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## Integrated Resource Team (IRT) Part 2: Comprehensive Breakdown of the IRT Approach

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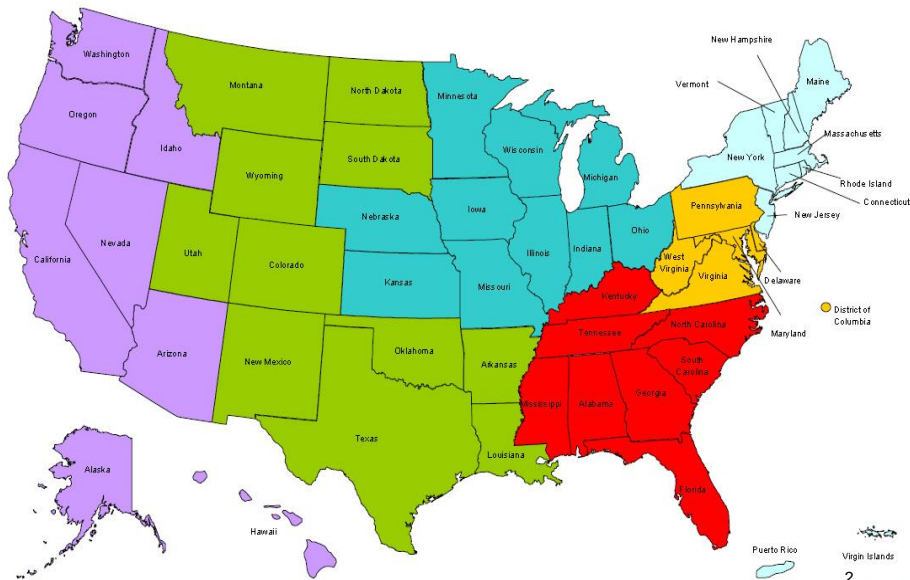
Webinar Date: 5/22/14

Presented by: *DJ Ralston and Brian Ingram*  
with *NDI Technical Assistance Team*

U.S. Department of Labor  
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## Moderators



Moderator: Randee Chafkin  
 Title: Workforce Development Specialist  
 Organization: Employment and Training Administration



Moderator: Miranda Kennedy  
 Title: Director of Training for DEI, NDI Technical Assistance Team  
 Organization: National Disability Institute



## Disability Employment Initiative



- The DEI is focused on improving the accessibility, capacity, and accountability of America's Job Centers to serve customers with disabilities resulting in education and career pathways that lead to unsubsidized employment and economic self-sufficiency.
- Training and Technical Assistance to DEI Projects is provided under U.S. DOLETA contract with NDI Consulting, Inc. and the National Disability Institute (NDI).
- Evaluation of the impact of the DEI Projects implementation and outcomes will be provided under U.S. DOL ODEP contract with Social Dynamics and its partners.

## Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the Comprehensive Breakdown of the IRT Approach training, DEI grantees will know the following:

- How Career Exploration serves as an important step in the IRT process
- The distinction between Active Resource Coordination and an IRT
- How Active Resource Coordination creates the building block to convene an IRT.
- How to convene an IRT Meeting including strategies for approaching partners
- How the IRT works hand in hand with helping customers to become enrolled in WIA Intensive and/or Training services



## Presenters



Presenter: DJ Ralston

Title: IRT Subject Matter Expert, NDI Technical Assistance Team

Organization: National Disability Institute



Presenter: Brian Ingram

Title: IRT Subject Matter Expert, NDI Technical Assistance Team

Organization: National Disability Institute

## Agenda

- IRT Review
- Coordination of an IRT
  - Career Exploration
  - Active Resource Coordination
  - IRT Meeting
    - Approaching Partners
  - WIA Access



## Background on the IRT Model

- The Disability Program Navigator (DPN) Initiative
- Disability Program Navigators (DPNs)
- Resource Gaps



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## What is an IRT?

- **An IRT is initiated on behalf of an individual with a disability who is experiencing multiple challenges in reaching an employment goal**
- **It addresses that one individual's specific needs in relation to attaining this goal.**



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## Goal of Introducing the IRT Model

- To enhance cross-agency collaboration and communication to better leverage available resources in a seamless way for an **individual jobseeker** with a disability.
- To increase enrollments in available workforce investment programs and enhance knowledge of available career options.
- To help the Workforce system and partner agencies see the benefit of resource collaboration.

