

PROJECT REACH OUT



Building Effective Partnerships
between the Public Workforce System and
Faith-based and Community Organizations

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INTRODUCTION

Partnering - for - Success



Each day, thousands of job seekers visit local One-Stop Career Centers (One-Stops) across the United States to search for employment that offers a decent wage and some potential for advancement. Even for skilled One-Stop operators, Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), and other intermediaries in the public workforce system,¹ connecting the jobless to gainful employment can sometimes feel like a Herculean task.

The reality is that not all job seekers are actually job-ready when they show up seeking assistance. Some need social supports such as childcare, substance abuse counseling, or housing assistance. Others are held back by their lack of a high school diploma or GED; immigrants with limited English language proficiency also face significant barriers to employment. Other job seekers are not aware of the services that the One-Stop Career Center offers and may never seek out assistance from the system.

Despite the essential service offering of the One-Stop system, these centers cannot directly address every challenge and need of One-Stop customers. By contrast, faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) often

have the capacity to work with clients holistically to address these barriers. FBCOs have a long-standing track record of providing ongoing, individualized interventions that can help some of the most challenged job seekers to compete for jobs and maintain long-term employment. FBCOs are equipped with organizational assets that can enhance workforce development goals. The supports that many FBCOs offer—personalized counseling, childcare, housing, GED and ESL instruction—are the types of services that lead to job readiness for hard-to-serve clients.

Many FBCOs are also equipped with cultural competency and community trust—they are integrated into the very fabric of their neighborhoods and have on-the-ground knowledge of the

¹ Congress passed the Workforce Investment Act in 1998, which organizes the nation's public workforce system. The business-led State and local Workforce Investment Boards oversee and design the local workforce system, where services are delivered at One-Stop Career Centers. Post-secondary educational institutions, local Employment Service offices, FBCOs, private for-profit entities, and government agencies may be designated as the One-Stop Career Center operators.

FBCOs include religious and secular nonprofit organizations that provide social services. They identify themselves with various community initiatives and/or religious or secular traditions or philosophies. FBCOs vary greatly in size and resources—some are large, multi-service organizations while others are small, grassroots organizations operating mainly through in-kind support from volunteers.

2 Non-financial partnerships include the One-Stop providing space for FBCOs, training FBCO to offer 'Core self-directed job search' at the FBCO site, FBCOs providing transportation to the One-Stop or receiving referrals from One-Stop for supportive services, etc.

needs and strengths of their constituents. What's more, they often have knowledge about local employers and the neighborhood marketplace, and can connect clients to community and small business opportunities that may otherwise be off the radar of a more centralized One-Stop. Moreover, FBCOs have deep connections to special populations that often do not seek services from the public workforce system, such as ex-offenders and immigrants.

By harnessing each other's strengths, One-Stop Career Centers and **FBCOs** constitute a powerful team. One-Stops are the go-to resource for employers and have their fingers on the pulse of the latest workforce trends, training needs and opportunities. For example, the supermarket giant Whole Foods sought assistance from the One-Stop system to staff a new flagship store in downtown New York City. The local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) agency invited the Upper Manhattan Workforce Career Center (UM WFICC), one of five One-Stop Career Centers in New York City, to help meet Whole Foods' need for qualified workers. UM WFICC partnered with FBCOs to build a qualified pool of recruits. This collaboration leveraged the strengths of both entities; the One-Stop cultivated a large employer relationship and centrally managed the assessment process for a high volume of job seekers, while the FBCOs conducted local outreach in their communities and preliminary assessments of candidates.

Given their unique assets, how can FBCOs and One-Stop Career Centers work together to complement each other's strengths in an effective, systemic way? This is one of the primary questions that this how-to guide will answer, step by step.

Since 2001, the Department of Labor (DOL)'s Employment and Training Administration, in collaboration with DOL's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, has invested in numerous pilot programs to increase active and committed partnerships between the Workforce system and FBCOs, and to utilize the strengths of FBCOs to serve One-Stop customers. Many of the pilot models that emerged emphasized non-financial partnerships² and relationship-building rather than contracting. According to a DOL survey of state and local WIBs, when FBCOs do participate as contractors, it is generally to deliver youth development and employment programs—not job readiness and placement supports for adults. Additionally, few WIBs and One-Stops actually track the results of their FBCO partners in relationship to WIA outcomes, particularly in non-financial partnerships.

DOL's work with Seedco, a national community development intermediary headquartered in New York City, is an exception to this general finding. In 1998, with startup financial support from the New York Community Trust and DOL, Seedco established a formal network of FBCOs that provide comprehensive employment services to adult job seekers in NYC. The network now includes 53 FBCOs (both financial and non-financial partners) that collectively provide workforce services to thousands of job seekers with severe employment and retention barriers under WIA and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) workforce development systems, (including One-Stop customers at the UM WFICC). In 2005, based on Seedco's success in running this unique FBCO network model in NYC, DOL invited Seedco to carry out a national initiative called

Who Should Read This Report and Why?

We wrote this guide with a variety of audiences in mind:



One-Stop Operators are the primary target audience for this guide, given the instrumental role they must play in developing FBCO networks. Operators will learn about the concrete benefits of partnering with FBCOs using a formalized network approach and some of the challenges that may arise. We hope that this guide inspires One-Stop operators to create their own FBCO networks and offers helpful tools to get started. The guide is designed to help operators assess their current ability to engage in FBCO partnerships, outlining lessons learned from the experiences of Seedco and WIBs nationally.



Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) will gain insight into the buy-in needed from One-Stop operators and front-line staff in order to develop a successful FBCO partnership. Additionally, the Guide will discuss how the structure of WIB/One-Stop contracts can inform and incentivize FBCO partnerships.



Faith-based and Community Organizations (FBCOs) will learn more about the workforce system and how they can partner with WIBs, One-Stops, and other workforce organizations to provide wraparound support services to the hardest-to-serve job seekers.



Policymakers and Funders will learn about the strengths of an FBCO network-based approach to delivering workforce services. They will also learn how strategic investments can supplement One-Stop service offerings and foster robust FBCO-One-Stop partnerships.

Project Reach Out (PRO) to strengthen the capacity of five different WIBs and One-Stop operators across the country to create formal relationships with local FBCOs.

Through PRO, Seedco spent 18 months providing intensive technical assistance (TA) to five WIBs and One-Stop operators, assisting them in developing formal FBCO referral networks that could eventually evolve into financial relationships with proven FBCO providers. Seedco then coached the WIBs and One-Stop operators on the ins and outs of defining project goals, selecting FBCO partners, developing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), providing training and support to FBCOs in delivering workforce support services, and tips on how to measure and track the results of these referral relationships.

Seedco's work with the PRO WIBs underscores a key lesson for WIBs and One-Stops nationally: **establishing relationships with FBCOs requires a long-term commitment** and patience that cannot be underestimated. That said, this **long-term commitment** to leveraging the strengths of FBCOs **has paid off for Seedco as a One-Stop operator in terms of improved WIA outcomes.** Seedco now contracts with 15 FBCOs to place hard-to-serve clients into jobs. The capacity of our FBCO partners and the robust nature of our management infrastructure was nurtured and built over time. Section II closely examines the evolution of our network model and FBCO partner capacity, and highlights some of the key development stages of Seedco's network.

Reflecting the long-term nature of this work and the need for sustained

commitment, the PRO WIBs experienced varying levels of success in both developing and implementing their FBCO networks. Four of the PRO WIBs—Brevard County (Florida), Nashville, Newark (New Jersey), and Northwest Indiana—ultimately developed formal partnerships with FBCOs. Of these, only Indiana, Nashville, and Newark, fully implemented the referral and tracking process and provided ongoing support to their FBCO partners. These varying WIB experiences offer lessons on factors that favored WIB success as well as conditions that hampered the best intentions of the PRO WIBs. These factors are described in detail in Section IV of this Guide. Included in Section III are initial outcomes for the three WIBs that implemented their FBCO partnerships. While their outcomes to date are modest, it is important to note that these results are based on only a few months of operating their referral networks, and as can be expected, the WIBs and One-Stop operators will need time to work with partners to fine-tune their partnerships and referral mechanisms.

Together with DOL, Seedco hopes that this Guide provides greater direction on how WIBs, FBCOs, and One-Stops can adapt the core elements of a successful FBCO network model in their own communities. This Guide provides step-by-step instructions for replicating Seedco's particular FBCO network model; however, we would encourage One-Stop operators and WIBs to pick and choose the elements of the model that are most appealing to them and will best meet the needs of their One-Stop customers.

How to Use This Guide

This guide provides a step-by-step review of several key questions: What is the secret to the success of Seedco’s FBCO network? How can a One-Stop operator or other intermediary organization partner with a consortium of FBCOs to provide high-quality services to the hardest-to-serve job seekers? What are the “nuts and bolts” of establishing and sustaining a successful FBCO network?

The next section of this Guide provides an in-depth look at Seedco’s experience as a One-Stop operator and FBCO network manager in NYC. We include the basic anatomy of a FBCO Network and then describe how this model was implemented at the UM WF1CC. We have incorporated quotes from stakeholders involved in this process to better illuminate the impact of Seedco’s model. The section unpacks the inner workings of our network model – how a One-Stop operator can leverage FBCO strengths as well as provide technical support to build the capacity of FBCOs to yield better outcomes for One-Stop customers.

Section III gives step-by-step guidance for creating your own FBCO network. This section includes snapshots of the PRO WIBs to provide insight into their success, challenges, and outcomes. Quotes from the WIBs and their One-Stop operators provide their perspective on PRO and the partnership development process. Throughout Section III, the Guide offers tools and templates for selecting partners and managing your network.

Section IV highlights the conditions that contribute to a successful partnership and factors that could hamper efforts to develop an FBCO network.



Seedco's FBCO *network model* EXPLAINED

Seedco, as a large and sophisticated organization, can help these FBCOs both manage data, learn how to be more efficient managers as well as make connections to both city government and the business community. This has been a very effective way of matching services to low income people.

Pat Jenny

New York Community Trust

Seedco's FBCO network was inspired by an unsettling public policy and funding trend that emerged in the late 1990s. New York City's newer contracts required large-scale service delivery and outcomes measurement, greatly affecting the ability of smaller FBCOs to compete for these opportunities. Smaller FBCOs lacked the capacity to service thousands of clients citywide. In addition, in a new climate where payment was contingent upon performance, FBCOs could not afford to take the risk of providing a service first and then getting paid later—or not getting paid at all. Seedco was approached by three NYC FBCOs that felt they could contribute enormously to job seekers and to the public workforce system. With the support of pioneering investors, including the New York Community Trust, and encouragement from these three FBCOs, Seedco decided to embark on an experiment: could what these grassroots organizations lacked in scale and infrastructure be counterbalanced by a “strength in numbers approach” with FBCOs teaming up to form a network of providers and Seedco functioning as an intermediary hub?

History of Seedco's FBCO Partnership Model



1998	2000	2004	2005	2007	2008
Seedco launches Network model in NYC with 3 FBCOs	Seedco receives DOL Promising Practices award; grows Network	Seedco begins operating UM WFICC	Seedco begins performance-based contracting with Tier 1 WFICC partners	Seedco receives \$116 million contract to replicate model in Memphis	Network on pace to place 8,000 clients

Anatomy of a Successful FBCO Partnership Model

Our model positions each partner to leverage its core capabilities. FBCOs provide direct services to low-income, high-need clients at the local level. Seedco, as the operating intermediary, provides hands-on management services and a shared operating infrastructure. So while Seedco performs the heavy lifting of marketing the network, sourcing new funding, procuring job orders, and negotiating the contracts, FBCOs can stay on the front lines doing what they do best as direct service providers. Financially, our FBCO network is sustained by a diverse funding pool. Private foundations typically underwrite the network's development and infrastructure costs while government funds support the delivery of direct services.

From the number of organizations that participate, to the substance and structure of the contracts and grants that sustain it, the network is dynamic and adaptable. We've broken the model down into five core elements. Here is an overview of each one:

#1 Shared Risks, Shared Rewards

By design, the model requires all FBCOs and the operating intermediary to have a stake in the network's overall performance. On every level, the work is shared and information is kept transparent. The stakes can be high as payment on public contracts is increasingly tied to performance. In the case of our NYC TANF contract, we pay our FBCO partners 50 percent of the contract's operating expenses under a line item reimbursement structure. As FBCOs achieve their targets, they can draw down the remaining 50 percent of the contract with each documented placement and retention milestone.

On some contracts, Seedco and the FBCO network members can actually earn program income by exceeding performance targets—an additional incentive for FBCO partners to excel.

