My Bridge of Strength Training

MY BRIDGE OF STRENGTH (MBS) AND GOAL ACTION PLAN (GAP) TRAINING JUNE 2015



Today's Outline

- History
- The Big Picture
- Using My Bridge of Strength in Practice
- Using Goal Action Plan in Practice
- Employment Plan
- After the Meeting
- Evaluation
- Closing the Loop

Purpose of Training

This session explains the purpose and essence of the MBS and summarizes it's role within the county's comprehensive framework of participant-driven career planning, counseling intervention, and coaching.

Goals

- Understand the foundation of MBS
- Integrate relevant theory to the MBS process
- Practice introducing the MBS and writing SMART goals
- Understand the requirements of using MBS and GAP
- Explain documentation expectations
- Discuss evaluation methods and objectives
- Next steps

Training Focus Points

What we know

What we want to know

• {Group Discussion}

• {Group Discussion}



2012-2013

- No research demonstrated that the 12 MFIP work activities correlated with strong employment outcomes.
- Education, credential building, career coaching, and retention services are evidence based practices the foundation of revised Employment Services.
- Pairing the 12 activities more closely with career coaching, education (emphasis on completing GED or high school diploma), certificate and credential building, mentoring, and retention services would increase the effectiveness of Employment Services and move more people from welfare to work.
- Use term <u>"engaged"</u> to designate the Participant actively determining his/her own goals and their future.
- Education, work, and health engagement into community activities can get people out of poverty and help stabilize families. Continue focus on family stability and children's success.

2014-2015

- New Vision Outlines adjustments of MFIP/DWP services in line with DHS initiatives focus on long term goals
- Coaching and counseling (shifting role of coach and counselor)
- Language executive skills into framework life long learning
- Participant choices dreams, goals, self-determination, strengths, etc...
- Participants in activities that matter (not just ones that count)
- Motivational Interviewing continues to be a crucial skill/tool
- Recognizing and incorporating cultural attributes and strengths
- Sanction as a tool in the mix with other tools
- Fast Program

Findings From Pilot Focus Group

General Feedback

- Participants stated it took an average of 20-30 minutes to complete
- Significant variation in how the MBS was explained, delivered, completed and updated by employment counselors
- Participants stated they had developed goals in the past, but they liked using the GAP better than other formats

Strengths focus of MBS

- "At first it felt like a lot, but the encouragement from the job counselor really helped make it easier"
- Easy for some, but more difficult depending on complexity of goals and approach taken by ES
- The interaction between participant and counselor felt more conversational than directional

Findings From Pilot Focus Group

Benefits of GAP

- Simple to follow
- Options for the type of goal is different
- Motivation was a key indicator

Limitations of GAP

- Nothing new
- Consistency is necessary
- Too complicated?
- Too simple?

→The main takeaway: Keep an open mind←

The Big Picture

Shift in Vision

- Previous: Process focused
- New: Family-centered, participant-driven and outcome focused. We want to reduce isolation and help families to be part of the community at large. Services drive outcomes, provide great services and enter information and outcomes will be met. Key outcomes are education, engagement, employment and employment retention
 Key Components
- Executive Skills and Life Long Learning
- Coaching, Counseling and Career Planning
- Motivational Interviewing

Career Planning, Coaching and Counseling

- ES counselors are expected to incorporate career planning, coaching, intervention and counseling techniques and tactics while working with their participants to develop clear, measurable goals and corresponding pathways to obtain these goals.
- The ES counselor will determine which approach is best to use during meetings with participants on an individual basis.
 - Move from one approach to the next as needed during meeting

Career Coaching

- Career Coaching Rooted in the belief that the participant is the expert in their own life (MI).
 - Participant comes up with their own answers to their questions.
 - Counselor's role:
 - ▼ Discover participant's values
 - ▼ Use a strengths-based approach to goal-setting
 - Break down goals into small, achievable steps
 - **×** Educate the participant about choices
 - ***** Be a champion, and a supporter

Career Counseling

- Career Counseling The career counselor is the subject matter and has expertise to offer.
 - More direct than coaching.
 - Obtain information on from the participant regarding their skills, abilities, styles and preferences.
 - Counselor helps the participant direct their job search and selection of the right career path.
 - Counselor utilizes resources such as lists of possible trainings and careers.

