers that market the AWC and its services as a whole, rather than marketing programmatic services. Include testimonials from satisfied employers as a way of demonstrating the tangible benefits employers are currently receiving from the AWC.
- Clarify how, and by whom, AJL is to be used. Ensure that all staff are trained in the proper use of all features of AJL. Explore the current process of putting job leads into AJL and emailing them to staff to ensure this is not a duplication of effort.

Facilities, Resource Rooms, Customer Flow

Findings

In both locations certain themes were evident when asked about Center strengths. They included: staff work well together and overall want to serve the customer to the best of their ability, and having multiple services available in one location (which allows them to make “walking referrals”).

In both locations there is a private area for customers to take assessments, including Key Train. This is a big advantage as opposed to taking assessments in the Resource Rooms which can be noisy and distracting when busy. Both centers indicated that they had enough computers (or had them ordered in West Memphis) to meet customer needs.

In Forrest City, specific strengths cited were: the ability to administer the TABE test onsite, and the open layout with the Resource Room in the center of the facility which makes it easier to see if customers need assistance or are waiting for long periods of time. Staff reported that this Center has a “good feel” to it.

In West Memphis, being on the college campus with the range of adult education services is a huge strength. In addition, being able to administer the complete CRC in one location is a great benefit for customers. Being located on a College campus also helps get away from the UI image that is so hard for people to get out of their heads.

In West Memphis, the Resource Room has an adequate number of computers, the room is always staffed, and the area is clean, comfortable, and easily accessible.

Challenges

In both locations, not having TEA eligibility on site was cited as a weakness, as was a lack of privacy for customer interviews. At the West Memphis location, the lack of privacy (no offices with doors) was the reason cited for Arkansas Rehabilitation not locating at the AWC. Neither location offers expanded hours.

In both locations, as well as other regions, small children were frequently in the office. Due to the integration of TEA services in the Centers, it was more likely that small children would be present. This could detract from the “business” atmosphere the AWCs wants to project.

In West Memphis, the physical layout of the Center is not as conducive to customer interactions as the open design of the Forrest City Center. The Center is split into two wings which unintentionally reinforces the “us and them” concept. In addition, there is a side door that can be used as an entrance to the AWC, literally, no wrong door doesn’t apply to this Center. This has occasionally caused problems because this door, leading

to the adult education “wing” of the Center opens one hour before the AWC front door. Occasionally AWC customers have come in early, but there are not AWC staff available. This has also necessitated staffing another receptionist desk in this “wing” of the Center to direct customers who use this entrance.

Although there is room for expansion at the West Memphis location, some partners (Arkansas Rehabilitation) have expressed concern about customer privacy issues and have chosen not to locate here for that reason. There is also concern about how expensive it is to rent from the College.

Additional challenges in West Memphis include: hours of operation when the college closes, signage that is needed that the College won't approve, and a general lack of understanding by College administrators on what the AWC means and needs to carry out its mission and vision.

In Forrest City, their challenges include: DWS not having anyone to staff the Resource Room, lack of space to add new partners, lack of full time staff for the reception desk, and one small conference room for job fairs.



Recommendations

- Consider the option of onsite child care.
- Provide individual offices to address privacy concerns of both internal AWC partners and to encourage others to locate in the AWC (i.e. Arkansas Rehabilitation).
- Label information in the Resource Room better, without help from staff it is difficult to know where to find things.
- The importance of the Receptionist function cannot be overstated. This is one of the most important positions in the AWC but doesn't specifically show up in Center Certification Criteria. Discussions that include both state and local staff need to occur to explore options for fully funding a dedicated staff for this critical position in the Centers.

West Memphis - Basic Facility Review

Facility Feature	Yes	No
Located on public transportation (n/a if not available) <i>Bus stop across the street</i>	X	
Common Reception Point <i>Sign in log with services to check</i>	X	
Space for group services	X	
Private space for personal discussion <i>Several comments from staff related to lack of confidential/private space</i>		X
Space for itinerant or part-time services <i>Rehab cubes are available since the decision was made not to co-locate</i>	X	
Space to expand to add new partners <i>Yes, however, may be cost prohibitive to rent from college</i>	X	
Clearly posts hours of operation	X	
Expanded hours when warranted <i>College closes</i>		X
Adequate general parking and handicap parking	X	
Visible and prominent external signage <i>Arrows clearly direct customers to the correct building</i>	X	
Clean exterior, free of trash and weeds	X	
Clear and professional internal signage <i>In some areas, college won't let them put up any signage that they don't approve</i>		X
Staff wear name tags <i>All wear center name tags with the exception of College employees</i>		X
Staff use common logo for stationery and cards	X	
Site has been ADA reviewed		
Has adequate computers available for use by general public <i>Never saw all computers being used in the three days during site visit. Nine for UI, five for AJL, twelve more on order.</i>	X	
Restrooms are clean and adequately supplied	X	
Menu of services is displayed <i>Paper/flyer in Adult Education area, didn't see one in resource room/reception area</i>		X
Vision and mission are displayed		X
Information about center performance is displayed or readily accessible		X