UM WFICC contracts are somewhat different in that they offer FBCOs the opportunity to receive payment for successfully securing employment for their walk-in clients. These contracts allow Seedco to extend the geographic reach of the UM WFICC, as each FBCO partner can act as a satellite One-Stop. FBCOs find these contracts appealing as well, given that they allow our partners to get paid to provide WIA services to a universal population of neighborhood residents with WIA funds.

“When the city moved to performance-based contracting in all of its welfare programs, it became first a feeding frenzy and then a nightmare. Many nonprofits went under because they couldn't manage delayed cash flow, and those that remained became more competitive with each other because they were all chasing the same dollars. By promoting a collegial approach, [Seedco's FBCO network] has been able to rise above the fray.”

Margaret Moree
 Director of Workforce Development and Training for the New York State DOL

“Without organizations like Seedco, services would be very fragmented. Seedco is able to bring some cohesion, because they are working with a large number of unique FBCOs; the ability to pair the customer with the agency that will provide the best services is something that is a real plus for Seedco and us.”

Linda Williams

Director, Tennessee Department of Human Services

Although Seedco leverages private foundation support to pay for service enhancements at the UM WFICC, our placement contracts with FBCO partners are funded through WIA dollars. We shifted some WIA resources away from the UM WFICC in order to pay the FBCOs to make placements and extend the One-Stop’s geographic reach. From a practical standpoint, this reallocation means less employment counselors at the UM WFICC—but we believe the tradeoff has ultimately improved our WIA performance and citywide reach.

#2 Common Program Model and Tools

Having a network of FBCOs implementing a common program model allows small FBCOs to collectively reach a level of scale comparable to large for-profit and nonprofit providers. We train each FBCO partner to implement the same program components with some variation, based on factors like geography or the needs of a particular population served. Seedco can provide training, TA, and tools (e.g. assessment forms, job readiness training curricula) to the network at large because each partner is more or less executing the same programmatic activities. FBCOs can learn from each other by directly comparing experiences, challenges, and successes.

#3 Centralized Infrastructure

When Seedco first established our FBCO network ten years ago, we committed resources to build staff and IT infrastructure. These front-end investments have paid off in our ability to add new FBCO partners into the mix at a minimal cost and without “reinventing the wheel” by building a new database or tracking system. That said, as the work of the network

has expanded to additional populations and programs, our IT needs have become more sophisticated. Accordingly, we have invested in significant enhancements to our IT system and other infrastructure; however, the cost for these enhancements is spread across all the FBCOs, which makes these expenses manageable from the FBCO perspective.

When Seedco began this work, we had to develop our network infrastructure from the bottom up. WIBs and One-Stop operators bring more existing resources—staff, space, IT systems, capacity to develop and manage contracts, reporting capabilities—and would therefore require less front-end infrastructure investment. For instance, many of the PRO WIBs utilized existing IT systems to track data for the project, tapped existing staff to conduct outreach and train FBCOs, and used established capacity to draft partnership agreements. When Seedco initially began our network, we were not a One-Stop operator, and therefore had to build these capacities with private foundation support.

The centralized services that we offer our FBCO network go beyond day-to-day administration. Seedco writes funding proposals and secures new contracts at the city, state, and federal levels. These services are invaluable to FBCOs that may lack the ability to prepare quality proposals under tight time frames.

#4 Technical Assistance and Training

Our relationships with FBCO network partners are very hands-on. If a partner isn’t meeting its benchmarks, the buck ultimately stops with Seedco; we work with each FBCO partner to devise an action plan for success. For example, if we notice FBCO partners

encountering similar challenges around case management or job development, we convene a group training to help build their capacity. All of our FBCO partners also receive a high level of TA on how to document their activities to comply with the terms of our shared contracts and get paid for milestones they achieve. Seedco also sends our own staff into the field to meet one-on-one with FBCO partners to help problem-solve around site-specific issues. Seedco's Site Associates have responsibility for three or four FBCOs and meet regularly with FBCO staff to review case files, provide support on audits, and share feedback on programmatic activities. We also look to our FBCO partners to inform our understanding of community needs and potential program enhancements.

Seedco believes in using data as a management and decision-making tool. Important lessons emerge from studying performance data over time. Each quarter, we conduct network-wide "SmartStat" sessions where we drill down into the data for a sampling of our FBCO partners. These sessions can help illuminate promising practices or inform changes in FBCOs' daily business operations.

Beyond SmartStat sessions, Seedco makes each partner's results transparent at monthly meetings so that each FBCO shares accountability and the responsibility to succeed. One faltering FBCO threatens the overall health of the network, as outcomes are reported to our funders in aggregate. This dynamic motivates all FBCO partners to pull their weight and excel, fostering a healthy sense of competition. Data transparency also affords an opportunity for peer-to-peer conversations about obstacles, challenges, and strategies for improvement.

Seedco's Accomplishments

Over the last nine years, Seedco's FBCO network in NYC has achieved impressive outcomes, rivaling those of other local for-profit and nonprofit WIA and TANF service providers. The table below highlights our performance in comparison to that of other vendors in NYC at the point of contract close-out for a large-scale, welfare-to-work TANF contract. Our performance with a WIA contract is described in the next section.



- Our FBCO Network in NYC placed 5,700 TANF recipients in jobs. This result exceeded our contractual target of 5,000 job placements.
- Seedco ranked number one in terms of the average wage (\$9.55) of our welfare-to-work participants.
- Out of the nine NYC vendors providing job placement services through TANF contracts, Seedco's network ranked number two in overall job placements as a percent of our contractual targets.
- Our TANF recidivism rate of 17 percent was considerably lower than the citywide average of 21 percent.

#5 Innovation and Experimentation

The FBCO network model provides an optimal platform for experimentation and seeding new ideas. For example, Seedco and the FBCO network are currently implementing two different pilot initiatives that will help job seekers to successfully enter and advance in the labor market. Our fatherhood pilot program is funded by the New York State Office of Temporary Disability Assistance and is designed to target an untapped labor pool - non-custodial fathers, with a particular focus on those with histories of incarceration. This initiative incorporates a variety of innovative social service and financial supports including a special, low-interest loan program for child support arrears (i.e. back-payments owed on child support orders), parenting training and intensive case management to help with substance abuse and anger management issues. A handful of our FBCO network partners provide intensive pre-employment services, job placement, and transitional employment

“There is no point in re-inventing the wheel with respect to how effective services are delivered to communities. Seedco puts us in an environment where all the specialization and all the expertise gained in our work can be shared in a way that is fluid, in a way that is supportive, and in a way that can really help us improve our respective organizations.”

David Garza
Director

Henry Street Settlement, NYC

HRA VENDOR PERFORMANCE REPORT

Employment Services and Placement Contract

Cumulative: December 15, 2002 - October 1, 2006

HRA Performance Indicators	Seedco		Other Vendors
	Cum. Avg.	Rank	Cum. Avg.
Average Wage	\$9.55	1	\$9.16
% Paid retention at 3 months	59%	3	57%
% Paid retention at 6 months	41%	3	35%
Recidivism Rate - 3 months	17%	1	21%
Recidivism Rate - 9 months	36%	3	40%
% Placement Milestones Achieved	142%	2	78%
% Retention Milestones Achieved - Week 13	107%	2	58%

Source: New York City Human Resources Administration Vendor Report

opportunities to participants with significant employment barriers. The UM WFICC concurrently places participants with fewer employment obstacles directly into available jobs. Our Earn/More Career Advancement Pilot targets customers that we previously placed into jobs and re-engages them six months post-placement to help them advance along a career path. The program provides – in collaboration with UM WFICC and three FBCO partners – career education, intensive counseling, hard skills training, and upgrade placement or advancement services.

With nine years to build infrastructure and fine-tune the partnership in NYC, Seedco was given the opportunity to implement the model in a new region. In spring of 2007, Seedco received a \$116 million dollar³

contract from the Tennessee Department of Human Services to create a Memphis-based FBCO network seeded with TANF funding. The beauty of this FBCO network model is that it can be adapted to fit different circumstances. The geographic focus of our network and the specific target populations that we serve can continue to evolve so long as the core elements of the model remain in tact.

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Now that we have had a chance to unpack some of the elements of Seedco's FBCO network model, let's take a closer look at how it works on the ground in a particular setting—the UM WFICC. The following section provides a detailed review of our experience operating the UM WFICC and achieving impressive performance outcomes in partnership with our FBCO network.

³ \$116 million is the maximum amount that Seedco can draw down over multiple years. This award covers FBCO provision of employment and training services as well as grants and stipends to clients for supportive services, including medical and dental services, transportation expenses, clothing assistance, etc.

Seedco's FBCO Network and the UM WFICC: An In-depth Look

In 2004, after being awarded a New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS) contract to run the UM WFICC, Seedco developed subcontracts with our FBCO partners in order to leverage the additional service resources that would be necessary to assist those One-Stop customers facing the most significant employment barriers. The UM WFICC has registered over 30,900 job seekers since 2004. In Seedco's experience, the majority of the UM WFICC's clients are not ready to be referred for employment when they show up at our center. Whether they're in need of assistance with childcare, basic work readiness training, substance abuse counseling, or some other service, the bulk of our client base requires a mix of interventions that the UM WFICC does not have the capacity to deliver due to staff resource limitations. In particular, one of the biggest barriers faced by UM WFICC clients is a criminal background. This is where our FBCO partners serve as vital subcontractors.

Over the last four years, Seedco has experimented with innovative ways of leveraging FBCOs to support the job preparation, placement, and retention goals of the UM WFICC. Formal and informal partnerships with FBCOs help the UM WFICC address three primary needs:

• **Geographic Reach.**

Partnering with FBCOs enables Seedco as a One-Stop operator to fulfill our service mandate of reaching customers throughout all of Manhattan. In a neighborhood-centric environment like NYC, it can be an impediment for clients to travel to a new or unfamiliar part of the city. Seedco relies on its FBCO referral partners to serve customers from neighborhoods less

convenient to the UM WFICC. In some cases, UM WFICC staff is co-located at partner FBCO sites.

• **Hard-to-Serve Populations.**

Different FBCOs have expertise around serving particular client populations such as ex-offenders, immigrants, and those struggling with substance abuse. This expertise is an essential component of the workforce activities of the One-Stop.

• **Wraparound Services.**

Seedco knew that the UM WFICC couldn't provide this level of comprehensive service on its own. FBCO referral partners play a critical role in helping our UM WFICC clients holistically address a variety of complex and interconnected employment barriers.

When we first began to operate the UM WFICC, many neighborhood FBCOs were eager to join the workforce system and serve a broader cross-section of the city's job seekers. Participating in WIA would allow these groups to serve community residents under the Act's universal access mandate, as opposed to TANF recipients and other job seekers that are typically mandated to participate in the FBCOs' workforce services; a partnership would also offer FBCO clients access to UM WFICC services and training opportunities.

Overwhelmed by this demand, we developed a triage plan to determine the capacity of these different groups and how they could best support the UM WFICC's three primary goals. Seedco established a three-tiered model for partnering with FBCOs. Each tier represents a different level of formality in terms of how Seedco engages FBCOs to meet its needs as a One-Stop operator.

“When you need to penetrate into communities deeply and build nonprofit capacity, [the Network model] makes a lot of sense. When you look at capacity and recognize it comes in many varieties . . . the Alliance [the Network model] can be really helpful. Many [FBCOs] out there are not good on administration.”

Scott Zucker

Former Deputy Commissioner
NYC Department of
Small Business Services

Tier One Partners

Tier One is comprised of our 15 core FBCO network partners. We know the capacity and expertise of each organization and in some cases have some of our staff co-located at the FBCO. All of these FBCOs have contracts in place with Seedco—meaning that they receive financial compensation for placing their walk-in clients in jobs. Tier One partners help us with job placements and provide ongoing, individualized case management services for the hardest-to-serve clients, preparing them for potential job placement through the UM WFICC.

Tier Two Partners

FBCOs in this second tier function as referral partners to whom we direct UM WFICC clients for specialized services like GED classes or substance abuse counseling. Once a client accesses specialized services with the FBCO partner, the FBCO refers the client back to the UM WFICC for hard-skills training and placement services. Seedco takes responsibility for tracking the results of these referrals; the tracking and subsequent feedback we provide these Tier Two partners helps build their capacity over time. Our Tier Two pool functions as an incubator for potential Tier One partners.