Career Planning

- Career Planning listening to the participant's selfdefined needs (MBS).
 - Counselor's role:
 - ► Provides support, structure and accountability to participants to help them achieve their goals.
 - Use assessment tools such as interest assessment and strength assessments.
 - Labor Market research and intelligence
 - Use DEED, iSeek, ONet

Where This Training Fits In and Next Steps

- Fall 2014 was the initial introduction of the MBS
- June 2015 is the MBS workshop
- July 2015 will be Coaching Training (PCG)
- Fall 2015 will be Lifelong Learning Training (Mathematica)

The Red Thread (how this fits together):

EBP informs us that a holistic model of recognizing the individual being the expert in their own lives is what makes the difference.

Coaching (PCG)

- Public Consulting Group (PCG) has been working with governments on improving program outcomes since 1986.
- Composed of a network of over 1,400 professionals throughout the US, Canada, UK and Poland
- National TANF policy experts
- Integrate best practices and research designs into comprehensive, innovative programs to benefit families
- Experts on current research focused on the impacts of executive function on behaviors, abilities and cognitive skills
- The PCG Coaching Framework has three components while supporting the improvement of essential skills:
 - Person-Centered
 - Relationship-Based
 - o Goal-Driven

Lifelong Learning (Mathematica)

- Research firm located in Washington DC, who has long-term experience in redesigning TANF programs
- Will provide consultation around the analysis, development, and implementation of an infrastructure that supports the continuum of Coaching and Executive Skills/Lifelong Learning Development .
- Area employers as well as proponents of the National Career Pathways Model, have long requested workforce programs to develop job seekers' essential skills such as time management, prioritization, response inhibition, stress management, etc. along with the technical demands of the job.
- Executive skill development through the act of "Coaching" is a tool, or ES intervention, that strengthens essential skill development and self-awareness, leading to greater success with long-term education and employment goal achievement, thus breaking the cycle of poverty and creating greater economic prosperity for individuals, families, and communities.

Executive Functioning

- Executive (essential) skills are the mental process needed to focus attention, control impulses, multitask, prioritize and filter tasks, and plan for the future. (including both short and long term goals).
 - This encompasses listening, speaking, problem solving and critical thinking skills.
- We are not born with executive (essential) skills, but born with the ability to develop it.
 - Examples: completing paperwork, addressing problems, participating in group collaborative efforts and team meetings, accurately computing numerical data, communicating effectively as a group.

Promoting Life-Long Learning

Turning barriers to employment into challenges.

- Participants are able to increase their internal resources and independently:
 - Problem solve unexpected issues
 - o Self-regulate their own behaviors
 - Set both short and long-term goals
 - Use their skills to be a leader in their community

"See one, Do one, Teach one."

Using My Bridge of Strength in Practice

How MBS differs from EM

Employability Measure

- Objective
- Tool for Counselor
- Counselor rates the level the participant is at after the meeting.
- Completed once
- Helps EGC gather information
- Interview-based
- Participant in unaware of assessment

My Bridge of Strength

- Subjective
- Tool for Participant
- Participant identifies which statement most closely reflects their situation during the meeting.
- Ongoing
- Help participants focus and prioritize goals
- Interactive, engagement based
- Transparent and appeals to visual, tactile and auditory learners

Ramsey County Workforce Solution's My Bridge of Strength



Name:

Date:

Case #:

