

# Managing Stress and Feeling of Isolation Related to Job Development

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**William Sandonato**

Employment Consultant, Florida Association  
of Rehabilitation Facilities

Senior Organizational Development  
Consultant for ServiceSource

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# Quotes

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“I have the best job in the world, I get to help people with barriers to employment find opportunities to be productive and earn a wage. Why do I feel like I am always swimming upstream?”

“Being a job developer is extremely taxing. The pressure is intense and you cannot control the outcomes because success is not only dependent upon your efforts.”

# More Quotes

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“I am someone who has just come out of school and trying to learn how to be a job coach. I need the ABC’s of job coaching! Lots of people in the organization are willing to give me tips, but no one has trained me in the basics. It is like being taught to be a master baker before being taught how to use a measuring cup”

“As an employment specialist, I am expected to help the rehab team, but when it comes to getting any help from the team.... Well, I am on my own”

# 124 responses to job developer survey – key issues

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- 35% say they did not receive adequate training at hire
- 65% felt work is characterized by intense pressure and deadlines
- 31% indicate they do not get appropriate recognition for a job well done
- 30% do not feel valued by the organization
- 19% felt that they do not have a support network they can depend upon
- 20% Indicate there are not ample opportunities for continuing training

# But.....

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97% responded positively to the question:

“I am proud of the work I do”

# The purpose of this webinar is to answer two questions:

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## For the job developer/coach/placement specialist:

- How to I manage stress, get what I need in terms of support and training and not burnout?

## For the manager:

- How do I support my job developers to capitalize on their pride in what they do and have them NOT feel isolated and not burnout?

# What we hear from job developers

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“I started on Monday and spent three days with one of the job developers following him around. After that, I had a caseload of my own and was told to just ask questions if I had any.”

“I felt like I was not only competing with the other job developers from other companies, but also in competition with the job developers who worked for the same organization. There sure wasn't a lot of sharing.”

# Comments ...

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“I asked for more training and was told that I should ‘just think about how used car salesman get customers to buy’ ”

“I think there is a huge disconnect between the mission statement which is all about helping people find jobs and the amount of attention paid to that function”

“after working so hard, not having my client reach a 90 day benchmark is so demoralizing.”



# Feelings of Isolation

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## Defined:

- A lack of care in terms of intervention, supervision and other forms of support for workers  
*Tabaj, Work -Related Stress and Work Satisfaction in Vocational Rehabilitation, Rehab Counseling Bulletin 6/14*
- Workplace isolation is a two dimensional construct that represents individuals' perceptions of isolation from others at work and includes perceived isolation from both colleagues and from the company's support network.  
*Marshall, G. W., Michaels, C. E. and Mulki, J. P. (2007), Workplace Isolation: Exploring the Construct and Its Measurement*

# How job developers perceive isolation

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- Inadequate initial training in job development skills at time of hire
- Limited (or No) opportunities for ongoing training
- Lack of mentors/role clarifiers
- Little or no opportunity for external networking (other job developers)

*(particularly resonant in organizations where employment is not the primary focus!)*