So how does a Tier Two FBCO graduate to Tier One? Seedco regularly assesses these partners' commitment to improvement and service excellence. We track the results of our Tier Two partners and provide them with feedback about their performance. For example, if a Tier Two FBCO refers clients who are, in fact, not ready for placement, we review our expectations of what a job-ready candidate looks like. Along the way, we provide Tier Twos with training and TA to

build their capacity to provide workforce support services. This open communication allows Seedco to assess a Tier Two FBCO's potential for taking on the greater responsibilities of a Tier One partner.

One example of this process is our work over the last two years with Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC). In early 2006, Seedco approached CPC about the prospect of a mutually beneficial partnership. Seedco was interested in expanding our geographic and cultural reach into Chinatown, CPC's target community. We were aware that Chinese-Americans were not leaving Chinatown to come to the WFICC, but that many needed employment assistance, especially in light of the collapse of the garment industry after September 11th. We were also impressed by CPC's connections to local hotel and other hospitality employers—a growth industry in NYC with prospects for career advancement. CPC was looking to tap into our relationships with larger, well-known employers. The relationship started as a Tier Two partnership with CPC recruiting, screening, and providing wrap-around services to job candidates in their community. The UM WFICC for its part placed qualified candidates referred by CPC into jobs with our larger employer partners. After a little under a year of tracking the impact of this relationship, it was clear that CPC was an effective partner, having been responsible for sourcing 30 of the 200 placements made with Whole Foods Supermarket. Based on this positive experience, CPC was brought on as a Tier One partner, receiving a contract for 65 placements per quarter and funds for two staff to be out-stationed between the UM WFICC and the community. Six months into the Tier One arrangement, with feedback and

technical support from Seedco, CPC is surpassing its target for its quarterly placement contract.

Tier Three Partners

Tier Three FBCOs are a broad group of agencies that collectively offer a variety of wraparound specialty support services or that focus on the needs of a special population such as ex-offenders. Tier Threes do not typically conduct any direct job placement and training. The primary difference between a Tier Three and a Tier Two partner is that Seedco does not conduct any formal outcomes tracking with Tier Three FBCOs. Working with Tier Threes gives us the opportunity to informally gauge the commitment and capacity of FBCOs who could potentially "graduate" to a Tier Two partnership over time.

We've learned from experience that FBCOs are not equally effective as One-stop partners, which is why this tiered process has been useful in helping us to gauge FBCO subcontractor potential. Given the range of needs of the UM WFICC clients and the NYC funding context, Seedco relies on all three tiers in order to fully serve our clients. That said, other One-Stops might be able to satisfy their customers' needs without implementing the full, three-tiered model or by adapting it to best fit their circumstances. For instance, the PRO WIBs went from relying exclusively on Tier Three FBCO partners at the outset of the project to developing more formal Tier Two relationships with a subset of these FBCOs. Some of the WIBs eventually envision financial relationships with the FBCO partners (akin to Tier One), while others feel that non-financial yet formalized relationships will satisfy the One-Stop's needs in the long term.

Outcomes

So what do the numbers tell us about the impact of using an FBCO network to enhance the workforce activities of a One-Stop? The UM WFICC, in concert with our FBCO partners, has placed nearly 9,000 clients in jobs with an average hourly wage of \$10.93. (These results include placements made by FBCO partners through contracts as well as placements facilitated by UM WFICC staff.)⁴

Through FBCO contracts alone, Seedco's partners made over 950 placements as of March 2008. FBCO placement contracts began three years ago and ramped up significantly toward the end of 2006; FBCOs are now making an average of 60 placements per month and we expect this number to continue to increase now that FBCOs have more capacity to independently conduct job training and placement.

Digging deeper, aside from the volume of our job placements, Seedco has also made job quality and retention a focus of our UM WFICC operations—which may at times mean sacrificing the volume of job placements. The good news is that SBS is starting to recognize the importance of job quality, and the agency's new WIA contracts are more focused on retention. These shifts represent welcome developments for Seedco because we have focused on both job quality and retention from the very beginning. For instance, the average wage for our job placements at \$10 an hour is among the highest of all NYC WFICC vendors.

Since 2004, the UM WFICC has steadily increased in its annual job placement yield. This result coincides with the incremental evolution of our FBCO network and tiered FBCO part-

⁴ Performance is discussed in terms of registrations and placements throughout the section, based on the terms of Seedco's contract with SBS. SBS does not utilize the typical WIA benchmarks (e.g. entered employment first quarter after exit); instead, the Agency uses registration and placement milestones to more easily measure the progress of vendors and the One-Stop system in real-time. In the most recent contract year, SBS also began tracking employment second quarter after exit in line with the agency's increasing focus on retention.

Workforce1 Vendor Performance Report

Cumulative: April 1, 2004 through November 1, 2007

One Year Snapshot: November 1, 2006 through November 1, 2007

ONE-STOP CENTER	Registered Job Seekers		Placements		Promotions	
	CUM.	ONE YEAR	CUM.	ONE YEAR	CUM.	ONE YEAR
Bronx	34,128	22,900	6,863	2,579	421	23
Queens	41,914	22,811	8,606	3,591	246	37
Manhattan (Seedco)	30,943	16,150	7,897	2,794	335	107
Staten Island	10,689	4,468	4,012	1,789	153	121
Brooklyn	38,688	15,607	9,462	3,758	274	76
CUNY LaGuardia	12,145	8,910	3,838	2,213	403	248
Cummulative	168,507	90,846	40,678	16,724	1,832	612

SOURCE: DSBS Worksource1

nerships. As we have offered FBCOs greater responsibilities and formalized our relationships with selected partners, more UM WFICC customers are being placed in quality jobs and are keeping these jobs over time.

When we first received our UM WFICC contract, SBS was skeptical about our commitment to formally engage FBCOs as financial service partners. SBS has since realized that One-Stop Centers are under pressure to effectively serve job seekers with significant social service and remedial education needs. Initially, Seedco had to prove

to SBS that paying FBCOs for their job placement work with UM WFICC customers was an operational efficiency; SBS originally felt that FBCOs should instead leverage existing programs and funding sources to do this work.

We ultimately persuaded SBS to allow us to compensate FBCOs for their work with WIA funds and of the value that FBCOs bring to the table. In fact, SBS now encourages other WFICC vendors to work with FBCOs to bring additional job-ready candidates into the WFICC.⁵ However, SBS stops short of encouraging other vendors to contract with FBCOs for these referrals.

⁵ This shift reflects large numbers of job seekers coming into WFICCs that are not job-ready. SBS now encourages vendors to work with FBCOs to bring job-ready candidates into the One-Stop centers in an effort to boost the system's placement and retention rates.

How-To Guide

AND

WIB Snapshots



The following section offers step-by-step guidance on developing and implementing your own FBCO network. Each step draws on lessons from the PRO WIBs and Seedco's experience. Relevant tools and sample partnership documents are included throughout the section. In addition, you can find a full set of partnership tools and templates at www.seedco.org/pro_toolkit. Case studies of the five PRO WIB partnership efforts—including goals, pre-PRO FBCO relationships, partnership activities, and outcomes—are summarized in a chart on the next page.

Step 1

Identify One-Stop goals and examine types of partnerships that will best meet the needs of your WIB or One-Stop.

When planning FBCO partnerships, a WIB or One-Stop Operator should first and foremost consider its own needs. Meeting a specific One-Stop or WIB need should be the engine that drives this process, and the design and execution of the effort should work towards this goal. Specifically, the project should be set up to quantify and track FBCO progress in impacting an identified WIB or One-Stop operator goal or need. Below are examples

of needs identified for FBCO partnerships by the PRO WIBs. (See One-Stop Goals and FBCO Resource Mapping Worksheet on page 19).

- Nashville Career Advancement Center (NCAC) sought out FBCOs that could help meet the WIB's career advancement goals by building a pipeline of working individuals to partake in sector-specific training opportunities. NCAC focused on FBCOs that could provide the basic skills elements (like ESL and GED) required to qualify for NCAC's hard skills training.
- Each week, the relatively small staff at the Seedco-operated UM WFICC

“One of the biggest concerns and needs in our participation in this program is our proximity to the state prison, just 16 miles away from us. Individuals being released are being dropped off at our career center. We knew there was a need and we wanted to do anything that could help the community with these processes, anything helping the individuals coming out of the prisons.”

Lenny Simpson
Snohomish WIB

PRO WIB Case Studies Chart

Context	PRO Goal	Pre-PRO FBCO Relationships	Major PRO Milestones	Outcomes to Date
Center for Workforce Innovations (Valparaiso, IN)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previously rural WIA region expanded to include an urban area; diverse range of service needs and FBCO capacity across region New statewide mandate for functional realignment and redefinition of various WIA and State Agency staff roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop standardized process for customer assessment, FBCO referral and tracking across all 12 WorkOne Centers and all levels of staff Track the impact of this work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longstanding local One-Stop relationships with FBCOs Each One-Stop mandated to have MOU with at least one FBCO Impact of partnerships not tracked and depth of FBCO relationships not uniform across Centers and staff members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed and implemented uniform client assessment and FBCO referral process Leveraged frontline staff with FBCO relationships to educate CWI staff about partnership benefits Trained staff on new procedures and identified new FBCO referral partners in rural and urban areas Implemented outcomes tracking system for referred customers; used a phased approach to keep activities focused and manageable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 101 WorkOne Center referrals to partner FBCOs, resulting in 12 placements Three-month average referral-placement time reflecting the time needed to address client barriers to employment Given this and the fact that many clients were referred in late 2007, expect more referred clients to obtain employment in the coming months Many clients referred to FBCOs for multiple services including: food assistance, legal services, GED and Adult Basic Education services, and housing assistance. Many unlikely to obtain jobs absent FBCO assistance
Career Advancement Center (NCAC) Nashville, TN				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted an urban county in NCAC's jurisdiction WIB leadership change early in the project shifted focus from serving job seekers to career advancement Past partnerships left WIB and One-Stop operators doubting value of FBCO partnerships; FBCO referrals of ineligible and non-job ready clients created administrative burden for One-Stops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop formal FBCO partnerships to improve NCAC capacity to connect low-wage workers to sector-specific training and career ladders Focus on FBCOs with the capacity to serve non-job ready NCAC customers and refer job-ready clients to NCAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIB contracts for youth services Some informal work with larger FBCOs to service adult job seekers; no relationships with smaller FBCOs WIB not positioned to seek formal partnerships with new FBCOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FBCO research and outreach Issued a RFQ to 12 FBCOs Formalized two partnerships through MOUs Implemented a referral and tracking process Offered FBCO partners professional development opportunities and training on NCAC services Required FBCOs to designate a staff liaison to One-Stop to facilitate partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three referrals in two months to NCAC from one FBCO NCAC please with initial result; represents 3% of clients coming into NCAC in this two-month period Two of these clients now actively engaged in WIA intensive services Referrals to increase in the upcoming months NCAC now pursuing an additional FBCO partnership
Newark (NJ)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban Service area with large presence of ex-offenders WIA system recently intergrated with TANF; One-Stop looking for ways to best serve TANF clients Changes in City and WIB/One-Stop leadership External pressure to make placements at the One-Stop late in the project that limited focus on PRO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boost retention rates Provide wraparound services for TANF/GA and ex-offender clients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracts with youth-serving FBCOs and groups to provide literacy education to One-Stop clients Limited FBCO relationships for broader functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researched, assessed, and ultimately selected six FBCO partners Trained partners on process Shared job orders Help monthly network meetings; requested FBCOs send same staff to monthly meeting to ensure continuity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with FBCO partners to provide support services to 49 individuals seeking employment 10 % of clients secured employment by the end of the first referral phase. As many of the referrals took place at the end of the quarter, expect additional placements in the coming months Served a significant number of clients with criminal backgrounds
Workforce Development Board Inc. Brevard (FL)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low unemployment rate Many jobs that require high skill levels going unfilled Scarcity of skilled workers to fill job orders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop relationships with FBCOs in order to offer work experience opportunities to TANF customers Develop strategies to more broadly tap into FBCO service offerings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIB operated Job Links program with 40 FBCOs (funding cuts reduced number to 10) FBCOs served as access points for core One-Stop services Impact not tracked; FBCOs did not provide wraparound services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveyed FBCO community Identified and reached out to seven potential partners Established formal relationships with three FBCOs through MOUs and began referrals on a small scale Did not implement tracking system or provide follow-up support to FBCO partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fell short in terms of tracking referrals and outcomes WIB anecdotally reported referrals between One-Stop and partners, but no confirmed outcome data
Snohomish County Workforce Development Council (WA)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIB Leadership reputation for limited FBCO inclusion in job placement work Four jails in county (one down the street from Everett One-Stop); growing ex-offender client base Recent WIB leadership change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve outcomes and services offered to ex-offenders thru partnerships with FBCOs Repair WIB's community reputation by incorporating FBCOs in serving ex-offenders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relationships and limited dialogue FBCOs perceived no opportunities for collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and outreach to ex-offender serving organizations and other FBCOs willing to serve formerly incarcerated individuals Organized professional development training for FBCOs that serve ex-offenders Follow-up discussions about opportunities for FBCO partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No tracked outcomes Problems securing buy-in from One-Stop operators Abandoned plan to allow FBCOs to co-locate at One-Stop - eliminating a key FBCO incentive Ultimately failed to select formal FBCO partners and implement PRO project

One-Stop Goals and FBCO Resource Mapping Template

Purpose: This worksheet should assist the One-Stop-operator and/or WIB in fleshing out specific goals for the proposed FBCO partnership. The Operator and/or WIB should come away from completing the template with a clear sense of how partnering with FBCOs would address a specific need or challenge that the One-Stop is facing.