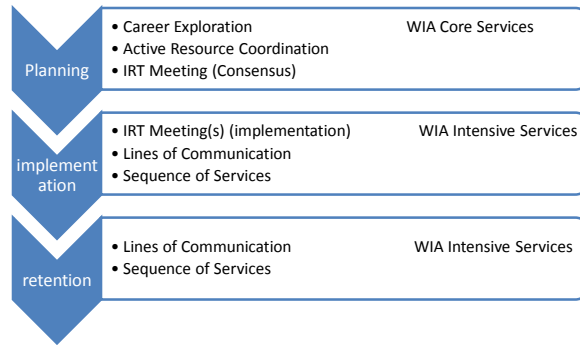


## Goal of Introducing the IRT Model

- The IRT model was developed in response to a need to increase access to WIA services for customers with Disability and /or multiple challenges to employment
- It was included in the DEI because of it's success in assisting these customers to access WIA intensive services

# IRT Flow Chart

The IRT model is designed to provide support to a customer through the entirety of a plan



## The Employment Goal

- An IRT is driven by the needs of the customer it is built around as it relates to their chosen employment goal.
- Supporting a customer as they develop and commit to an employment goal is the commencement point of the IRT process



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## The Employment Goal

- The employment goal should be a very good match to a customer's skills and interests
- The employment goal needs to meet the long term needs of the customer



- If the employment goal, is not substantial enough, or a good match, there is very little chance an IRT will be successful

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## Career Exploration

A focus on making the career exploration process more accessible can increase the accessibility of all levels of WIA services including enrollment in intensive services.

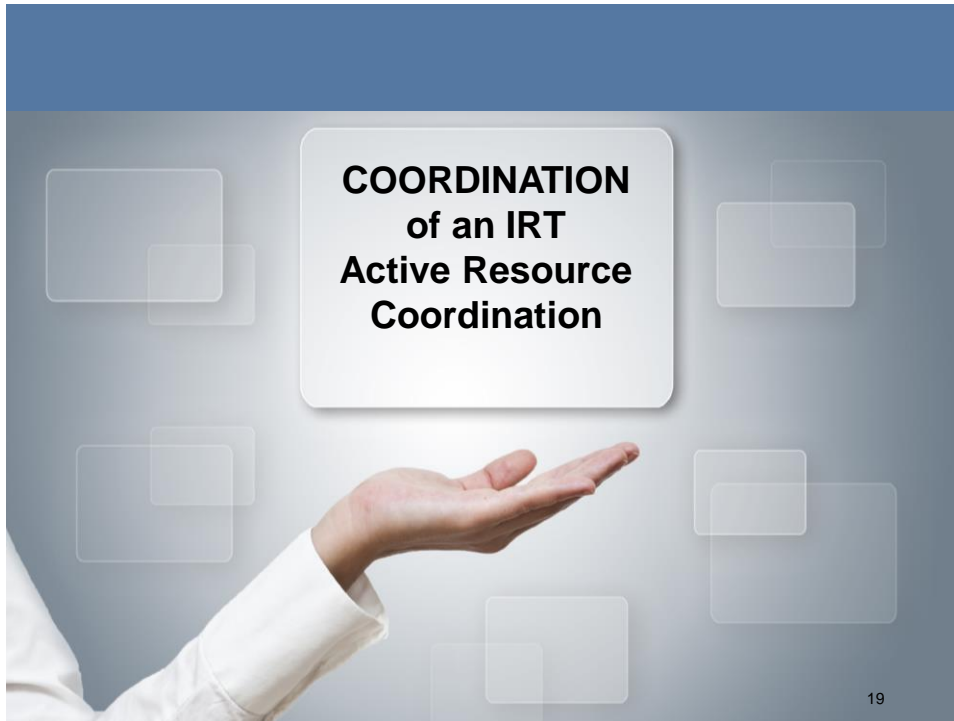
- Does your center have a career exploration process?
- Who is referred to this service, and why?
- Is this service considered part of the process associated with enrollment in WIA intensive services?
- How accessible is this process to customers with unique needs?