Family Stability		Well-Being			Education	Financial and	Employment		
Housing	Dependent Care	Transportation	Health	Children's Behavior	Social Support	Education	Financial	Legal	Workplace Skills
I have stable and safe unsubsidized housing	l have reliable child care and back- up	I have reliable transportation and backup	No health concerns affect my employment	Behavior does not limit my employment	I have consistent and effective social support and/or a leadership role in the community	I have at least an AA degree or higher	My income is stable, I am current on my bills, I have money for saving or spending	I have no current legal issues	My strong workplace skills enhance my employability and support career advancement
I have stable and safe housing that is subsidized	l have reliable child care but no backup	I have reliable transportation but no backup	Health concerns sometimes affect my employment	Behavior sometimes affects my employment	I have generally reliable social support that is growing	I have a high school diploma, GED, or entry- level certificate or a post secondary certificate	My income is stable, I am current on my bills but I don't have money for saving or spending	My legal issues are not work related and do not take work time	My workplace skills support my employability
I am living in temporary housing, unsafe housing, or am at risk of losing housing	I have child care but it is not reliable	I have transportation options but they are not reliable	Health concerns often affect my employment	Behavior often affects my employment	I have a limited social support network with few positive influences	I am attending high school, GED, entry-level certificate classes, or other training	My income is sometimes enough to cover my basic living expenses	My legal issues take me away from work some times	My workplace skills often interfere with my employability
My family has no housing	I have no child care		Health concerns prevent my employment	Behavior prevents my employment	I have no social support; my network is draining or destructive	I have no high school diploma, GED, or entry-level certificate	My income is not enough to cover my basic living expenses	I work certain jobs, or I have lost jobs because of my legal issues.	I need to work on my workplace skills in order to obtain employment

Strengths:

*Workplace skills include, but are not limited to, decision making, communication, conflict resolution, problem solving, anger management, time management, crisis management, planfulness, relationship skills, prioritizing, grooming, and other capabilities that facilitate job performance.

My Bridges is adapted from the Crittenton Women's Union Bridge To Self-Sufficiency and the Minnesota DHS Employability Measures.

Procedures

- Purpose of MBS is explained to participant.
 - Purpose of MBS is to help participants identify areas of strength and possibly areas to focus on or reinforce.
- MBS is completed during initial meeting(s) with any participant that is new to a counselor (regardless if they have completed MBS in the past)
- Participant and counselor have a conversation, and go through each pillar together. Participant choses the statement that they feel is most representative of their situation.
- Strengths that participant have within themselves are discussed and listed on MBS form.
 - It is the counselor's role to assist with identifying strengths as needed by asking questions and providing feedback (not checklists, etc).

What If My Participant is in Crisis?

- Perhaps these participants are the ones that would benefit the most
- Allows for participants to *focus* on one area of their life, when life is overwhelming
- Encourages the participant to break down daunting tasks into more achievable steps

Strengths, Strengths, Strengths!

Use MI skills to draw out strengths

- "If we asked your best friend/parent/significant other, what would they say were your greatest strengths?"
- As participants explain situations they have been through in their life that they perceive as negative, encourage them to see what was they gained from it (ex. learning experiences, building strengths)

Link these strengths to their accomplishments and goals

- Discuss when they have used these strengths in the past and how they may apply them to their current situation.
- Which of your goals can you use your strengths and abilities?

Discussion:

Introducing MBS to Participant

Read off statements and discuss strengths and weaknesses of each introduction approach.

Decide together how to introduce MBS to the participant.

- "So we have this new thing, it is called My Bridge of Strength, I am going to hand this to you, and I would like you to circle whatever you think is best."
- "I am going to work on your plan, while I am doing that, fill this out. If you have any questions just ask."
- "Okay so this is your homework: fill out this bridge and we will go over if when you get back."
- This is a bridge that identifies different areas of your life. We are going to go through each section together and have a conversation.
 - Tell me more about your living situation . Please circle whichever statement most closely reflects your current situation.
- Other considerations:
 - Completing MBS with/without interpreter
 - Completing with participants who are unable to read the content

"Non-Negotiables"