Method: Select one or more of the challenges and/or needs listed on the left side of the template. Your selection should correspond to a real issue that your One-Stop is facing and should represent a priority for you and the One-Stop's leadership team. In the second column, be specific about what you feel is contributing to the challenge. For instance, if you have a low third quarter after exit retention rate, think critically about what is causing this trend. For instance, are many of your clients suffering from substance abuse or mental health issues, which prevent them from holding on to their jobs? Next, think about how local FBCOs can help address these specific issues. What community services could help ameliorate these issues and/or help clients weather personal issues while on the job? Finally, in the last column, identify local groups in your community that specifically offer these services.

One-Stop Goals and FBCO Resource Mapping Template

WIB challenge/ area in need of improvement	Factors contributing to challenge	Potential FBCO role	FBCOs in area with capacity <i>List out FBCOs that have this capacity.</i>
Low volume (generally or specific to certain special populations)	Lack of staff to do outreach/ lack of community presence	Outreach to community/current client base Tap into special populations/increase awareness of One Stop services	
	Other?	Other?	
Low entered rate of employment	Clients face barriers to employment/not job-ready	Provide food, clothing, childcare, transportation, housing, mental health & other services Offer intensive soft skills training	
	Other?	Provide ABE, ESL literacy classes, basic computer literacy Other?	
Low 3rd quarter after exit retention rate	Difficulty maintaining contact with clients/documenting retention	Follow-up with employed WIA customers	
	Low-wage employment does not allow clients to make ends meet	Assist clients in accessing work supports, other supportive services; budgeting	
	Client experience difficulty managing work and family responsibilities	Provide intensive case management services/counseling Other?	
Low credentialing rate/entered employment rate for clients enrolled in training	Difficulty maintaining client contact and documenting training/employment status	Follow-up with WIA customers enrolled in training	
	Client experience difficulty managing training and family responsibilities	Provide intensive case management services/counseling	
	Clients drop out of training to find employment	Assist clients in accessing work supports, other supportive services; budgeting Other?	
	Other?		



Available online at www.seedco.org/pro_toolkit

receives over 200 job seekers with a wide variety of job readiness levels and barriers to employment. Seedco therefore relied on the three-tier system (detailed in Section II) to best match client needs to FBCO capacity and maximize partnership effectiveness.

Step 2

Self-assess readiness for developing formal FBCO partnerships

While the proposed FBCO partnership should meet a critical One-Stop or WIB need, satisfying this threshold does not ensure partnership success. One-Stop operators and WIBs should also honestly assess their own readiness according to several criteria: (See the One-Stop Self-Assessment Worksheet on the page 21).

- **Political or funding environment:** A WIB or One-Stop should carefully consider how current political and funding dynamics could hinder—or facilitate—a new initiative. Are there major changes to WIA or other One-Stop funding that could limit staff resources needed to focus on FBCO partnership development and network management? Are there changes happening that could reinforce the value of partnership building? Is a focus on working with FBCOs to serve the neediest customers in line with the overall vision or direction of the One-Stop? Has there been more (or less) attention and funding dedicated to the population (e.g. ex-offenders, at-risk youth) you are looking to target for the FBCO partnership? For example, a State of Indiana realignment of One-Stop staff positions reinforced the Center for Workforce Innovations (CWI)'s PRO goals by re-focusing many staff positions on case management. This change allowed

CWI to more seamlessly incorporate FBCO referrals into case managers' activities. Tennessee's shift in 2007 to a performance-based welfare-to-work contract system offered Seedco the opportunity to replicate our model in Memphis—where we had cultivated FBCO partnerships but previously lacked a sustainable funding source to bring this work to scale.

- **Organizational buy-in and anticipating barriers to sustained commitment.** While it is important for this type of project to have a champion, organization-wide buy-in is key to institutionalizing the work and allowing the project to weather staff and leadership changes. Staff members may feel that the project will complicate and add to the work they already do, so initial discussion about how formalized FBCO partnerships will affect staff roles and positions is essential. Staff at all levels must understand how the FBCO work fits with the organization's broader goals and mission.

- **Assessing available staff resources:** Developing and maintaining a FBCO network requires a time commitment from different levels of One-Stop and WIB staff. WIBs and One-Stop operators sometimes dedicate staff resources for project start-up without accounting for the ongoing staff needed to manage FBCO relationships and track progress; the PRO WIBs were surprised by the time commitment required to nurture the partnerships. Even with the economies of scale in a large FBCO network, each partner will require a level of individual follow-up. Accordingly, some of our PRO WIBs opted to start small, selecting only a handful of partners in order to keep the work manageable. Seedco employs two UM WFICC staff whose primary responsibility is

One-Stop Self-Assessment Worksheet

Purpose: The Self-Assessment should be used by the WIB or One-Stop to determine their own capacity to partner with local FBCOs, sustain funding streams and staffing levels, and establish internal buy-in before cultivating partnerships with FBCOs.

Method: The WIB or One-Stop can take stock of its readiness to engage in partnership development by answering questions related to FBCO relationship history, staff and leadership buy-in, available staff resources, and an assessment of the current make-up of the political and funding environment in which a partnership network will be established. The Worksheet should be completed at the outset of the project to assess whether the One-Stop or WIB should move forward.

Tips for Use: Answer all questions on the assessment frankly. Your answers may reveal that there are several barriers to developing a FBCO partner network. This result in and of itself does not preclude you from developing FBCO partners. However, you should assess these potential stumbling blocks and develop a realistic plan to overcome them before proceeding. Refer back to this document once you are in the partnership development process and have implemented your network. Use it as a reminder to continually look for opportunities to involve all levels of staff in the project and gain their support. Also, check whether you are allocating an adequate level of support and staff resources to your FBCO partners.



Questions to Consider		Notes
Organizational Buy-in		
Is the need that your FBCO partnership will address mission critical? <i>If not, consider re-evaluating the goal to focus on a need that is critical.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Are multiple staff involved in and truly committed to the project? <i>If not, need to develop a plan for multiple levels of staff involvement.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Have you taken steps to involve and gain buy-in from leadership? <i>If yes, specify. If no, develop plan.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Have you taken steps to involve and gain buy-in from front-line staff? <i>If yes, specify. If no, develop plan.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Has your One-Stop or LWIA partnered with FBCOs before? <i>If yes, was it a positive or negative experience? Be prepared to address any concerns leadership or staff may have based on this experience.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Are there any barriers that you foresee in gaining buy-in from front-line staff or leadership? <i>If yes, how will you overcome these barriers?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Evaluate Your Political and Funding Environments		
Has funding recently been cut (or increased) for internal One-Stop staffing? <i>If yes, will this impact staff willingness to partner with FBCOs and track this work?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Has funding recently been cut (or increased) for contractors? <i>If yes, will this impact your ability to partner with FBCOs?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Are there opportunities to seek new funding (private or Federal government) to serve additional One-Stop clients or a specific target population that you will target through your FBCO partnerships? <i>If yes, specify.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Sustained commitment to the FBCO network		
Do you have staff that can devote time to cultivating new partnerships. <i>If yes, how much of a staff person's time per week for how many weeks?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Do you have staff that can train FBCO partners (1-2 days of training) at the start of the project?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Do you have staff that can act as the day-to-day liaison for the FBCO network, fielding questions and holding monthly meetings? <i>If yes, how many hours a week can staff devote to this work?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Do you have staff that collect data on FBCO referrals and match it to One-Stop employment records? <i>If yes, how many hours a month can staff devote to this work?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

“The bottom line is that we do want the residents of Newark and the surrounding communities to improve their quality of life and there are a lot of components that go in to that. We knew we only had a piece of the puzzle that was missing and we knew it was imperative to join with other organizations to make this happen.”

Rose Doctor
Newark WIB

“The question around whether we were originally going to participate should have been taken to the program staff as well.”

Amy Persell
Snohomish WIB

maintaining ongoing communication and providing TA to our network of 53 Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners. You should assess the type of FBCO partnership you need and the ongoing resources required to support (and track) each tier: Will you be able to allocate a half-time person to regularly communicate with and provide feedback to FBCOs on referred clients and available job orders? Are you committed to having a staff person track the progress of referred clients and assess the impact of this work?

Step 3 Research potential partners in your community

In developing a mutual referral relationship, it is important to research which nonprofits might be willing and able to partner with One-Stops. There is a variety of partner research methods that One-Stops/WIBs can employ separately or in combination.

- **Start with online or hard copy directories.** Contact information and brief descriptions of FBCOs can be found in local nonprofit directories that are often compiled by local government agencies or larger local or regional nonprofits. For example, the Newark WIB used online and hard copy directories from United Way and Catholic Charities to identify potential FBCO partners that offered support services and/or served the TANF and ex-offender populations. CWI inventoried all online and hard copy FBCO directories spanning their multi-county service region in order to identify partners.

- **Partner with other intermediaries or umbrella organizations with ties to FBCOs.** When Seedco developed its FBCO network,

we tapped into preexisting community networks developed by umbrella organizations including Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the New York Community Trust. By connecting to these networks, Seedco gained assurance of our new partners' workforce development experience and connections to private funding streams. Regional interfaith councils and chapters of large organizations, like the United Way, Salvation Army, and Catholic Charities, are also good starting points for identifying FBCOs in the area. This method can be more efficient than relying on a directory, as these umbrella organizations may be familiar with affiliated FBCOs and can direct you to potential partners based on capacity, geography, target population, and mission.

- **Conduct “snowball” research by asking nonprofits and other FBCOs to identify their peer organizations.** Groups serving a particular population will be likely to know other FBCOs that also serve this population; for example, the FBCOs in Snohomish County that served ex-offenders were able to refer similar organizations to the WIB. Ask organizations that you contact to recommend a few other organizations to contact—this will expand outreach and ensure that no potential partner candidates are left out.

