1. CONDUCT NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF YOUR ORGANIZATION & COMMUNITY

   A community needs assessment to determine the needs of the IDD population in your community. It is also imperative to determine the workforce needs in your community as well in order to match the needs of the community with the needs of the workforce.

   1. *Who in your community would have information regarding the workforce needs and job availability? Do these include high demand and growth industry sectors?*

   2. *Who might complete a needs assessment of the IDD population on an annual basis?*

   3. *Is it necessary or beneficial for your college to conduct a needs assessment of the IDD population independently?*

   4. *What areas of need should you include in your assessment? (transportation, training needs, mental health services)*

   5. *Where would you distribute the needs assessment and how would you gather and compile the results?*

   6. *Once needs assessments have been obtained, determine what are the most pressing needs to help assure demand for new and existing programs at your college.*

2. BUILD AN IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

   It is crucial to build partnerships with secondary education, postsecondary/higher education, career and technical education, adult education, business and industry, workforce development, economic development, community-based organizations, and other community stakeholders in developing and supporting a career pathways system. All of these partners will be invaluable to your success. However, a strong implementation team on campus, including representation from Senior Leadership.

   1. *Who are key players and stakeholders within your institution?*

   2. *Have you spoken directly with a member or members of the Senior Leadership team to bring them in on the conversation regarding program offerings for the IDD population?*

   3. *Do all members of your college's implementation team share a vision for serving the IDD population?*

   4. *How will the program offerings benefit cross-departmental partners?*

   5. *Do you have representation from the Business & Industry sector, either external or internal representation? (ie. Apprenticeship coordinator, B&I Coordinator, Foundation)*

3. IDENTIFY NEEDS AND BARRIERS FOR YOUR PROGRAM/PATHWAY

   As with any new idea, there will be specific needs and barriers when attempting to implement your plan. Your implementation team and community partners can help identify both as you put the pieces together to offer a program to the IDD population at your school. There will be bumps in the road! But with a strong team, you will have a very strong program.

   1. *Where will classes physically be located? What times will classes be offered?*

   2. *How will programs be funded?*

   3. *What are the programmatic requirements of your funding sources?*

   4. *What tuition and fees will be the responsibility of the student?*

   5. *Are waivers possible?*

   6. *Transportation?*

   7. *What federal and state regulations apply?*

4. MARKET/EDUCATE ORGANIZATION & COMMUNITY

A good marketing plan ensures viability and sustainability of your program. If you develop a completely new program or change your existing program dramatically, your marketing will include educating and/or re-educating the community and target population about what your program has to offer and how it will benefit students. Remember to update your marketing tools and plan as the landscape of your community and demographics change, as well as when any changes are made to your program.

1. *What are good locations for marketing your program?*

2. *Does your program and/or college have a strong social media presence?*

3. *Identify special events where your target demographic might gather (bowling leagues, Special Olympics, JOY Prom, etc).*

4. *What agencies and other entities in your community work with families of IDD individuals?*

5. *What media outlets (other than social media) are available in your community?*

6. *Would it be possible to host focus groups at area churches, support groups, schools, or other locations?*

5. BUILD AND NURTURE PARTNERSHIPS

Once you have all stakeholders on board with planning, whether as a member of the implementation team or as a community support, it is imperative to continue to build and nurture those partnerships. Open communication is key to nurturing any partnership. Keep your stakeholders in the loop. Ask questions and be available to answer questions.

1. *Do you have contacts in your local school systems and are they aware of your program and planning? How can you get them involved and keep them involved?*

2. *Do you have consistent contact with your community partners? Should you consider a quarterly meeting?*

3. *How are employers regularly engaged?*

4. *Have local employers identified which credentials they value for occupations?*

5. *How are you partnering with your HRD and Workforce Development/Business and Industry colleagues on campus?*

6. *Are all partnerships mutually beneficial?*

6. INTEGRATE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

   IDD students have unique needs and abilities. Many of them require assistance to ensure their success in an academic and vocational training environment. Reasonable accommodations must be defined and provided to students attending your program. Many times, this includes assistive technology.

   1. *Include your college Disabilities Counselor in discussions regarding your program. What assistive technology is currently available at your college?*

   2. *What kinds of assistive technology would best meet the needs of your students?*

   3. *What funding is available to purchase additional assistive technology, if needed?*

   4. *Would professional development and/or demonstrations regarding specific assistive technologies benefit the students, families, and staff in your program?*

   5. *Review the Assistive Technology Resource page in this packet.*

7. CONDUCT REGULAR PROGRAM EVALUATION

Consistent program evaluation is key to ensuring continuous program improvement. Measuring performance outcomes will allow you the opportunity to decide which elements of your program work best, and which elements need adjusting to better meet the needs of the students and the community. It is also important to recognize the successes of the students in your program. This is not only a measurement of the overall success of the program, but an opportunity to continue marketing and educating the community about the benefits of the program.

1. *What tools will you utilize to evaluate your program?*

2. *What tools are you already using to evaluate the outcomes of your program?*

3. *What program successes have you had previously that you can continue to build upon?*

4. *What is your plan to recognize success?*

5. *How will you share your successes internally and externally?*

6. *How often will you evaluate your program for successes and the need for improvement?*

7. *Who will evaluate your program? Will it be self-evaluation only?*

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