As counselors, what do we need to hold ourselves accountable for while working with a participant on their MBS

- Always presented in a strength-based, participant centered manner
- Focus on foundational pieces and the relationship-building process initial stages of the bridge are for engagement
- Conversational and completed together (participant talking more than counselor, not question and answer)
- Belief in the tool and desire to work together with participant
- Participant always chooses for themselves (no right or wrong answer)
- Be present, authentic, flexible, and respectful
- Non-judgmental, safe environment

Case Study: Suzy



- Suzy's Story:
 - o 29 year old female
 - 3 children ages 8, 6 and 2
 - MFIP months used: 20 months
 - Recently back on MFIP after being off of MFIP for 12 months
 - Has a reliable vehicle, sees the bus by her home but has never used it
 - Suzy and children live with Suzy's parents in a house.
 - Suzy is responsible for \$200 per month rent to her parents
 - Suzy received 2 school phone calls regarding the 6 year old's behavior last month
 - No child care in place besides her parents who will watch her children in the evenings and weekends
 - High school diploma completed, no additional training
 - o Suzy's childhood friend lives next door
 - Suzy has an unlawful detainer
 - Suzy has past traffic violation, no outstanding fines/fees
 - 3 years of consistent employment with fast food, recently quit employment at Target, currently working at a temp service
 - Suzy reports no safety or health concerns

Case Study: Suzy's MBS

Pass the ball activity

• Introducing and completing the MBS with the participant.

• Practice, Practice, Practice...

Suzy's MBS

Name: (Date: Case #:	SUZ		Rar	nsey County	Workforce Sol	ution's <u>My Bridge of Str</u>	rength		
	Family Stabil	lty		Well-Being	,	Education	Financial and	Legal	Employment
Housing	Dependent Care	Transportation	Health	Children's Behavior	Social Support	Education	Financial	Legal	Workplace Skil
I have stable and safe unsubsidized housing	I have reliable child care and back- up	have reliable transportation and backup	No health concerns affect my employment	Behavior opes not limit my employment	I have consistent and effective social support and/or a leadership role in the community	I have at least an AA degree or higher	My income is stable, I am current on my bills, I have money for saving or spending	I have no current legal issues	My strong workplace skills enhance my employability an support career advagement
I have stable and safe housing that is subsidized	I have reliable child care but no backup	I have reliable transportation but no backup	Health concerns sometimes affect my employment	behavior sometimes affects my employment	I have generally reliable social support that is growing	I have a high school liploma, GED, or entry- level certificate or a post secondary certificate	My income is stable, I am current on my bills but I don't have money for saving or spending	bry legal issues are not work related and do not take work time	skills support my employability
I am living in temporary housing, unsafe housing, or am at risk of losing housing	I have child care but it is not reliable	I have transportation options but they are not reliable	Health concerns often affect my employment	Behavior often affects my employment	have a limited social support network with few positive influences	I am attending high school, GED, entry-level certificate classes, or other training	Muncome is sometime enough to cover my basic Eving expenses	My legal issues take me away from work some times	My workplace skills often interfere with m employability
My family has no housing	I have no child care		Health concerns prevent my employment	Behavior prevents my employment	I have no social support; my network Is draining or destructive	I have no high school diploma, GED, or entry-level certificate	My income is not enough to cover my basic living expenses	I work certain jobs, or I have lost jobs because of my legal issues.	I need to work o my workplace skills in order to obtain employment
Relia Pun Hon	able ctua rest	L CL I Stre Res	yal ong ilian	e (t T	_	nom inication Person	skills		

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My Bridge is adapted from the Crittenton Women's Union Bridge To Self-Sufficiency and the Minnesota DHS Employability Measures.