- **Conduct a survey of FBCOs.** In order to supplement information available from online and hard copy directories, three of the PRO WIBs—Newark, Snohomish, and Brevard—developed and administered FBCO surveys to better understand populations served, services provided, current knowledge of and relationship with the One-Stop, and interest in One-Stop partnership. Since Brevard opted to informally select FBCO partners, the survey allowed

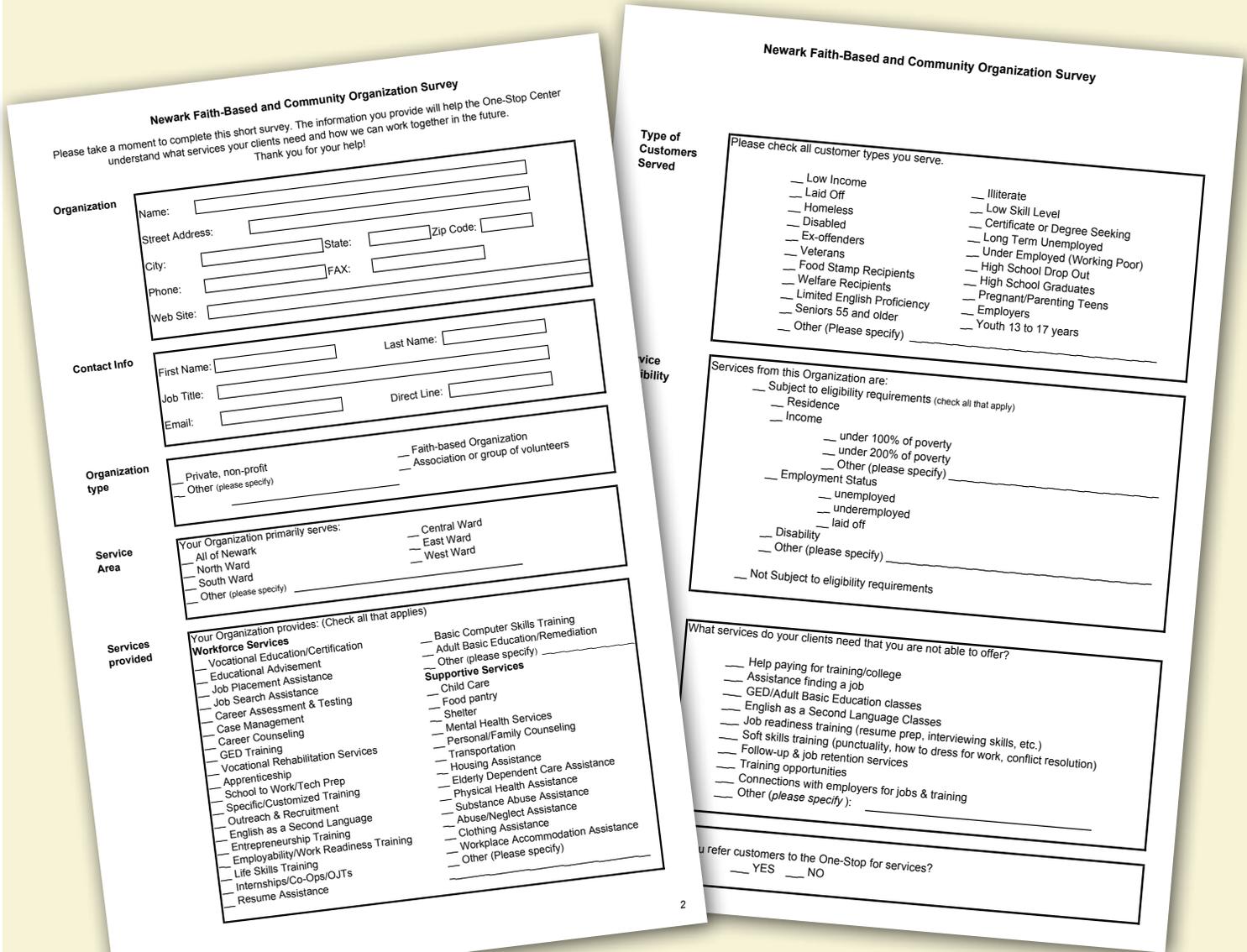
FBCO Sample Survey

Purpose: The FBCO Sample Survey can be easily customized to gather information on local FBCOs in your community. The survey tool is meant to capture broad areas of information on FBCOs, including: populations served, target geographic areas, services provided, current interaction with the One-Stop, contact information, areas where FBCOs want assistance from the One-Stop for their customers, and client eligibility for services.

Method: After identifying the type of services and/or populations that you are looking for FBCO partners to offer/serve, customize this sample survey to best capture information on your local FBCOs. Specify the target population(s), services, and geographic areas that you are looking to target and other relevant information you are seeking to capture.

Tips for Use:

- Customize the survey to capture the level of detail you are seeking. For instance, if you are interested in FBCOs that provide a particular service, ask only about that service rather than asking about all the services the FBCOs offer. For instance, if you want to identify FBCOs that offer intensive job readiness training, add several questions to the survey that relate to this service (e.g. the number of clients served annually, the duration of the training, topics covered, eligibility for training services, locations where training is offered, qualifications of the instructor, etc.).
- Email or mail the survey to a list of local FBCOs, or distribute the survey at community meetings or events. You might also consider partnering with a local umbrella group, such as the United Way, to administer a survey to its membership organizations or listserve.



the WIB to learn more about potential partners and hone in on specific organizations that appeared to be the best partnership candidates based on their criteria. (See sample FBCO Survey on page 23).

• **Include groups that the One-Stop has already worked with formally or informally.** One-Stop staff members can often leverage existing informal FBCO relationships into official partnerships. Tapping into these contacts is an easy way to begin outreach; with an existing level of familiarity and trust between the One-Stop and these FBCOs, it is easier to establish a formal partnership. WIBs and One-Stops may find it helpful to consider organizations that had applied unsuccessfully for previous partnerships, since these groups have already demonstrated interest in partnering and may be better suited for a future contract.

Step 4 **Outreach to** **Potential Partners**

Conducting outreach serves a number of purposes. First, it allows the WIB/One-Stop to share information about its goals and ideas for the partnership. Second, it provides an opportunity for FBCOs to educate WIB/One-Stop operators and each other about their programs, needs, and concerns about the prospect of partnership. FBCO outreach options include:

• **Hold focus groups.** Focus groups are an opportunity for potential partners to share information about their services and learn about the benefits of partnership in a low-key environment. Bringing FBCOs together emphasizes a sense of collective purpose; after all, the ultimate goal of collaboration is to pool resources to better

serve the community. Based on our experiences in New York, it is essential to cultivate true buy-in from all parties involved to ensure that everyone understands the amount of work—and the ultimate reward—that will stem from the partnership. In Newark, Seedco and the WIB invited a representative sample of 40 FBCOs to two focus groups at the One-Stop. The WIB educated FBCO attendees about the One-Stop service offering and customer flow; for many of these organizations, this was their first introduction to the One-Stop system. The meetings also built WIB leaders' knowledge of the FBCO community and the ways different groups could work together to provide comprehensive client services. This familiarity allowed the WIB to tailor its Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and partnership structure to respond to FBCO needs.

• **Host a bidders' conference or introductory meeting.** These meetings provide an opportunity to cover the details of partnership goals, expectations, and benefits, usually tied to a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. This meeting is often more formal than a focus group. Potential partner organizations should leave such a meeting with a clear sense of the project elements and next steps toward partnership. (See FBCO Introductory Letter on the page 25 and Flyer on page 26).

• **Hold individual meetings with FBCOs.** Holding individual meetings with FBCOs can be a good way to narrow down the field of potential partners. Individual concerns and issues can be more clearly understood through one-on-one conversations, and motivated organizations can move quickly towards partnership. Brevard County's WIB opted for individual meetings after identifying po-

I actually thought that most of the time gaps we had were about internal buy in.

Ellen Zinkiewicz
Nashville WIB

FBCO Introductory Letter and Flyer Templates

Purpose: The FBCO letter should be sent with other partnership outreach materials and should highlight the opportunities associated with partnership with the WIB/One Stop. The letter typically accompanies the flyer and RFQ or RFP document.

Method: The letter lists the benefits to the FBCO for the partnership structure, especially highlighting the expanded services that will be available to clients as a result of partnership. Along with the FBCO flyer, the letter invites FBCOs to a potential partner group or individual meeting with the WIB/One Stop Operators. The letter should also outline some of the basic goals of the One-Stop/WIB in partnering and expectations for potential partners. The letter is a formal invitation to the meeting, as opposed to the eye-catching, breezy language of the flyer.

Tips for Use:

- The FBCO letter can vary greatly depending on the preferences of the WIB/One Stop Operators and the main points that ought to be addressed. Think about your local FBCO community, their needs, interests, and target populations, and what your One-Stop/WIB can offer in order to incentivize FBCOs to partner.
- The letter should be short and straightforward, outlining the key points. Too much detail will muddle the message. Remember, the key is to get FBCO leaders to the potential partner meeting.
- The contact at the bottom of the flyer should be prepared to handle multiple inquiries and track RSVPs.



Available online at
www.seedco.org/pro_toolkit

[Date]

[Name]
[Title]
[Address]
[City], [State], [Zip Code]

Dear [Name],

The [WIB Name] invites you to join an innovative workforce development partnership. The [WIB Name] is looking for new faith-based and community organization partners that can provide [insert key services that WIB wants FBCOs to offer One-Stop clients]. In turn, you will have the opportunity to connect your clients to a variety of training and employment services available at the One-Stop Career Center, including:

- Job Search Assistance
- Employment Counseling
- Resume Development
- Interview Techniques
- Labor Market Information
- Career Planning
- Skills Assessment
- GED Prep/Adult Basic Education
- Assistance with Training

The [WIB Name] can also provide your organization with [insert in-kind incentives that WIB will offer FBCO partners (e.g. free space at Center, networking opportunities, support for proposals etc.)]. Joining the network will connect your organization to a network of service providers. By partnering, we can strengthen our collective capacity to respond more comprehensively to our customers' needs. Through collaboration, we can work together to achieve employment outcomes that directly impact our communities.

The first step to partnering is to for us to learn more about the services your organization offers and the needs of your clients. We would like meet with you to get started on this new collaboration! The next meeting opportunity will be [Date and Time] at [insert address].

Please see the attached fact sheet for more information on developing a partnership with the [WIB Name]. If you are interested in meeting with us, please contact me at [insert contact email] or [insert contact phone].

Sincerely,

[Contact Name]
[Contact Title]
[WIB Name]

Flyer (on One-Stop Services) for FBCOs

Purpose: The FBCO flyer should be an eye-catching addition to other outreach materials and should highlight the opportunities associated with a formal partnership. The flyer aims to entice FBCO staff about the possibility of working with the WIB/One Stop. The flyer typically accompanies the FBCO Letter and RFQ or RFP documents.

Method: The flyer lists the opportunities that will be available to the FBCO under the proposed partnership structure, and also includes some of the specific expectations of FBCO partners. The flyer/handout informs potential partners about One-Stop services in an easily digestible format. Thus, the flyer should arouse interest in working more closely with the One-Stop system, teach recipients about services available to FBCO customers, and 'sell' the reader on the merits of collaboration.

Tips for Use: The FBCO flyer can vary considerably depending on the preferences of the WIB/One Stop Operators in terms of content, style, and tone. Issues to consider include: needs of FBCOs that will create a 'winning pitch,' WIB/One Stop needs that selected FBCO partners should be able to meet, and tentative goals for a partnership. Make the flyer more eye-catching by adding your logo or other graphics. This should be the type of document that FBCOs can post in the office for staff to see. The language should be accessible for FBCO front-line staff. The contact listed at the bottom of the letter and flyer should be informed of the preliminary goals of the introduction meeting, prepared to handle multiple inquiries and able to track RSVPs.

Get connected to the workforce system, and become a partner with the [insert WIB/One-Stop Name].
Together, we can meet the needs of our community!

Connect your clients to **jobs, career** advancement and skills **training** at the [insert One-Stop name]. Provide supportive services and [insert other specific services that One-Stop clients need] to Career Center customers.

Why partner with the One-Stop System?

- Connect your clients to **training** and **career advancement** services that will help them move up the career ladder. These services will include job matching, career counseling, employment services (including on-site interviews), skills trainings, post-placement support, labor market information, and education services.
- Help your clients to **access jobs**. The [One-Stop Center] has relationships with hundreds of employers and can match your clients to job orders.
- Learn helpful tips from workforce development professionals, including training on Workforce Investment Act (WIA) eligibility, One-Stop services, and our job-readiness assessment process.
- Receive regular updates from One-Stop staff on the status of clients you refer. Your clients will have special priority with our employment counselors.
- Participate in training and **professional development** opportunities.
- **Join a network** of other faith-based and community organizations, broaden your connections, and collaborate to best serve your clients. Develop an ongoing relationship with the One-Stop and collaborate in new ways as opportunities arise.

What is the Career Center looking for in partners?

- Client referrals from agencies that provide high-quality, social services to job seekers and low-income workers.
- Referral of job-ready clients to the [insert One Stop name] for job-matching, career advancement and training, and tracking of outcomes.
- Attendance at regular Partner Network meetings held by the One-Stop. Input and advice on strategies to improve partnership.

If you are interested in partnering with the One-Stop system, take the next step!
Contact:
[Insert Contact Name and information]



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tential FBCO partners through a broad survey of service providers in the County. After applying a set of criteria to the 67 FBCOs that responded to the WIB's survey, the WIB, with Seedco's assistance, identified seven FBCOs that appeared to be good potential partners, met individually with these organizations, and ultimately signed a MOU with one group.

Step 5

Assess and select potential partners

Clearly, the success of the project hinges on the ability of each partner to meet its partnership obligations. It is crucial, therefore, that partners have the capacity to deliver services that will meet the goals of the program. The following section outlines qualities that potential partners should possess, as well as some steps for selecting the best-suited organizations. (See sample Proposal Scoring Sheet on page 28). Factors to consider in potential partner assessment are:

- **FBCO experience in serving the project's target population and/or geography.** Under PRO, the Newark WIB reached out to several groups with expertise and proven track records in serving the TANF/GA and ex-offender populations. However, the local FBCO community may not always have the expertise sought, and the One-Stop may need to be creative about meeting its needs. The Snohomish County WDC initially intended to select partners with significant experience in serving the ex-offender population; however, few organizations had this level of expertise, so the WIB decided instead to partner with organizations that had less direct experience with ex-offenders but nonetheless offered services that addressed the employment and retention barriers faced by this population. Similarly,

Seedco recognized a specific need to partner with FBCOs that have the capacity to serve homeless One-Stop customers, who typically struggle with underemployment and sporadic employment. Seedco identified Network partners with experience in serving homeless job seekers and developed a plan to work together to meet these clients' specialized needs.

