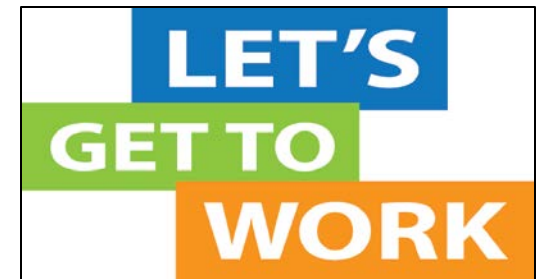


# COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

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# OVERVIEW

- Fundamentals and Core Principles
- Planning a Community Conversation
- LGTW School Experiences with Community Conversations
- Developing your plan
- Resources on LGTW website



## WHAT IS A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION?

- Gathering or Event
- Planned around a Specific Topic
- Variety of Stakeholders
- Share Ideas
- Create Investment
- Next Steps/Actions



# WHY USE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS?

- Engages broader community in discussion and action
- Builds awareness of issues
- Generates new and diverse ideas
- Develops connections
- Grows Commitment (including possible job opportunities)



# CORE PRINCIPLES

1. All communities possess unique opportunities, connections, resources and relationships.
2. Community members are experts in their own communities
3. People who come together will learn something new (resources, viewpoints, ideas, etc.)
4. Locally-feasible ideas produce real change



# LOGISTICS OF THE EVENT

- Usually about 2 hours long (consider the time of day!)
- Held at a community location
- Hospitable and fun atmosphere
- Seating arrangement works for groups of 4-8
- Meal or refreshments/snacks
- Brief presentation and Instructions
- World café format typical



# WORLD CAFÉ METHOD

- Table Setting: paper (can be flip chart, placemats, colored paper), markers, goodies
- Café Etiquette (Handout)
- Small Group Rounds (20 minutes each)
  - Each group gets a question
  - People get up and join new table
  - Same question can be repeated
- Harvest/Wrap-Up Discussion



# THE FACILITATORS

## Event Facilitators

- Introductions
- Reviews Agenda
- Presentation framing the issue
- Introduce questions
- Record reporting back/harvest
- Wrap up and thank you

## Table Facilitators

- Keep discussion focused and on track
- Ask related questions to get conversation started
- Record ideas
- Report back to large group





# MATERIALS AT THE EVENT

- Sign-in/contact information sheet
- Name tags
- Agendas
- Facilitator/school contact business cards
- Resources for employers and families
- Commitment cards and/or fish bowl for business cards of attendees
- Big post-it paper
- Easel
- Markers
- Treats for tables



# GRAFTON HIGH SCHOOL

- Collaboration between school and local service provider
- At School Library in the evening
- Presented LGTW grant, Customized Employment basics, and employer presentation
- Made folder of resources available



# OCONOMOWOC HIGH SCHOOL

- Held at local resort
- Evening
- Lessons learned – held a second one



# HOLMEN HIGH SCHOOL

- Evening event held at high school
- Current employer catered the event
- Students handed out invitations
- 2 New Employers from Event



## KEWAUNEE COUNTY

- Kewaunee, Luxemburg-Casco, Algoma
- Team effort
- Held at Country Club
- Employers
- DVR
- Parents
- Introduction to Community Employment for some
- 1 Job and 2 Work Experiences stemmed from event



# NEW AUBURN HIGH SCHOOL

- 2 over 2 years
- Held at local lodge
- Students, DVR and Adult Service Provider highly involved
- Community energy and support – Everyone's connected!
- Connections made with new employers resulted in work experience opportunities and 1 permanent employment position



## MANITOWOC

- Held at local coffee shop
- Led to several job shadows and 2 jobs
- Facilitated increased collaboration
- Started a trend of students and parents shifting expectations
- Follow-up events





# RHINELANDER

- Held at hotel banquet room
- Employer presented
- Student posters displayed
- Parents and students participated
- Adult service providers engaged
- 2 ongoing work experience locations, seasonal paid work, connection with chamber, 3 businesses willing to do job shadows and short term work experiences





# STOUGHTON HIGH SCHOOL

- Invited employers for lunch
- Held at local restaurant
- Collaborated with Voc-Tech dept.
- Focused on summer employment for students
- Employers shared employment needs & possible job opportunities
- Students brought resumes



# EXAMPLES OF INVITATIONS, AGENDAS, & QUESTIONS

- Oconomowoc
- Grafton
- Holmen
- Kewaunee
- Manitowoc



# STEPS FOR PLANNING

1. Create a Planning Team
2. Decide your focus and who to invite
3. Decide on your venue
4. Develop your invitation, agenda, and questions
5. Disseminate invitations
6. Coordinate event logistics and prepare materials



# INVITING AND ANNOUNCING EVENT

- Fliers
- Post card
- Letters
- Newsletters
- Press releases
- Chambers and business groups
- Parent networks



# TYPICAL TIMELINE

- March – 1<sup>st</sup> planning meeting
- March – secure location
- March – draft invitation and agenda
  
- April – 2<sup>nd</sup> planning meeting
- April – invitations out
- April – finalize questions
- April – logistics and agenda finalized
  
- May – Community Conversation
- May – Post-conversation tasks and follow-up



# AFTER THE EVENT

- Notes typed
- *Big Ideas* disseminated to participants
- Follow-up on specific ideas
- Contacts with people who agreed to complete tasks (*I'd be willing postcards*)
- Contacts with employers who indicated a willingness to host informational interviews/tours/job shadows



# CREATE YOUR PLAN

- 2-3 Ideas for a Target Focus (e.g. – Gaining more Employer Partners, Engaging Parents in Planning for Employment, Building Stronger Connections with Vocational Support and other Adult Service Providers, Etc.)
- 3-4 Draft Questions
- List of potential planning team members
- Outline of Timeline
- 2-3 Ideas for Location



# TABLE QUESTIONS:

- What will we gain from having a Community Conversation?
- What FOCUS makes sense for our school and community?
- What 2-3 questions align with that Focus
- Who can we enlist to help?
- When do we want to have our community conversation?
- Where do we want to have it?





## SHARING IDEAS/WRAP-UP

- What focus do you think your school will choose?
- What did you include in the start of your plan?
- What additional questions do you have about this process?