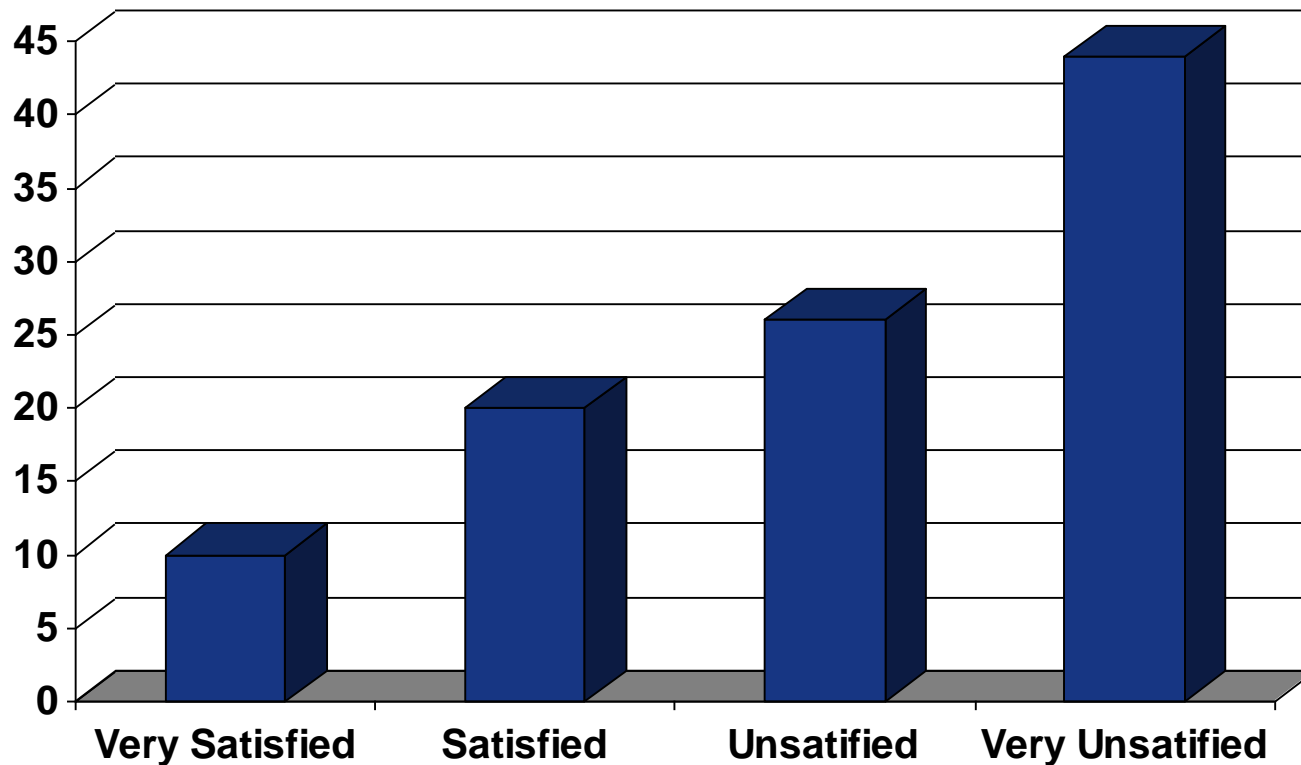
# Yep I'm alone



# Satisfaction with leadership-climate and voluntary quitting

Turn over after one year

Semmer, N., Baillod, J., Stadler, R. & Gail, K. (1996)



# Isolation

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“The counselor must realize that it is not possible to solve everyone’s problems, and that the counselor cannot solve any problem without the help of clients, coworkers, supervisors and other professionals. Isolation creates a “sure-fire” atmosphere for burnout”

Emener quoted in : Preventing Rehabilitation Burnout By  
Balancing the Caseload; Horn, 1989

# Isolation

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“Poor working relationships amongst co-workers in an organization impacts a person’s psychological well-being. Co-worker support significantly increases the respondent’s sense of personal accomplishment while supervisory support reduced emotional exhaustion”

Lee and Akhtar( 2007) as quoted in International Encyclopedia of rehabilitation

# Anton Pavlovich Chekov Quote

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“Isolation in creative work is an onerous thing. Better to have negative criticism than nothing at all”



# Managing Stress

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## Definition:

- Work-related stress is the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope.
- Stress occurs in a wide range of work circumstances but is often made worse when employees feel they have little support from supervisors and colleagues, as well as little control , over work processes.