- **FBCO program offering that complements One-Stop services.**

In Newark, many of the FBCOs that responded to the WIB's RFQ offered employment and training services that were similar rather than complementary to the One-Stop's services. As a result, the WIB instead selected FBCO partners that offered social and supportive services that were not provided by the One-Stop (e.g. housing, childcare, mental health services, case management services, etc.). NCAC sought FBCO partners that could provide remedial education and then refer their ESL and GED program graduates to NCAC for hard skills training and career advancement services.

- **FBCO capacity and experience.**

Potential partners must have a solid track record of providing quality services, achieving outcomes, and a minimum capacity to document this work. In order to assess capacity in this area, the FBCO can provide examples of past or current government contracts or foundation grants that required tracking and achievement of specific, quantifiable outcomes (not just tracking of services provided). This will also help the WIB assess the scale of FBCO programs. A FBCO operating at a very small scale, for instance, may not be in a position to accept many referrals from the One-Stop (or refer many clients to it). In some cases, strict eligibility guidelines for FBCO services may hamper a potential One-Stop

Proposal Scoring Sheet

Purpose: This tool provides an opportunity for the WIB/One Stop operators to evaluate FBCO applications for partnership through an RFQ or RFP process. The tool helps evaluators break down the elements of the application to give a comprehensive look at the quality of the application as a whole. The tool also allows a number of evaluators to compare scoring based on an agreed-upon set of criteria, so that specific strengths and weaknesses of each application can be considered.

Method: Before beginning the review process, WIB/One Stop operators should consider the scoring criteria and assign a set maximum number of points for each criterion. When criteria have been determined, application evaluators from the WIB/One Stop should print out multiple copies of the applications and review over the course of a few days. It may be helpful to read through application criteria before reading any applications and to read through all applications before scoring any of them. Each evaluator should score the applications separately, and then discuss the scores and the reasoning behind the scores. Large discrepancies between scores should be noted and discussed, so that all evaluators are clear on their own expectations for the applications, and the reasoning behind the scores given. Once evaluators have had a chance to consider their thoughts, scores should be averaged and applications should be ranked based on averaged scores.

Tips for Use: Evaluators may find major differences in each other's scoring, especially in expectations or emphasis. This is not necessarily a problem and may help evaluators ultimately reach consensus on desired characteristics for FBCO partners. Often, different evaluators will score applications much higher or lower than others. In general, as long as criteria are consistently applied by the reviewer to all applications, these scoring differences should not be a problem.

**Newark One-Stop
FBCO PROPOSAL SCORING SHEET**

Reviewer Name: _____
FBCO Name: _____

Item	Question	Score
1.	<p>Services Provided (56 Points Possible)</p> <p>Check and allocate points if each criteria is met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Describes goal and mission of organization. (1 point) <input type="checkbox"/> Describes FBCO's target population. (1 point) <input type="checkbox"/> Describes the type of services the FBCO offers. (4 points) <input type="checkbox"/> Includes the number of people served and other outcomes. (1 point) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides long-term client follow-up and/or supportive services (e.g. housing, childcare, substance abuse services, mental health services, counseling, case management) (20 points) <input type="checkbox"/> Serves low-income families and/or Public Assistance (TANF or GA) recipients. (17 points) <input type="checkbox"/> Serves clients seeking entry-level employment and/or provides job readiness training. (13 points) 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
2.	<p>Existing Partnerships (10 Points Possible)</p> <p>Check and allocate points if each criteria is met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Current or past referral or other partnerships with other organizations to provide additional services to FBCO's clients. (5 points) <input type="checkbox"/> Refers clients to Career Center currently. (5 points) 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
3.	<p>Capacity (13 Points Possible)</p> <p>Check and allocate points if each criteria is met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> FBCO has past or current experience with tracking client services provided and outcomes. (12 points) <input type="checkbox"/> Includes description of staff roles and capacity to provide social services. (1 point) 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
4.	<p>Plan for Project (21 Points Possible)</p> <p>Check and allocate points if each criteria is met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a detailed description of plan to provide referrals of clients to One-Stop and to provide supportive services and follow-up to One-Stop clients. (3 points) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides staff liaison that will make and receive One-Stop referrals. (3 points) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides description of job readiness services, supportive services and follow-up to be provided that appears to meet the needs of entry-level workers, low-income workers and/or Public Assistance (TANF) clients? (15 points) 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
Total Possible Points – 100		Total: _____

This FBCO _____ should _____ should not be selected.

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partnership by limiting the number of One-Stop clients who can qualify. For instance, when entering into a new TANF contract in NYC that put greater emphasis on retention milestones for payment, Seedco was very careful in selecting FBCO partners that had demonstrated effective retention work with clients over other FBCOs that had strong placement outcomes but weaker retention performance.

• **Commitment to project and fit with FBCO mission.** The FBCO's commitment to the partnership is one of the most critical elements of the assessment process—the project's success depends on it. However, FBCO commitment can be difficult to gauge in an application or interview process. Some suggestions for structuring the application and/or interview process to best assess FBCO commitment include:

- 1) Require the FBCO to **dedicate staff** to the project. For example, the Newark WIB asked each FBCO to identify one staff person to serve as the main point of contact for the project and to track referrals and outcomes.
- 2) Consider the quality of the FBCO's proposal, and/or preparedness and promptness for in-person meetings. Incomplete or haphazardly-prepared proposals, as well as lack of preparedness for an in-person meeting, can indicate a lack of commitment to the project.
- 3) Ask the FBCO to spell out how the project benefits its client population and/or dovetails with its mission. It is important that the partnership fits with the FBCO's mission, operations, and client population. Seedco has been approached for partnerships by organizations with strong track records and excellent reputations,

but has rejected these FBCOs because the project did not fit well with the work of the organization and may be viewed as a side project that will not take priority.

Consider different options for selecting FBCOs, based on the type of partnership that will be developed, the number of FBCO applicants, and other factors. The method used to select partners also sets the tone for the formality of the partnership. Some options include:

• **Informal partner selection.** The Snohomish County WDC recognized that a formal selection process was unnecessary, since few organizations in their area served ex-offenders. Informal meetings gave WDC a chance to brainstorm with potential partners about what each side could offer.

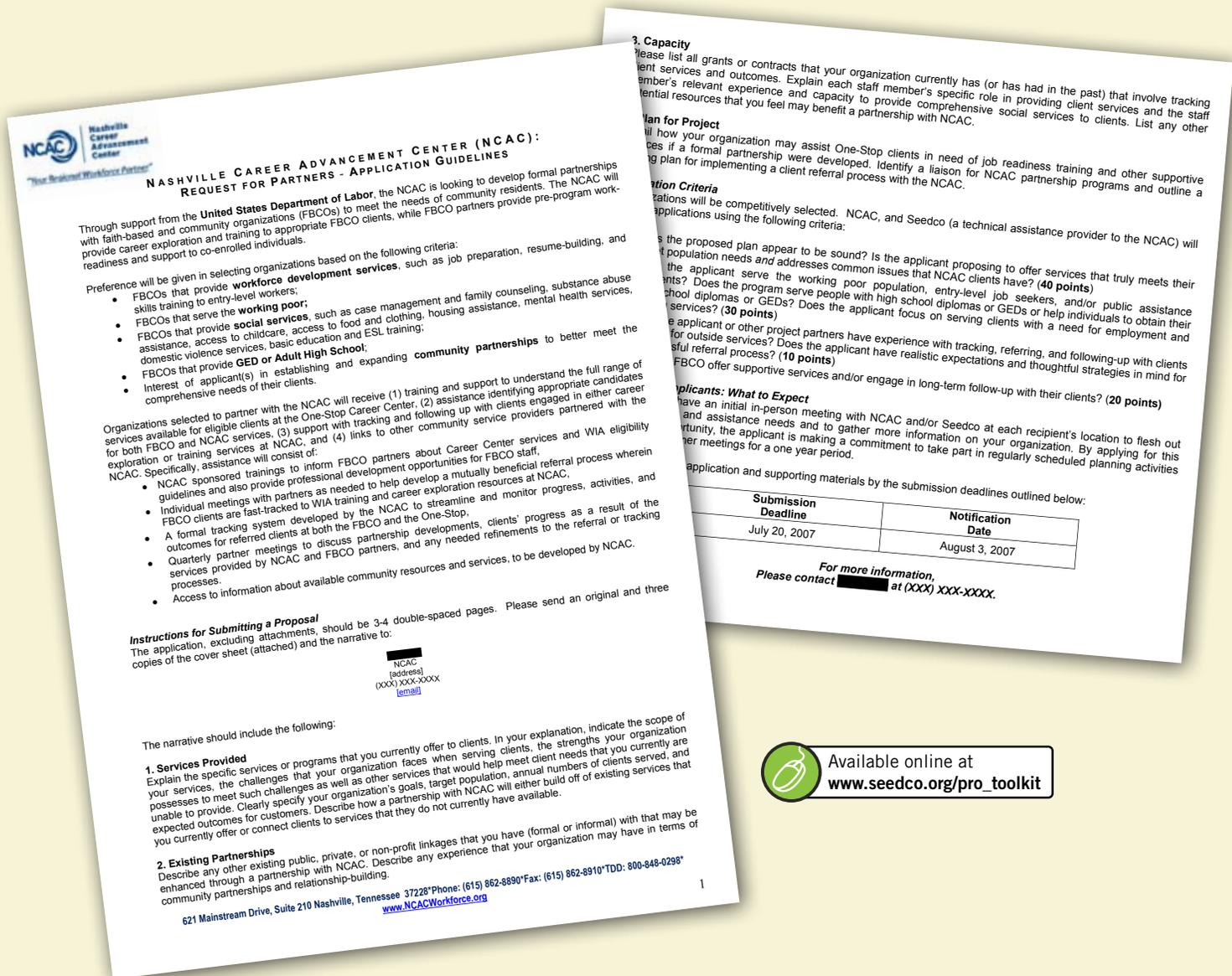
• **Issuing an RFQ.** RFQs can help educate the WIB or One-Stop about unknown FBCOs. Nashville executed a RFQ process because, while familiar with many of the organizations that were interested in partnership, it was not necessarily aware of the FBCOs' abilities to meet NCAC's specific needs. Similar to an RFP, an RFQ requires potential partners to detail their interest in partnering, qualifications, and plan for the partnership; however, response requirements for an RFQ are typically less formal, time-consuming and onerous for the applicant. The RFQ process allowed NCAC to efficiently evaluate the qualifications and commitment level of interested FBCOs. Requiring FBCOs to respond to an RFQ can also help weed out organizations that are not truly interested in partnership or not capable of following through on RFQ requirements. (See sample FBCO RFQ on the page 30).

FBCO Sample RFQ

Purpose: To provide background information on the partnership structure, selection process, and desired attributes of FBCO partners. To offer detailed instructions on the process for FBCOs to apply to the partnership and on the information required to complete a successful application.

Method: This RFQ document is often sent with the FBCO letter and/or FBCO flyer, so it is geared towards FBCOs that will attend the potential partner meeting or bidders' conference where the proposed partnership and RFP will be discussed in detail. However, the RFQ should contain all the information that a FBCO would need to complete a successful application in the event that the meeting or bidders' conference does not take place.

Tips for Use: Tailor the RFQ to the needs of the WIB/One Stop and the structure of the particular partnership. The section listing preferences given to FBCO applicants should be considered carefully and include all the characteristics desired in successful applicants. Take equal care to think through what you can offer potential partners in terms of support for the network and in-kind contributions. You will want to offer enough to incent FBCOs to apply but be careful not to over-promise a level of support that your organization will not be able to sustain. As much as possible, ask applicants to cite relevant past experience in their proposal rather than simply proposing what they will do in this partnership. This approach will put you in a better position to evaluate the capacity of applicants, based on a proven track record of serving your target population(s), providing particular services, and achieving outcomes. Contact information should be listed, and the contact should be prepared to field questions on RFQ specifics in the weeks following the release of the RFQ and leading up to the application submission deadline.