West Memphis - Basic Resource Center Review

Resource Center Feature	Yes	No
Resource area is the focal point of the center and draws customers in <i>Yes, adjacent to reception desk, easily accessible</i>	x	
Self-help materials are readily available	x	
Materials are available in alternative formats for the disabled or non-English speaking	x	
Staff are stationed in the resource area and readily available to customers <i>Yes, always someone in the room. TEA case managers are helping out with coverage.</i>	x	
Resources are available for employers as well as job seekers <i>Only on the video, with an explanation of the CRC.</i>		x
Information is available in a wide array of media, including video, audio, books, periodicals, and software <i>Video with programmatic overviews, job orders, Gov. Beebe message re: CRC and certified workforce playing. Audio kind of distracting, problems with buffering. Binder full of websites/employers sorted by type of job. Standing clear pocket stands with job leads.</i>	x	
The area has appropriate signage to guide customers to resources <i>Not really specific to what customers might need/want, would have to look through all of them</i>		x
The area includes capacity for customers to photocopy, print, telephone, fax, and access the internet <i>If there was access to photocopy, telephone, fax, it wasn't visible.</i>	?	
There are materials appropriate for youth to use in career exploration, postsecondary selection, and financial aid assistance <i>Mostly in the Adult Education wing, didn't see anything in the Resource Room</i>		x
Labor market information is easily understandable and accessible <i>On AJL</i>	x	
There are tools for customers to self-assess their skills and develop resumes <i>Career Planning, What color is your Parachute, Industry Research (Cannot Display Error), Career One Stop, Career builder, Monster</i>	x	

Appendix

Appendix A – Common Referral Form



ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS
 Bringing People and Jobs Together.SM

REFERRAL FOR SERVICES FOR CRITTENDEN COUNTY CENTER

Customer Name: _____ Date of referral: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Referring Staff: _____ Referring Staff E-mail: _____

<u>Program/Agency</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Number</u>
Literacy/ESL <i>Helps customers learn to read / English as second language</i>	kifluker@midsouthcc.edu	870-733-6763
Notes: _____		
Adult Education (GED) <i>Assist customers with improving basic skills and earning a GED</i>	kifluker@midsouthcc.edu	870-733-6760
Notes: _____		
Career Pathways <i>Helps parents who qualify obtain training to become self-sufficient</i>	rcoleman@midsouthcc.edu	870-733-6817
Notes: _____		
Adult/DLW/Youth Programs <i>Workforce Investment Act training programs to promote self-sufficiency through training</i>	ori.malone@arkansas.gov	870-735-6730
Notes: _____		
Job Corp <i>Assist 16-24 year olds with education and vocational training</i>	alexander.cynthia@jobcorps.org	870-400-4977
Notes: _____		
Job Service, UI, Vets, TAA <i>Assist customers with job search, unemployment claims, veteran and trade act services</i>	Dejanette.smith@arkansas.gov	870-400-0320
Notes: _____		
WorkKeys/KeyTrain <i>Prepares customers for the Career Readiness Certificate</i>	Dejanette.smith@arkansas.gov	870-400-0320
Notes: _____		
TEA <i>Provides Temporary Employment Assistance to needy families</i>	Dejanette.smith@arkansas.gov	870-400-0320
Notes: _____		
Employment & Training (E&T) <i>Helps clients referred by DHS to gain skills necessary to obtain employment</i>	hworkman@midsouthcc.edu	870-733-6756
Notes: _____		

Appendix B – Long Range Systems

Long Range Systems (LRS) is a company that produces an electronic comment card system. This comment card system is called “The Informant” and is used in restaurants, hospitals, stores, etc.

The technology helps ensure ongoing quality to customers and provides the ability to recognize trends and act on feedback from customers immediately. “The Informant” allows you to survey all customers regarding their visit each time they visit a Workforce Center. The system provides the opportunity to review reports on a daily basis by staff person, by department and by location.

The following excerpt explains how this system is being used in a Workforce Center in Kansas.

How “The Informant” works

There are four (4) different surveys loaded into “The Informant” targeted at various audiences we want to survey. The surveys are:

- 1.) Job Seeker
- 2.) Employer
- 3.) Youth
- 4.) Other (i.e. job fairs, rapid response events, workshops)

Each set of survey questions is unique to the audience being surveyed. Following each visit, please ask your customer to take 2-3 minutes to complete the short survey (approx. 7-8 questions). The survey asks questions related to their visit that day. All responses are anonymous and downloaded via a computer connection.

A picture of “The Informant” is shown below.



For more detailed information about this system, go to: <http://www.pager.net/Long-Range-Systems/ECC-Video.html>

Appendix C – Regional Profile

Regional Profile

Program/Measure	Goal	Actual	Outcome
Workforce Investment Act (WIA)			
Adult entered employment rate			
Adult retention rate			
Adult average earnings			
Dislocated Worker entered employment rate			
Dislocated Worker retention rate			
Dislocated Worker average earnings			
Youth placement in education or employment			
Youth attainment of degree or certificate			
Youth literacy or numeracy gains			
Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA)			
Percentage of participants placed in jobs			
Retention			
Initial wage at placement			
Employment related closures			
Unemployment Insurance (UI)			
Number of applicants for UI			
Employment Security (ES)			
Entered employment rate			
Employment retention rate			
Average earnings			
Number of new job orders entered			
Career Readiness Certification (CRC)			
Number of certificates received	N/A		