## Career Exploration Activity

### Suggested activity

A worthwhile activity for a DRC might be to personally attend a career exploration workshop/session/ or web based activity to directly observe:

- If it is accessible to customers who do not have any or current work history
- If it is accessible to customers who do not have any or traditional educational history
- If it is accessible to customers who need the use of accommodating technology to access the outcome of the service
- If it is accessible to customers who need the modification of existing procedures to access the outcome of the service



## What is the difference between an IRT and Active Resource Coordination?

- › **Active Resource Coordination is the process of identifying needed resources and appropriate and prioritized action steps to address specific, targeted barriers to employment experienced by an individual entering the Job Center's WIA customer flow.**
- › **Active Resource Coordination always takes place *PRIOR* to an Integrated Resource Team (IRT) being put in place. Although active resource coordination may take place without resulting in an IRT.**

***So you can have Active Resource Coordination without an IRT, but you CANNOT have an IRT without first having done some Active Resource Coordination!***

## Active Resource Coordination is:

- **Actively assisting** a customer to identify, explore, and access available resources in a way that is specific to assisting a customer achieve their employment goal,
- **Positioning** the customer in the WIA system prior to coordinating with other providers
- **Providing** customers with targeted support around coordinating their resources beyond simple referral
- **Acknowledging** that a customer often has the least amount of leverage when it comes to advocating for themselves within service delivery systems

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## Active Resource Coordination (ARC) vs. Simple referral

**ARC differs from simple referral to resources (which is a legitimate WIA service) in a number of important ways:**

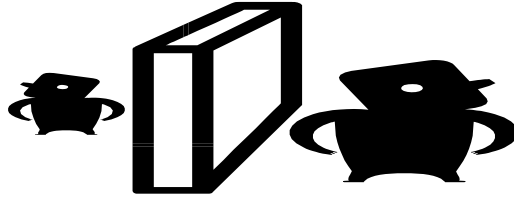
- ARC begins with an employment goal then makes referrals based on needs specific to attaining that goal.
- In ARC referrals are made internally to WIA services before or at the same time referrals are made to other systems.
- In ARC the WIA system makes an initial commitment to advocate for a customer as they engage in eligibility for additional services.
- In ARC the WIA system makes an initial commitment to take the lead in convening multiple service providers for the purpose of resource coordination.

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## Active Resource Coordination (ARC) Challenges

The implementation of ARC can present some programmatic challenges to a WIA Program. These challenges focus on

### The division of Core and Intensive activities



It is important to be aware of these possible issues and determine if they exist (and to what extent), and how they might be addressed.

## Active Resource Coordination (ARC) Challenges

### For Consideration



- The DRC should investigate the division of services into WIA Core and Intensive services as it currently operates in their job centers to determine where the activities under the DEI's definition of ARC fall.
- If the activities fall under the definition of intensive services the DRC might consider using DEI resources to provide ARC to customers while the customer engages in core services as a strategy for leveraging enrollment into WIA intensive services.

## ARC Challenges: Case Study

### The Resource Planning Meeting

The state of Oregon was funded in round 2 of the DPN initiative and region 2 (Portland Metro Area) hired a Navigator in 2004. This Navigator covered the 5 centers in the region and immediately began working with WIA staff and attempting to increase access to WIA intensive services for customers with disability and/or multiple challenges to employment. Within a few months the Navigator began to notice consistent barriers to accessing WIA intensive services for the customers he was advocating for, they were:

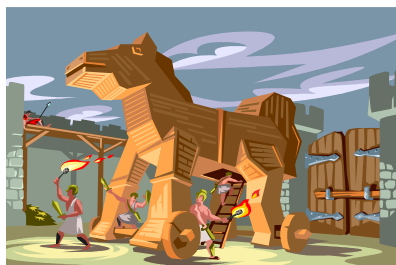
- The referral of customers with disability and/or multiple challenges to employment experiencing resource gaps to other providers and away from WIA
- Lack of Access to the job centers Career Exploration Process
- The perception that customers with Disability and/or multiple challenges to employment presented a risk to WIA performance measures due to their need for services and resources the center did not directly control

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## ARC Challenges: Case Study

To address these issues the DPN developed a two tiered strategy.

1. A career exploration workshop
2. A one-on-one follow up Resource Planning Meeting



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## ARC Challenges: Case Study

The Resource Plan document would then function as the primary focus of subsequent ARC activities

- Resource Plans:
  - Have a stated employment goal
  - Include services your system will provide
  - Include possible partner services
  - Include possible partner roles
  - Identify pieces of the multi-partner plan puzzle

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## ARC Challenges: Case Study

- **Tips for writing a Resource Plan:**
- Make employment goals as specific as possible, state specific needs around hours benefits and wages, list longer, or shorter term goals in relation to the primary goal for example:
- *Sample Employment Goal:*
- *Obtain a part time job in a warehouse to maintain housing while attending WIA funded welding certification program, upon certification obtain full time welding position at \$17-\$20 an hr. with medical benefits.*
- 2) Frame all discussion of barriers to employment as a discussion of available resources, and frame all resource discussions as a discussion of how to attain employment goal.
- 3) The purpose of a resource planning session is not to list every possible benefit or service a customer may be eligible for, but to use these possible resources to address barriers to the stated employment goal.
- 4) Use the resource plan as a tool to give context to referrals and next steps you may suggest to the customer