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- **Letting an RFP.** An RFP process is the most formal method to select partners and is necessary when a relationship is financial in nature. When subcontracting with FBCOs, an RFP ensures that the selected groups have the capacity to meet the contract requirements and provides for fairness in selection by assessing all interested FBCOs based on a common set of criteria.

Step 6

Formalize FBCO Relationships

Once FBCOs have been selected, the WIB/One-Stop operator should define and solidify the partnership. This step allows partners to formally agree on their obligations and consequences for not meeting these obligations. Partnerships can be structured differently depending on the level of formality or specific funding streams or project goals. While many of these tools and agreement types apply to other types of partnerships that the One-Stop or WIB may have, they also work well for FBCO partnerships and should detail expectations for the collaboration.

- **Memoranda of Understanding** (MOUs) are legal documents that outline the responsibilities required of each party entering into the agreement (and can include information on events or circumstances that would result in termination of the partnership). By signing a MOU, partners help formalize the collaboration by ensuring, for example, that if a staff member managing the partnership leaves the FBCO or WIB/One-Stop, the relationship will continue. The MOU is a flexible document that can outline broad partnership expectations, time period for the project, and reporting requirements. MOUs are not financial in nature, which means that organi-

zations are more likely to enter into them without extended negotiations or legal counsel (unlike subcontracts which take longer to finalize because of their financial ramifications). MOUs are also attractive because they can be dissolved more easily than a contract when circumstances change. For example, when Seedco replicated our network model in Memphis, prospective partner FBCOs were asked to sign a MOU while contract negotiations were in progress. In this case, the MOU served as an agreement that neither Seedco nor the FBCOs would entertain other partnership offers while the terms of the contract were being discussed. When contracts were signed, the MOU became obsolete and was dissolved.

- **Non performance-based contracts or grant awards** provide organizations with support for a project without tying payment to achievement of specific milestones. Seedco sometimes provides a one-time planning grant to help new network partners with start-up costs like space, staffing, and supplies. This structure offers an opportunity to test the partnership and FBCO capacity before entering into a performance-based contract. For instance, a WIB/One-Stop could provide a FBCO partner with grant funds for a year, monitor FBCO progress in meeting these service and outcome goals, provide needed training and support, and at year end, assess the FBCO's performance and readiness to enter into a performance-based contract.

- **Performance-based contracts** structure a financial relationship with a FBCO partner according to achievement of specific milestones or outcomes. This type of contract is legally binding but goes a step further in providing the WIB/One-Stop opera-

The piece that I'm looking forward to is down the road when all of our systems integrate and you'll be able to see when a client is referred and when he was employed, when you can see a direct correlation.

Kristal Levi
Northwest Indiana
One-Stop Operator

tor with leverage to manage FBCO performance. These contracts typically spell out activity and outcome targets for the partnership, specific timeframes for meeting these targets, and repercussions for underperforming. As these subcontracts are legally binding, it is important that FBCOs understand the consequences of non-compliance—including non-payment for services provided. Seedco meets with each FBCO to determine reasonable outcome targets, detail expectations for the contract, clarify the population to be served, and determine actions that will be taken in the event of under-performance. (See **FBCO Sample Contract at www.seedco.org/pro_toolkit**).

In employing any of these partnership structures, it is important to **provide a clear description of the roles and responsibilities of each partner, including:**

- **Services to be provided**—In order to create an effective partnership, each FBCO must be clear on what services they are expected to deliver (i.e. training, job placement, or social services).
- **Target population**—Client eligibility requirements should be emphasized in contracts or MOUs so that FBCOs are clear on their target population—especially in the case of government contracts, which often require documentation of client eligibility.
- **Numerical targets**—Partnership agreements should clearly state targets for services provided as well as outcomes to be achieved.
- **Timeframe for meeting targets and outcomes**—Partnership agreements should spell out a timeline for targets (e.g. monthly targets over the course of a year.)
- **Mandatory partner activities**—Agreements should list partner

meetings to discuss reports and operational issues, and should specify meeting frequency and who is expected to attend.

- **Reports to complete and reporting timeline**—Agreements should detail reporting requirements and timeframes. WIBs/One-Stops should provide report templates and examples of satisfactory reporting.
- **Term of the partnership or agreement**—The agreement should state the partnership duration, the conditions for renewal or extension, and the circumstances under which either side can terminate the partnership.
- **Terms of payment and consequences of non-compliance**—FBCOs should be clear on the targets they must achieve to remain in good standing and what will happen in the case of non-compliance.
- **Client records or case files to be maintained**—The WIB/One-Stop should provide FBCOs with examples of client case files and review files periodically to ensure proper record-keeping.

Step 7 Implement FBCO partnerships

Options for FBCO partnership implementation:

- **Hold project orientation and training(s)**. Training sessions can be a helpful way to demonstrate commitment to the project and make sure that everyone is on the same page. The Indiana WIB provided two rounds of training to prepare One-Stop staff for the changes in basic work practices that their FBCO partnership would require; the trainings reviewed project goals and procedures and collected One-Stop staff feedback. By contrast, the Newark WIB focused their training activities on FBCO staff to ensure

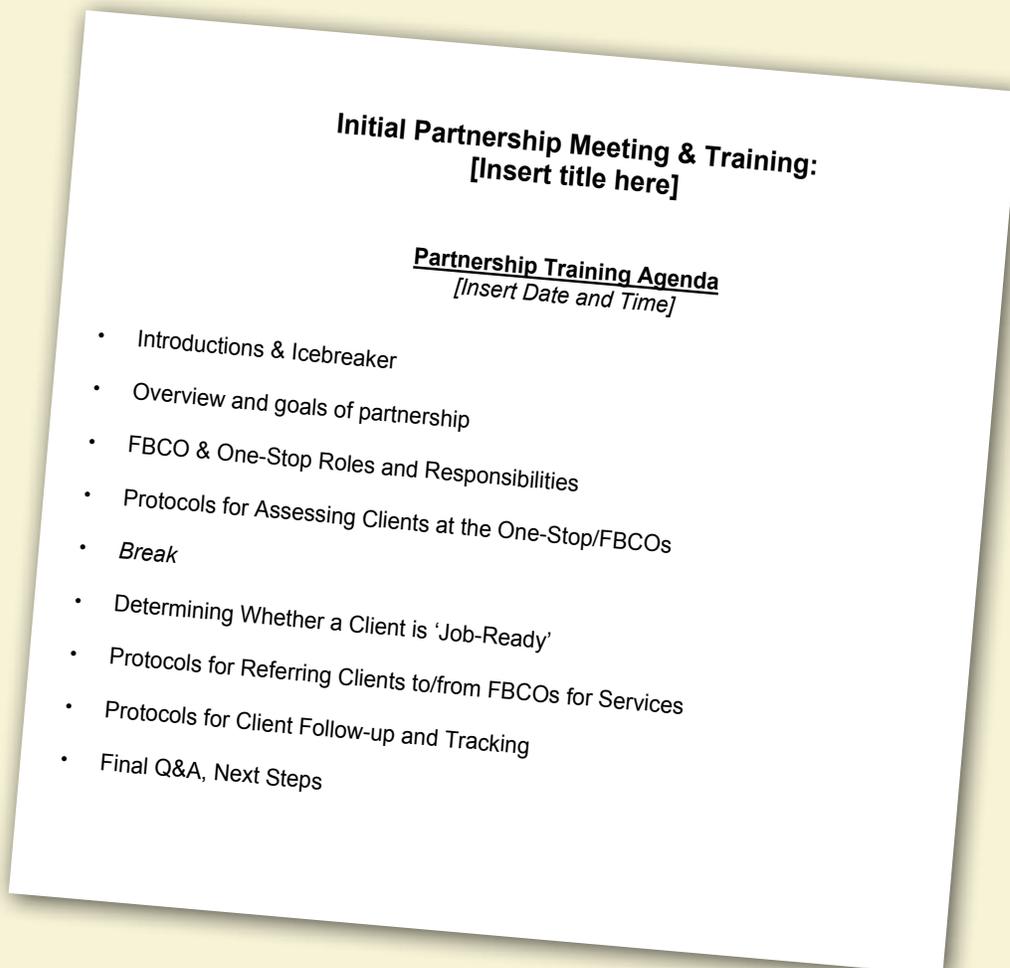
Sample Training Agenda for Partnership Kick-off

Purpose: Train new FBCO partners on the goals of the partnership, expectations, required forms to complete, and provide all necessary information relevant to the project. FBCOs should come away from the training with a clear sense of the project's goals, their role in the network and specific expectations, and any immediate next steps.

Method: The training and corresponding agenda should include training and exercises on the topics outlined above. It should provide for ample opportunity for discussion, questions, and team building. In addition, the WIB/One-Stop operator should provide handouts of relevant forms, guidelines or other documents that will guide the FBCOs' work and tracking of client outcomes.

Tips for Use:

- Include various One-Stop and WIB staff in the training presentations and exercises as a way to build their buy-in for the project and include their input.
- Encourage FBCOs to send multiple and different levels of staff to the training – front-line and leadership – to encourage organization-wide buy-in and mitigate against turnover.
- Use the meeting as a way to encourage discussion and FBCO input on different aspects of the project, including: the flow of clients to and from the One-Stop, definitions of job readiness, goals for the project, tracking forms, etc. This approach will help to ensure that FBCO viewpoints are incorporated and that the work of the project represents an acceptable workload for staff.



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that all partner sites would effectively refer and track job-ready clients. (See FBCO Sample Training Agenda on the previous page).

- **Conduct initial site visits** to assess staff readiness for project launch, gauge training and TA needs, and provide one-on-one TA. The WIB/One-Stop operator should confirm that a FBCO has the capability to handle the increased client flow that the partnership will involve, and that FBCO programming will meet the needs of One-Stop customers. Before referrals began, the Newark WIB visited all FBCO partners to assess customer service, operational efficiency, and physical space from a client's perspective. The WIB did not formally evaluate FBCOs on this criteria, but FBCO leadership appreciated the outside viewpoint and constructive criticism.

Step 8 Ongoing management of FBCO partnerships

Techniques for effective ongoing management of FBCO relationships include:

- **Collect and analyze FBCO data on a monthly basis.** It is important for a WIB/One-Stop operator to be aware of data trends and troubleshoot problems or potential problems before they get out of hand. Tracking month to month progress allows the WIB/One-Stop operator to identify shortfalls or weaknesses and consider ideas for how to improve those areas. Reports that show actual outcomes achieved compared to targets can help FBCOs focus on analyzing and improving their performance. (See Tracking Sheet Templates on page 35).

- **Hold monthly partner meetings to review reports and operation-**

al issues, allowing partners to share their experiences with colleagues and learn from each other. FBCO program managers should review reports together to reinforce that they are all held to the same standard and encourage transparency across the network. FBCOs can identify common issues, help each other troubleshoot, and share best practices. Seedco also typically uses these meetings to share new ideas or changes in policies or programs, and gain FBCO input and consensus on any new initiatives. (see sample Management Report on page 37)

- **Assign staff person to maintain contact with FBCOs and hold regular site visits.** Assigning staff to specific FBCOs creates familiarity with FBCO staff, leadership, and client demographics, and allows for more effective troubleshooting and TA. Seedco creates continuity by establishing one contact at each FBCO who is responsible for presenting their monthly reports and responding to Seedco's follow-up questions. Turnover of front-line staff at FBCOs can be high, and managers often need help training new staff in case management and tracking requirements. Newer FBCOs may also need guidance on contract requirements or how to handle contract changes. Monthly (and sometimes semi-monthly) visits help Seedco staff focus on these types of issues and meet FBCO needs.

- **Quarterly Data-driven sessions** provide a way for FBCOs to understand performance trends and underlying factors affecting performance. Each of these meetings focuses on the performance data of one selected FBCO and is meant to help clarify the causal relationships between outcomes and services provided. For example, in one session, Seedco's data

analysis helped a FBCO assess the effectiveness of its job placement strategy. The FBCO had been encouraged by its recent success placing clients in the telemarketing sector—but when Seedco encouraged a closer look at the data, the FBCO realized that telemarketing actually offered little promise of long-term worker retention. The data revealed that telemarketing's low wages and general lack of benefits contributed to the lowest three-month retention rate among sectors where the FBCO's clients were placed.