World Health Organization, 2007



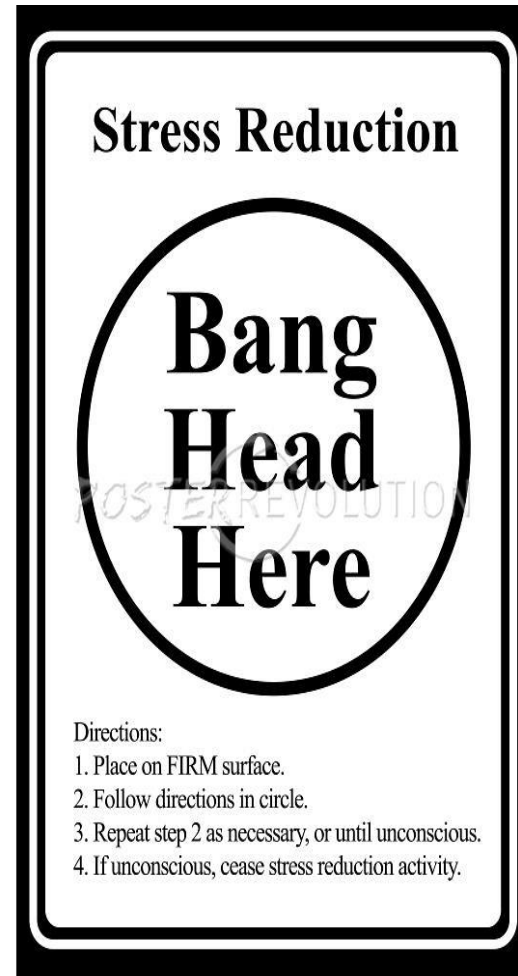
# Stress Reduction

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## Bang Head Here

### Directions:

1. Place on firm surface
2. Follow directions in circle
3. Repeat step 2 as necessary or until unconscious
4. If conscious, cease stress reduction activity



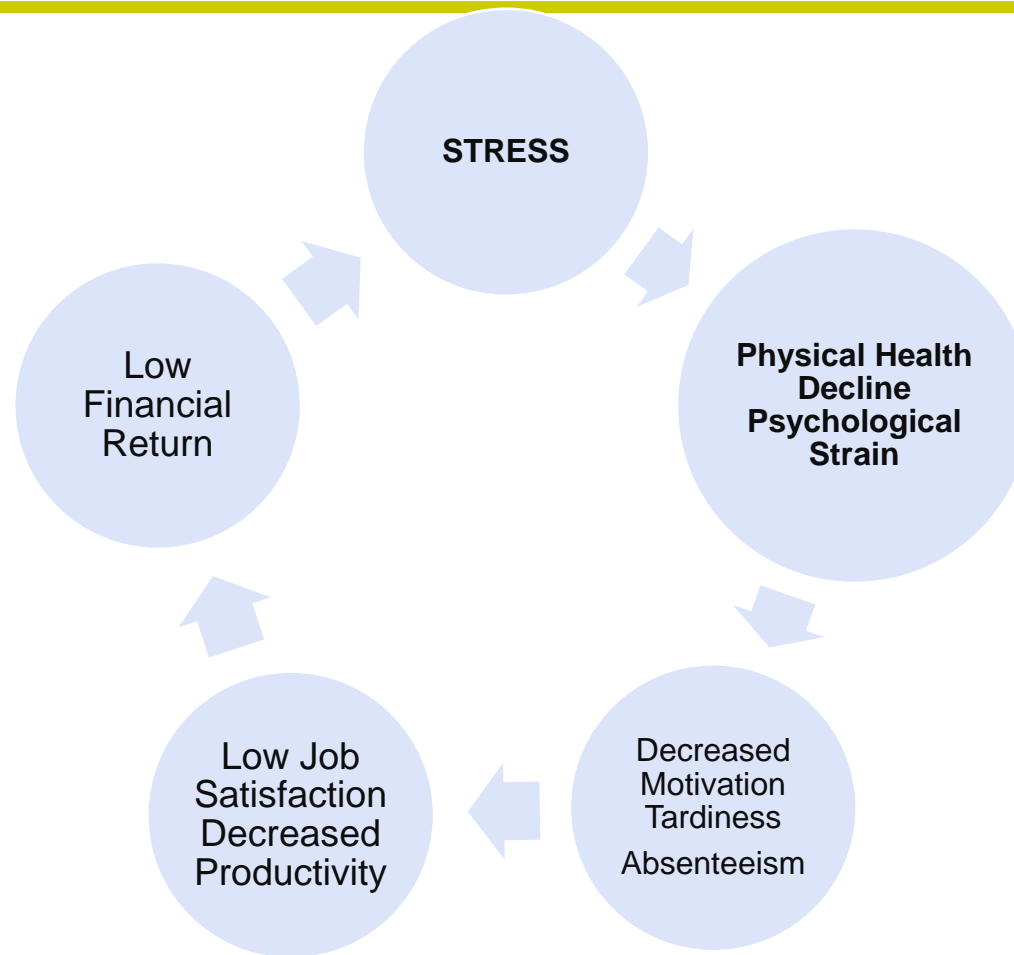
# Quote

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Stress is when you wake up screaming and you realize you haven't fallen asleep yet ~*Author Unknown* ~

# How stress works

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# Workplace stress

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- 65% of workers said that workplace stress had caused difficulties and more than 10 percent described these as having major effects;
- 19% or almost one in five respondents had quit a previous position because of job stress and nearly one in four have been driven to tears because of workplace stress;

Integra Study – The American institute of Stress

# Workplace stress

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- 62% routinely find that they end the day with work-related neck pain, 44% reported stressed-out eyes, 38% complained of hurting hands and 34% reported difficulty in sleeping because they were too stressed-out;
- 12% had called in sick because of job stress;
- Over half said they often spend 12-hour days on work related duties and an equal number frequently skip lunch because of the stress of job demands.