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## IRT Meeting

The purpose of an IRT meeting is to convene all the providers that have service commitments to a specific customer to share information about each provider's service plan and then reach consensus around three key parameters:

1. A common Employment goal
2. Sequence of services
3. Lines of communication

## IRT Meeting

### Planning the meeting

1. Identify both the resource gaps and the services and resources needed to address them then make the appropriate contacts and referrals to the services that may meet those needs.
2. Ensure that all the necessary releases are signed and in place so that information can be shared
3. Identify a location for the meeting
4. Identify a time that works for all the attendees
5. Develop an agenda for the meeting

## IRT Meeting

### Approaching Partners





## IRT Meeting

### Pre-Partner Eligibility

- Let the staff person who will be determining eligibility know you have referred the customer, and that the customer is also engaged with WIA services
- Ask the staff person who will be determining eligibility if there is anything you can do to help your customer to complete the partner's eligibility process
- Let the staff person who will be determining eligibility know that you are interested in discussing the possibility of partnering with them if the customer is determined eligible for their services.
- Try to track your customer's progress through each of the provider's eligibility processes and be willing to assist in communicating any issues or barriers your customer might be experiencing during this process to the providers themselves.

## IRT Meeting

### Post-Engagement

- Ask questions concerning the specific services that are being delivered
- Emphasize the benefits of partnering with your program that might be of great value to the customer
- Try to uncover areas where you or the partner has some flexibility within the established plans

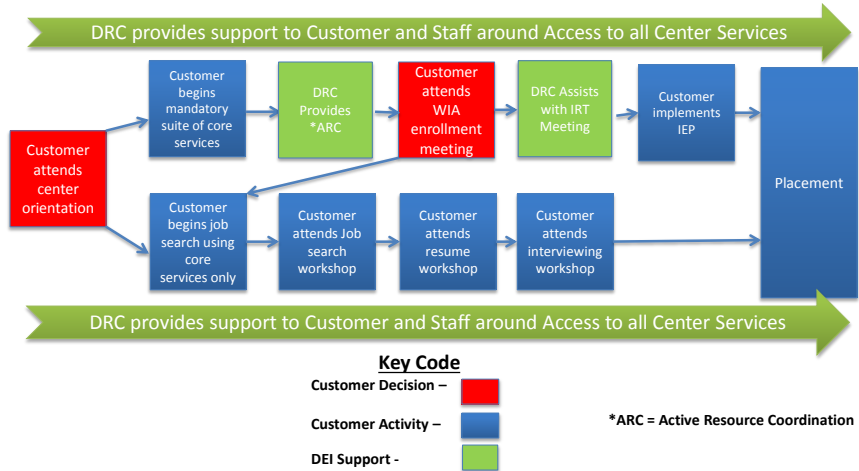
## IRT Meeting

### Facilitating the IRT Meeting/Negotiating Integrated Resource Teams

- Set up an IRT meeting to discuss a joint employment goal and plan
- At this meeting, present information gathered about customer's goal choices, needs, and YOUR program's resource commitments
- Listen to the concerns of partners in relation to identify needs concerning their field of expertise
- **Reach consensus around:**
  - Shared employment goal
  - Sequence of services
  - Timeline of services



# Sample DEI/WIA flow (Detail)



# Resources

[http://www.dei-ideas.org/chapter2-1/page2a\\_irt.cfm](http://www.dei-ideas.org/chapter2-1/page2a_irt.cfm)

- IRT FAQs
- IRT Promising Practice Brief
- IRT Video

[http://www.dei-ideas.org/chapter2-3/Nov\\_2012/RoundThreeDEISGA\\_4\\_16\\_2012.pdf](http://www.dei-ideas.org/chapter2-3/Nov_2012/RoundThreeDEISGA_4_16_2012.pdf)

The Round 4 SGA provides the most up to date definition of the IRT



## Summary

In today's presentation we covered the following:

- IRT Review
- Coordination of an IRT
  - Career Exploration
  - Active Resource Coordination
  - IRT Meeting
    - Approaching Partners
- WIA Access

## FINAL WORD FROM RANDEE



Moderator: Randee Chafkin  
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Organization: Employment and Training Administration

# Open Chat

What are your thoughts/questions about The Integrated Resource Team (IRT)?



# Please enter your questions in the Chat Room!



## Speakers' Contact Information

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# *Thank You!*

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