• **Continuous Performance Improvement (CPI)** is a management tool designed to evaluate program quality. The process typically requires the WIB/One-Stop operator to visit FBCOs once or twice annually to interview staff and clients, review client files, and gather qualitative data. In Seedco's partnership, our staff assigns a score to each FBCO based on this assessment. These reports (which are also provided to the FBCO) offer a comprehensive review of program strengths and weaknesses and particularly highlight areas for improvement. FBCO managers also use the CPIs as a management tool with their own staff. Typically, Seedco's report includes a clear plan for improvement and timeline for implementing changes. Any improvement is then reported in the next CPI six months later. Consistent low scores are warning signs, indicating that a Corrective Action Plan may be needed.

(See Sample CPI at www.seedco.org/pro_toolkit).

• **Corrective Action Plan (CAP)** is a tool used to guide a FBCO partner through a formal process of performance improvement once the WIB/One-Stop operator determines that the FBCO has chronically underperformed on both quantitative and

qualitative measures. CAPs are designed to facilitate improvement and include frequent check-ins to monitor FBCO progress. Seedco rarely has need to use CAPs, but they are sometimes necessary to help a consistently under-performing partner focus on certain weak points—while allowing Seedco and the other FBCO partners to protect themselves financially. For instance, Seedco normally reimburses FBCOs for half of their line item expenses monthly and allocates the other half of the contract based on performance; a FBCO under a CAP does not receive the line item reimbursement and instead is paid solely on performance. However, they are paid double for performance so that if they do perform, they can succeed financially. When the FBCO corrects the problems that had been identified, it is taken off the CAP and transitioned back to the semi-annual CPI schedule.

(See CAP Sample at www.seedco.org/pro_toolkit).

Sample Management Report

Purpose: Management reports can and should be used by the WIB/One Stop to evaluate FBCO progress every month. These reports are typically based on the data that the FBCO partners submit and the One-Stop collects internally, and should be shared with the FBCO to celebrate successes, identify trends, and also to uncover underperformance and common challenges. Management reports serve an important role with helping partners strategize to overcome issues and meet outcomes.

Method: WIB/One Stop operators typically produce these management reports based on an analysis of data received by FBCOs or other tracking and recording mechanisms. Good management reports compare actual performance levels in relation to program goals and targets. As well, One-Stops may want to compare outcomes across FBCOs; this creates a spirit of healthy competition among partners. The sample included here features the performance of four FBCOs and that of the entire network on key milestones for the report month (May 2007) as well as for several months prior and cumulative to date. This approach allows the One-Stop operator or WIB to compare seasonal trends in performance and progress to date in meeting overall goals for the network as well as for individual FBCOs.

Tips for Use: Management reports should clearly show targets for each period of time measured. Reports should be shared with FBCOs and analyzed regularly (monthly at a minimum). Public acknowledgement at meetings of high-performers can motivate partners to continue doing well and to encourage lower-performing groups to try harder to overcome any obstacles. As well, better performing FBCOs should be encouraged to share operational lessons learned with the other groups at monthly meetings in order to further the group's collective understanding of best practice. The reports should be straightforward and easy to read. Avoid cluttering the report with less important milestones that may obscure or take away from the main outcomes of the partnership. The attached sample should be revised to reflect the items that the partnership will focus on. The design can be simplified to suit project needs and/or partner preferences.

Sample WIA FBCO Subcontract Monthly Management Report
May 2007

	Feb-07			Mar-07			Apr-07			May-07			CTD TOTAL		
	Target	Doc'd	Doc'd as % of targets	Target	Doc'd	Doc'd as % of targets	Target	Doc'd	Doc'd as % of targets	Target	Doc'd	Doc'd as % of targets	Target	Doc'd	Doc'd as % of targets
FBCO 1															
Direct Plac.	9	13	144%	9	11	122%	10	24	240%	10	15	150%	494	714	145%
1Q Retention	8	0	0%	13	0	0%	9	0	0%	9	24	267%	424	596	141%
3Q Retention	6	7	117%	6	5	83%	5	9	180%	5	5	100%	266	384	144%
HW Gain	4	4	NM	4	2	NM	5	5	NM	5	19	NM	107	151	141%
FBCO 2															
Direct Plac.	5	2	40%	5	2	40%	6	4	67%	6	10	167%	301	338	112%
1Q Retention	5	4	80%	9	4	44%	5	2	40%	5	5	100%	263	294	112%
3Q Retention	4	4	100%	4	7	175%	3	3	100%	3	5	167%	186	191	103%
HW Gain	3	3	NM	3	3	NM	3	0	NM	3	5	NM	58	89	153%
FBCO 3															
Direct Plac.	5	4	80%	5	13	260%	6	3	50%	6	10	167%	273	261	96%
1Q Retention	6	7	117%	10	3	30%	5	11	220%	5	11	220%	258	267	103%
3Q Retention	4	8	200%	3	3	100%	3	8	267%	3	7	233%	179	145	81%
HW Gain	2	0	NM	3	0	NM	3	5	NM	3	10	NM	50	73	146%
FBCO 4															
Direct Plac.	2	1	50%	2	6	300%	2	4	133%	3	2	67%	108	79	73%
1Q Retention	3	2	67%	5	0	0%	2	5	250%	2	5	250%	91	64	70%
3Q Retention	2	3	150%	2	0	0%	2	4	200%	2	1	50%	64	35	55%
HW Gain	2	3	NM	2	0	NM	2	2	NM	2	2	NM	36	20	56%
Total Performance															
Direct Plac.	21	20	95%	21	32	152%	25	35	140%	25	37	148%	1176	1392	118%
1Q Retention	22	13	59%	37	7	19%	21	17	81%	21	45	214%	1036	1221	118%
3Q Retention	16	22	138%	15	15	100%	13	25	192%	13	18	138%	695	755	109%
HW Gain	11	10	91%	12	5	42%	13	12	92%	13	36	277%	251	333	133%



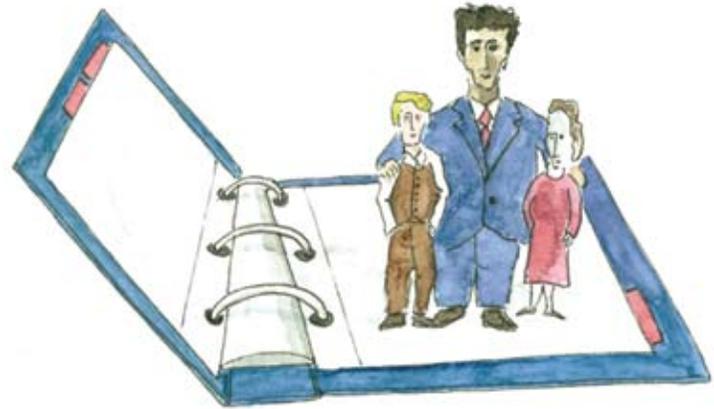
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PRO CASE STUDIES

FINDINGS

— AND —

Lessons Learned



This section highlights potential hurdles in the partnership development process as well as factors that favor the success of such endeavors.

Potential Barriers to FBCO Partnership Development

Changes in WIB/One-Stop staff and/or priorities. Significant shifts in WIB/One-Stop staffing or leadership, or organizational strategy can pose a challenge to developing partnerships, especially if new leadership lacks commitment to the partnership. On the other hand, organizational or leadership changes can also have positive effects on partnerships, particularly if the shifts create a greater commitment to community collaboration or if new staff brings with them strong FBCO relationships.

Misalignment of WIB and One-Stop goals and incentives. WIBs and One-Stop operators do not always have the same goals and incentives, which can sometimes present a pitfall in the FBCO partnership process. For instance, a WIB may want to engage FBCOs in the One-Stop system in order to serve more hard-to-place clients and/or improve community relations. One-Stop operators, on the other hand, are generally more concerned

with operational issues and may not be on board with this goal, particularly if they do not see a clear benefit in terms of easing of One-Stop staff workloads or meeting specific performance goals tied to payment from the WIB. WIBs can create incentives for One-Stops to partner with FBCOs by designating funds for FBCO subcontracts or including FBCO relationships as a required part of the One-Stop's operating plan. One-Stop Career Center staff's desire for improving the job readiness of customers is a common goal that can incentivize the building FBCO partnerships.

Past unsatisfactory experience with FBCO partnerships. Negative impressions or bad past experiences with FBCOs can hinder partnership development. Leadership must address any preconceived notions or negative past FBCO experiences of WIB and One-Stop staff early in the partnership process.

“Another thing that really helps, we have a long term commitment to working with an at-risk population...we [learn how to] get creative with serving these people, you get board commitment to serving these more marginalized people, we get internal staff commitment to serving more marginalized people...Our core leadership was the checks and balances that we needed them to be.”

Ellen Zinkiewicz
Nashville WIB

Factors That Favor Successful FBCO Partnership Development

Leadership and front-line staff buy-in and dedication to project.

Developing partnerships requires considerable effort and perseverance. Without adequate commitment and support, the partnership process can become stalled or ineffective. Therefore, it is critical that One-Stops garner broad staff support for establishing FBCO partnerships—including buy-in of frontline staff that may be wary of changes as well as leaders' commitment to the project. A dedicated One-Stop staff member (or members) to shepherd the partnership effort appears to be critical to success. This staff person can coordinate and track activities, manage timelines, and serve as the face of the project to FBCO partners.

Existing informal ties to FBCO

community. One-Stops with existing ties to FBCOs can successfully leverage these connections in order to facilitate (and expedite) the outreach and FBCO research work. One-Stop staff can draw on personal contacts to get FBCO representatives to the table for initial partnership meetings. In addition, FBCOs that, based on their own experiences, can vouch for a One-Stop's track record of community partnership can help create good word of mouth among other FBCOs. One-Stop systems that do not already have FBCO relationships may need to factor in a longer timeframe for FBCO outreach and relationship-building when planning their partnerships.

Clear, realistic goal or outcome for the partnership.

Clear goals for the FBCO partnership are a critical (but often overlooked) ingredient for success. The most successful FBCO partnerships are structured to meet specific needs of both the One-Stop and the FBCO partner(s). Often, both One-Stops and FBCOs decide to partner in order to generally improve community relations or to secure additional funding through collaboration, without first identifying mutual and specific benefits for the partnership. Creating a partnership without clear goals is unlikely to produce satisfying or long-term results. By establishing the goals and intended outcomes of a partnership in a very transparent manner, both sides are more likely to feel satisfied with the partnership and see how it better serves their respective customers.

Mix of large and smaller FBCO partners with varying capacity

levels. Partnerships that encompass only small FBCOs serving a handful of customers may not be able to meet the goals of a One-Stop that serves a large volume of customers. Lower-capacity FBCOs offer very valuable services, but typically need significant TA and training on how to plan for project implementation, track outcomes, and report on project activities. On the other hand, One-Stops that target larger, more established groups may suffer from not accessing the critical, customized services and long-term follow-up offered by many smaller grassroots FBCOs. By recruiting a mix of smaller and larger FBCO partners, One-Stop systems can both meet their short-term goals as well as build long-term FBCO capacity.

“When staff heard that referrals had become automated, and realized they didn't have to keep track of referrals and enter it later, [tracking became] part of what they're doing, their buy in just changed like you can't believe.”

Kristal Levi
Northwest Indiana
One-Stop Operator

“As we move into this new integration mode, [we] see everything as a referral and it has become everything we do. How have we stuck with that? We built everything around [this idea].”

Kristal Levi
Northwest Indiana
One-Stop Operator

FBCO Leadership and front-line staff commitment. Numerous FBCOs may express interest in partnering but not all will be able to meet One-Stop needs if FBCO leadership is not invested in the project. It is therefore critical that the partnership development process is structured to ensure buy-in from all levels of FBCO staff and leadership. For example, FBCO front-line staff may be personally invested in a partnership, but will ultimately be unable to dedicate the necessary time and resources unless leadership also prioritizes the project. Conversely, FBCO leadership should cultivate front-line staff buy-in for the project, particularly if workloads are impacted by project activities. Without broad support, the project will likely falter in implementation.

Clear incentives for proposed partnership. The benefits of partnership—especially a non-financial partnership—are not always clear. Before embarking on the FBCO partner selection process, WIBs and One-Stops should consider not only what they expect from partners, but what financial and in-kind resources they can offer. WIBs and One-Stops should take care to structure a partnership that responds to FBCO needs as well as their own. Early impressions that the project only serves the One-Stop's needs can lead to FBCO disinterest or mistrust. Offering compensation for services (even very small grants) or in-kind contributions like use of One-Stop space for meetings or workshops are gestures of goodwill that may ease FBCO concerns. In addition, many FBCOs are appreciative of letters of support for grant proposals, or the prospect of collaborating to pursue future funding opportunities. Of course financial relationships or performance-based contracts offer considerable incentive for prospective partners.