Using Goal Action Plan in Practice

Goal Planning

- Participant identifies and choose their own goal to focus on leading to increased engagement and overall success.
- Setting goals and following through with them increases our EF (essential skills) and self-regulation:
 - Working memory
 - Mental flexibility
 - Self-control

SMART Goals

- **Specific** What will the goal accomplish? How and why will it be accomplished?
- *Measurable* How will you measure whether or not the goal has been reached?
- *Attainable* Do you have the necessary skills, knowledge and resources to accomplish this goal without it defeating you?
- *Relevant* What is the purpose of accomplishing this goal in your life?
- *Time-Limited* In order for an applied sense of urgency, what completion date has been established?

Two Options for (
RAMSEY COUNTY/WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS GOAL ACTION PLAN pant's Name: Case Number: Date: plue Date: strengths will I use to accomplish my goal:	RAMSEY COUNTY/WORNFORCE SOLUTIONS GOAL ACTION PLAN Participant's Name: Case Number: Date:					
the goal and action steps against SMART criteria: Specific Measureable Attainable Relevant Time-based ctions: Once you develop your goal, identify the action steps that you will need to achieve along the way. Your action steps should eet the SMART criteria.	My Goal is: Due Date: Check the goal and action steps against SMART criteria (all must be checked): Specific Measureable Attainable Relevant Time-Limited Instructions: Once you develop your goal, identify the action steps that you will need to achieve along the way. Your action steps should also meet the SMART criteria.					
Due Date:	STRENGTH ASSOCIATED	ACTION STEPS TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOAL 1. 2.	TARGET DATE	DATE COMPLETED	SMART CRITERIA S M A R T	
Due Date:		3. 4.				
ue Date:		5.				
of next appointment: Was this goal obtained or discontinued?: □YES □NO If yes, date: what stopped you?	Date of next appoi		r discontinued?	t DYES DNO If y	ves, date:	
Personal and Professional Goals Activity

Instructions

• Write down one personal, or one professional SMART goal on the Goal Action Plan provided.

Procedures: Goal Action Plan

- Participant identifies a "pillar" of their life to focus on
- Participant and counselor determine a goal
- Participant and counselor create SMART steps together
- If used, identify incentives
- Set next appointment
 - Frequency of meetings
- GAP referenced in employment plan
- Participant brings GAP back with them to next appointment (copy also kept in file)

Incentives Purpose

- Reinforces Positive Behavior
 - Recognizing the positive changes they are making in their life through providing incentives, and positive feedback encourages the behavior to continue.
- Provides a reward for effort put into a larger goal
 Even small incentives can make a big difference.
- Keeps the momentum going
 - As participant works towards accomplishing goals, they will build their executive skills and their confidence in their ability to take on new tasks and succeed.

Incentives Use

- Type of incentive should be agreed upon ahead of time (by the end of the GAP meeting)
- Incentive should be provided soon after goal has been obtained
- Encourage the use of a variety of types of incentives (not just monetary), and let the participant choose
- Link the amount of incentive to the energy/focus/time needed to accomplish the goal

Incentives Ideas From Participants

- Pizza party for family
- Gift cards to Red Lobster/go to dinner with family
- Mall of America activity passes
- Movie theater tickets
- Clothing vouchers (Burlington Coat Factory, Walmart, K-Mart, Target, Sears, Old Navy)
- Bowling gift cards
- Kid's and adult haircut certificates
- Gift baskets (shampoo, conditioners, soaps, deodorant, lotion – for kids and adults)
- Other basic need items (ex.diapers)
- Celebrate birthdays—ex: balloons, cake mix, plates, etc.
- Museum passes
- Family portraits

- Baseball, football and basketball games for family
- Nail/hair gift cards (Ex: Empire)
- Swimming pool passes
- Gym memberships
- School supplies
- Visa gift cards
- Oil change certificates
- Pay for enrolling/equipment/gear for children's sports activities (ex: dance class, etc.)
- Valley Fair passes
- Increase community visits
- Birthday cards
- Congratulation cards
- Inspirational quotes
- Portfolio, planner, zip drives