# What stresses job developers?

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## Workload

- Sometimes there's just too much to do. The pressure of deadlines and concerns about the ability to fulfill all responsibilities is a tremendous source of stress in the workplace.

## Too Much Communication

- Keeping up with today's rapid-fire communication is a significant cause of workplace stress. Phone calls, emails, faxes, teleconferences, online message boards, and other communication media can be a constant assault on employee attention.

# What stresses job developers?

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## Too Little Communication

- Of course, the other end of the communication spectrum can easily foster stress in the workplace, too. Employees rely upon their superiors to provide direction, instructions, details, and other pieces of essential information. When such information isn't being relayed properly, employees are often left frustrated and uncertain.

# What stresses job developers?

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- **Lack of training**
- **Unclear expectations**

“ it is critical that job duties be identified clearly and specifically. Job descriptions and orientation programs should be utilized at the beginning of employment. They should be reviewed and updated regularly. Regular team meetings may also help clarify role conflicts and role ambiguity.”

Lee and Akhtar, 2007 International encyclopedia of rehabilitation.



# What Stresses job developers?

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## Lack of Appreciation

- Everyone requires feedback. This includes affirmation and constructive criticism. However, when positive feedback for jobs well done is never forthcoming, it leads to concerns about whether work is good enough, noticed or appreciated. This anxiety can become quite stressful over time.

# Employee Recognition Program



Employee Recognition Program

# Consequences of Stress

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## Burnout

When chronic stress leads to feeling of negativity and ultimately result in the loss of motivation and interest in work

## Compassion Fatigue

When the “cost of caring” for others who face substantial barriers to improve their very difficult life circumstances profoundly affect the care giver.

# Fred Rogers Quote

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“In times of stress, the best thing we can do for each other is to listen with our ears and our hearts and to be assured that our questions are just as important as our answers.”



# Managing stress and isolation

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## Two perspectives

# The purpose of this webinar is to answer two questions:

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## **For the job developer/coach/placement specialist:**

- How do I manage stress, get what I need in terms of support and training and not burnout?

## **For the manager:**

- How do I support my job developers to capitalize on their pride in what they do and have them NOT feel isolated and not burnout?

# For the job developer ...

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- Define and delineate your responsibilities
- Be proactive in suggesting avenues for support and training
- Find opportunities to network with other job developers
- Research evidence based practices

# Job developer ...

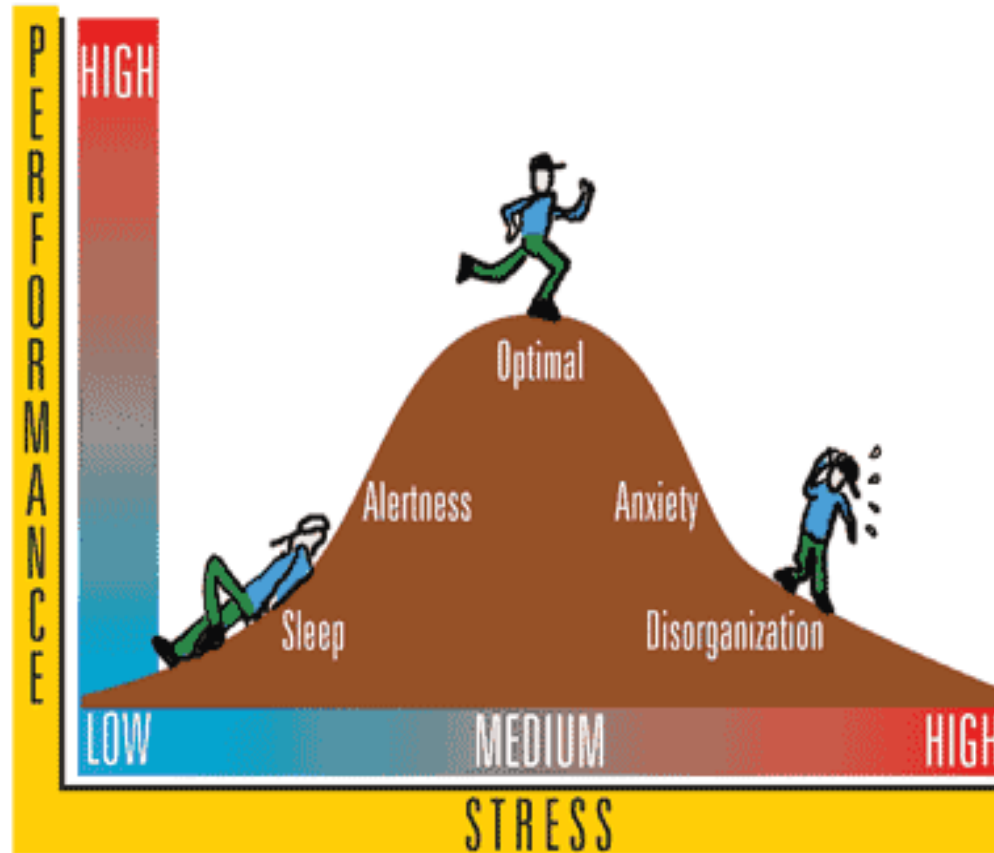
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- Sell yourself and what you do within your entire organization, amongst your social networks, with family and friends
- Take the time to celebrate /renew
- Ask for feedback/ask for help
- Be alert for signs of chronic stress



# Stress/Performance Connection

Stress is not necessarily all bad when it is not chronic



# For the manager...

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- Clearly communicate job roles, functions expectations and requirements
- Ensure that the initial training is topical, timely, and targeted;
- Find opportunities for additional training, continuous learning
- Foster (Create, if necessary) a supportive organizational environment

# For the manager ...

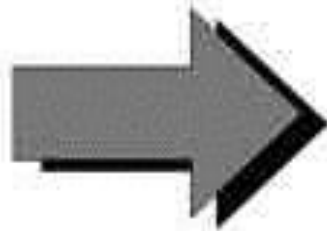
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- Create opportunities to “connect” the job developer
- Give feedback and celebrate
- Allow for renewal and self care
- Learn (Do, Understand) every aspect of the job developer’s job

# Manager

## Key Management Practices

1. Hiring and Welcoming
2. Inspiring
3. Speaking
4. Listening
5. Thanking
6. Developing
7. Caring
8. Celebrating
9. Sharing

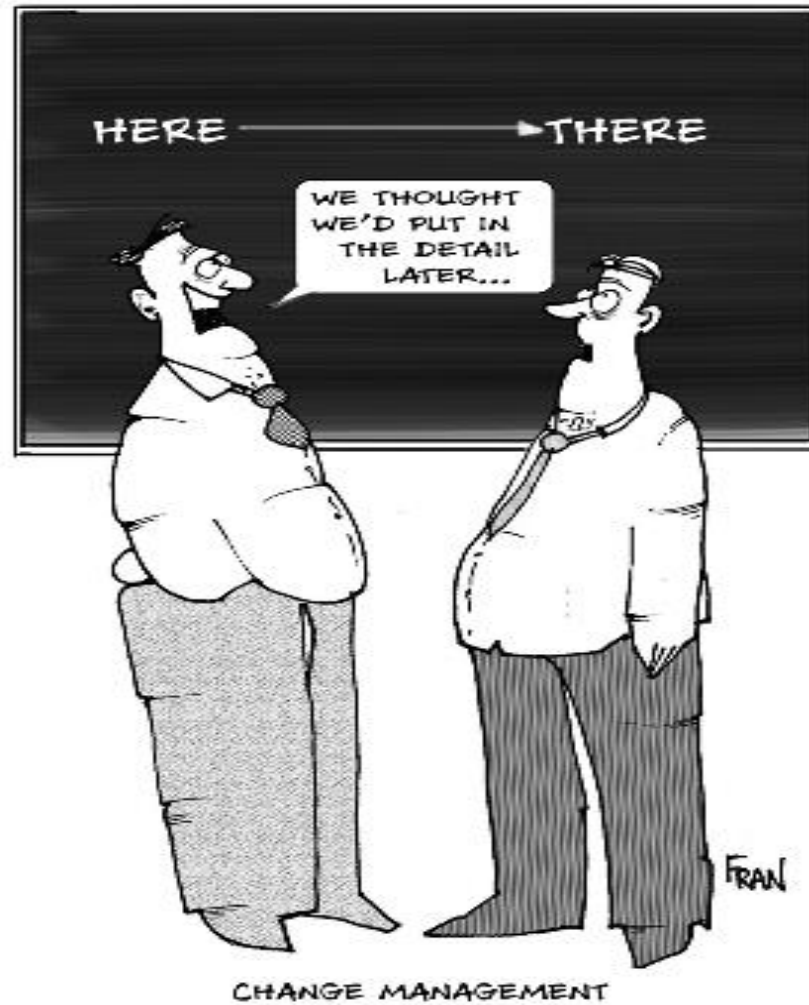


## Resultant Dimensions of a Great Workplace as reported by employees

1. Credibility
2. Respect
3. Fairness
4. Pride
5. Camaraderie

TRUST

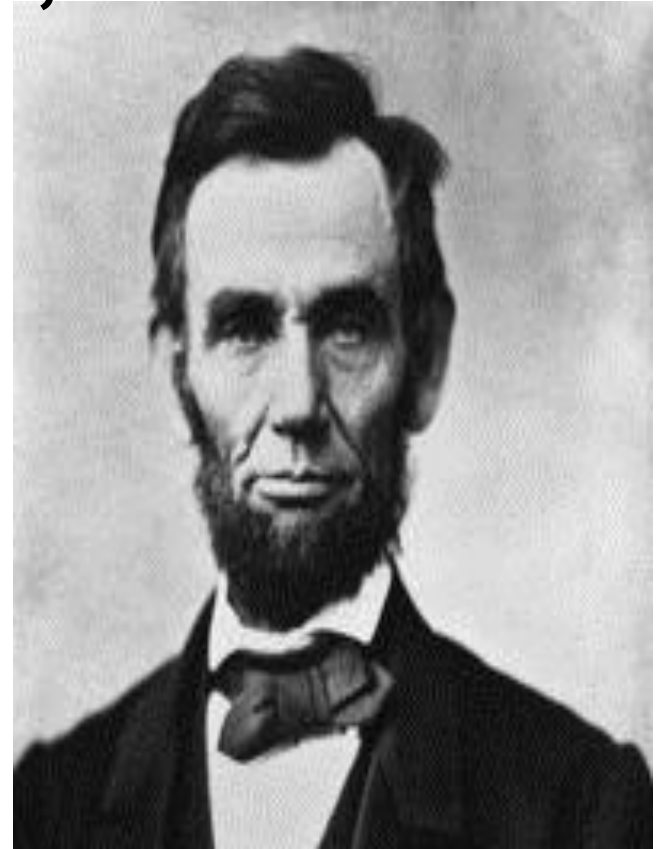
# Here....There



# Abraham Lincoln Quote

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“Whatever you are, be a good one.”



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# THANK YOU!

# For More Information...

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## Bill Sandonato

Employment Consultant, Florida Association of  
Rehabilitation Facilities  
Senior Organizational Development Consultant for  
ServiceSource

**Email:** [wsandonato@floridaaarf.org](mailto:wsandonato@floridaaarf.org)



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# Questions? Comments?

# Job Development Exchange (JDX)

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- Southeast TACE formed a JDX Advisory Committee
- Convened focus groups with job developers in the Southeast

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# Learn more about TACE Job Development Exchange

[www.tacesoutheast.org/network/jdx/](http://www.tacesoutheast.org/network/jdx/)

# Education Credits

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## CRCC Credit (1.5)

**By September 8<sup>th</sup> participants must score 80% or better on a online Post Test and submit an online CRCC Request Form via the MyTACE Portal.**

**My TACE Portal: [TACEsoutheast.org/myportal](http://TACEsoutheast.org/myportal)**

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# Southeast TACE Region IV

Toll-free: (866) 518-7750 [voice/tty]

Fax: (404) 541-9002

Web: [TACEsoutheast.org](http://TACEsoutheast.org)

MyTACE Portal: [TACEsoutheast.org/myportal](http://TACEsoutheast.org/myportal)

Email: [tacesoutheast@law.syr.edu](mailto:tacesoutheast@law.syr.edu)

# Disclaimer

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