

Promising Practices and Innovations



Handouts offer clear and concise information of trending policies, practices, and innovations for Apprenticeship Building American (ABA) grantees to consider, explore, and utilize. The trends and innovations listed below draw from the expertise of ABA Technical Assistance Coaches, research, and grey literature (see references below).



Overview

The purpose of this ABA Promising Practices and Innovations is to offer ABA grantees either a practice or innovation that can be used to support grantee goals, including increasing the number of pre-apprentices and apprentices and to diversify the industries using Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs). The information provided in this document is a summary of best practices utilized by ABA grantee Reset to Success.



Utilize A Hub-And-Spoke Model

Reset to Success has successfully leveraged existing business development entities to expand their employer network. One of their strongest supporters is the local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity ACT (WIOA) board. They utilize this network to connect them with employers in their region who may be in need of their services. In particular, the WIOA board has helped them identify healthcare facilities with critical vacancies. Reset to Success has created successful partnerships with these organizations and is actively working to fill their job openings through their apprenticeship program. Reset credits their local WIOA board with helping them to connect the dots to key employers across the region.

While they depend on their WIOA board to help connect them with employers, they also take a proactive approach to expanding their network. They meet with other workforce development boards regularly and attend regional convenings to learn more about business needs locally and across the state. Sitting at the table with these groups has helped them develop interworking relationships with key businesses.



Leverage Contacts From Previous Roles

Reset leadership utilizes their connections from previous roles to raise awareness about their apprenticeship program. For example, Dr. Sulbrena Day was the former COO at a hospital in her region. As part of the C-suite system, she had access to large community networking groups and hospital associations. She successfully leveraged these previous partnerships to give the Reset apprenticeship program a jumpstart. Her colleagues were already aware of her exacting standards, which gave credibility to Reset's program.



Cast A Wide Net

To target employers who are not already included in their workforce development networks, Reset sends literature to healthcare organizations at least every three months to describe and promote the program. They then conduct follow-up communication to remind them of the services they can provide.

Although Reset has had remarkable success in their networking efforts, they still have many opportunities to expand. Reset's partners have described them as "the best kept secret" because their candidates tend to be noticeably more prepared, yet their program is not as widely known as they would expect. Although they appreciate their reputation among their existing employer partners, they recognize that they still have work to do and are treating it as an ongoing opportunity. To address this, Reset to Success recently began a marketing campaign to raise community awareness. They are working with their marketing team to reach both potential employer partners and participants through Twitter, Facebook, and the web. They are also considering other promotional activities, including broadcasting on local television.



Provide References and Information About Program Outcomes

After Reset to Success learns about businesses in need of their services, they hold an introductory meeting to discuss what they do and the types of services they can provide to that employer.

First, they spend time explaining the apprenticeship model. Apprenticeships are still fairly new in many career sectors, including healthcare, and employers are often unaware of the benefits.

Understandably, employers are interested in the employment outcomes of Reset to Success's trainees. They have tracked their trainees' progress and are able to prove their value in a few separate ways:

They provide references from other business partners. Other employer partners are willing and able to validate Reset to Success's outcomes when other businesses contact them. Existing employer partners consistently report that their employees tend to be well trained and more professional.

Most employers are extremely interested in retention rates, and they typically prefer to hire employees who will stay for at least a year. Reset understands this and explains to their employees that they are being trained for long-term positions with career trajectories and growth potential. Reset instills a growth mindset while working with their trainees, and they aim to encourage employees to stay in their positions to build their careers. The prospect of a long-term, loyal employee who is professionally trained is a strong selling point for employers, and the low rates of employee turnover provide a good case for return on investment.

The county workforce development board also validates their successful outcomes. Because of their extensive networking activities, the value of Reset to Success's program is well known among board members.



Meet Employer Needs That Fall Outside The Scope of Traditional RTI

Employers are often interested in how Reset to Success's apprenticeship program is different from other training programs available to them. They answer this question by showing how they tailor training programs to employer needs.

At the beginning of the partnership, Reset to Success spends time learning about each employer's pain points and actively targets them. They can tailor case management services for each trainee, which allows their needs to be met without adding extra tasks for the employer.

A recent example is from a healthcare provider that has been struggling with chronic absenteeism and tardiness. The problem had become systemic and was a main reason for employee termination. When Reset to Success staff learned of this need, they began actively coaching their trainees by emphasizing the importance of not missing work and being on time. By taking responsibility for this coaching, Reset has been able to decrease the burden on the employer.

Another employer had noted that many employees do not know how to effectively handle conflict with coworkers or with patients. Because Reset to Success already knew this was a need at the beginning of the training program, they proactively built in training on conflict management. Their trainees had already been coached on this topic, and the issue had already been addressed before they began with that employer.

While engaged in the partnership, Reset to Success keeps the lines of communication open with employers to make sure their needs are consistently addressed. Because it needs to change over time, it is important to make this an ongoing conversation.



Don't Give Up

Some employers can be difficult to engage because they do not understand the value of registered apprenticeships. Most commonly in healthcare, employers need to fill a vacancy immediately and cannot wait for a trainee to complete a program. However, employers who are quick to hire often experience high rates of attrition due to turnover, terminations, advancement, and retirement. Reset continues to engage these employers periodically to remind them that their program can provide well trained employees who are more likely to stay with their employers.