Suzy's Goal

Small group activity – complete Suzy's SMART goal and GAP • After Suzy completes the MBS with her counselor, she has decided that her main focus is to secure full-time employment

Case Study: Suzy's GAP

Participant's Name: <u>SU</u> My Goal is: <u>Select</u> What strengths will I use to	24 GC	DAL ACTION P Case Number: nter-for my c 2009, good cor		ate: 6/17/15 ate: 6/17/15 pp://cation.cloum s, Keliable, cth
	lop your goal, identify the		eed to achieve along the way. Complete cc	
Research CC Providers, follow-up with CC list: Openings, obstance, on School bus Pourte? Due Date: <u>6/4/15</u>	Set up appointments, TOUR 2-3 CC providers	Choose a CC provider Due Date: 6/13/15	Application including Ignmunization Kelozels + submit to Provider Due Date: 6/15/15	
Date of next appointment:	6/17/15 2pm	s goal obtained or disconti	nued?: □YES □NO If yes, da	te:

Employment Plan

Employment Plans

- Employment plans will remain largely unchanged.
- MBS No reference of the MBS in EP needed
- When GAP is completed statement in EP in comment section:
 - o "Follow through with ongoing goal action plans."

Example Employment Plan

• See handout



Case Note in WF1

- The counselor writes a detailed case note "telling the story" of the meeting including explaining each area on the MBS discussed with the participant.
- Workforce One case note type: Counseling and Guidance

Case note subject line:

- Enter the letters MBS in the subject line of the case note if the MBS was completed during the meeting that is being case noted.
- Enter the letters GAP in the subject line of the case note if the GAP was completed during the meeting that is being case noted.
- If both the MBS and the GAP were completed during the meeting that is being case noted, include both acronyms in the subject line.

Example Case Note

• See handout



Participant Case File

- MBS Participant takes their MBS with them, a copy is also kept in their case file.
- To celebrate the participant's accomplishments, review the MBS (showing progress).
 - The MBS is also useful to reference when there is a lack of progress or to help the participant center their focus and identify goals.
- GAP Participant takes their GAP with them, a copy is also kept in their case file.

Evaluation

Evaluation/Data

- Goal of Evaluation: to use program data and counselor/participant feedback to better understand the impact of the GAP and MBS and coaching services as well as the overall use of the tool.
- Data will be pulled from the WF1 case note regarding completion of the MBS and GAP.
 - Will be included in quarterly report card.
- Additional data evaluated:
 - Change in earnings and hours worked
 - o Change in engagement and increase in education
 - Sanction status
- Each counselor will be asked to complete a survey in January.

Closing the Loop

PROCEDURE, REQUIREMENTS AND DOCUMENTATION EXPECTATIONS

INCLUDING: MY BRIDGE OF STRENGTH DESK REFERENCE

Language Shift

Moving from...

То...

- Prescribed goals
- Case management
- Core Activities
- Assessment
- Increased numbers
- Crisis management

- Individualized goals
- Coaching
- Meaningful activities
- Conversation
- Increased engagement
- Lifelong Learning

Review of Expectations

- Who: All participants should have MBS and GAP completed
- When: Introduce MBS, during initial meetings with participant (while completing EM).
- How often: Each participant new to counselor will have a MBS completed within first 3 months of initial meeting. GAPs will be developed when a participant has identified a clear goal.
- Start date: July 1st

 \rightarrow Each existing participant should have MBS and GAP completed within the next 12 months

EM Requirements

• Still needs to be completed once in a lifetime per participant (or more often per agency policy)

• Reason: "see case note" and explain reasoning of each section in the MBS case note (to avoid duplicating work).



My Bridge of Strength Desk Reference

• See handout



Questions?

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• Please complete the training evaluation form

References

- Public Consulting Group proposal
- Mathematica proposal
- Google images

THANK YOU...

FOR YOUR PRESENCE AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS MAKING THIS SESSION SUCCESSFUL, AND FOR THE WORK THAT YOU DO

IMPACTING OUR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES