The New Mexico Team of Offender Workforce Development Specialists is dedicated to assisting service professionals. Through our training efforts we will develop a force of highly trained service providers who are prepared to assist ex-offenders during the transition from prison to the community. Each member of the NMOWD Team is certified as an Offender Workforce Development Specialist through the National Institute of Corrections and as a Global Career Development Facilitator.

NMOWD Team
Expanding Offender Opportunities

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Albuquerque, NM 87107

The NM OWD Team draws its membership from:
New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions
New Mexico Corrections Department
U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services
Aging and Long Term Services
Eagles Unlimited
Lifework Learning

New Mexico Offender Workforce Development Team

Offender Employment Specialist

Customized training for every professional service provider.

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**Making A Selection**

Each module below includes its objectives and time requirements for your convenience. Please select the modules you would like to receive training in, and indicate the selection using the checkbox on the left. Please keep time constraints in mind when making your selection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assisting Offenders to Plan Their Life Roles</strong></td>
<td>At the end of this module, participants will be able to describe Super's concept of career and use that concept to assist offenders with transition to their lives after incarceration.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assisting Offenders to Use Referral Services</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to categorize referral agencies, use the Referral Resource Worksheet, and make effective referrals.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Holland Theory &amp; Formal Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to state their personal career code and what it means, list primary statements of Holland's theory and apply it.</td>
<td>1.5 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Holland Theory &amp; Informal Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to define informal assessment and explain how to use card sorts, group activities, and checklists to assess interests and skills.</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Identifying &amp; Managing Barriers</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to identify most critical offender barriers to employment.</td>
<td>2.5 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Instruction and Group Facilitation</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to describe ways to work with groups, identify facilitation skills and principles of good instruction, and identify common training problems and solutions.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Job Retention</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to explain the Job Retention Process model, state common job loss indicators, identify retention planning strategies, and use them in a case study.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Job Seeking &amp; Employability Skills-Interviewing</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to explain the job interviewing process and coach offenders in effective interviewing techniques.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
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<td><strong>Job Seeking &amp; Employability Skills-Job Club</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to explain the role and responsibilities of the offender in accepting a job offer, list employer expectations, and strategies to meet them, and define job club and its importance.</td>
<td>1.5 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Job Seeking &amp; Employability Skills-Job Search</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to describe the advantages and disadvantages of various job search strategies, describe networking and its benefits, and describe informational interviewing.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Job Seeking &amp; Employability Skills-Manipulation</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to identify characteristics of manipulation, the set-up, and how to guard against it.</td>
<td>2.5 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Job Seeking &amp; Employability Skills-Job Club</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to describe the principles of facilitation, the advantages and disadvantages of open- and close-ended questions, the skill of reflection, and demonstrate the skills of reflection and questioning in an interview.</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding Diverse Offender Populations</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to identify basic offender demographics and their implications on workforce development, describe the diverse groups within the offender population, and explore personal attitudes toward diverse populations.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Using the Internet for Finding Jobs</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to identify job search websites and describe how to use them.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Using the internet to Support the Career Planning Process</strong></td>
<td>Participants will be able to describe the career planning process and how assessment and information relate to it and identify websites that can be used to support each step of the career planning process.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Training Hours:**
Series: Building Career Facilitation Skills

Curriculum: Offender Workforce Development Specialist

Skill-Building Module: Job Retention

Time Required: 2 hours

Summary and Rationale

Offenders who maintain employment in the community experience greater transition success than those who are unemployed or sporadically employed. Therefore, it is important that offender employment specialists understand how their role can support improved job retention outcomes. This module provides an overview of offender job loss indicators and interventions that can be used to improve retention.

Performance Objectives

At the end of this module, participants will be able to

1. explain the Job Retention Process model.

2. state at least four common job loss indicators.

3. identify three planning strategies that can be incorporated into the retention planning process.

4. using a case study, apply these strategies to an offender.

Resources


**Equipment**

- Easel with flip chart
- Markers
- Overhead projector, or computer and projection device
- Screen

**Materials**

- Transparencies or PowerPoint presentation for this module
- Activity worksheet: Job Retention Plan
- Activity worksheet: Job Retention Plan - revised
- Job Retention Case Studies
LESSON

CONTENT

In this module you will learn a model that identifies the basic components of effective job retention strategies for offenders, common indicators of job loss, and how to work with an offender to develop plans to minimize the potential of job loss.

As we all know, job retention is a crucial task related to an offender’s successful transition from a correctional facility to the free world as well as a key component in reducing recidivism.

Performance Objective: At the end of this module, participants will be able to

1. explain the Job Retention Process model.

Through research, review of the literature, and communication with practitioners, a model has been developed that pulls together the essential elements of effective job retention.

As you can see, this is an active model as indicated by the picture of the moving gears and the text within the gears, all of which are active-voice verbs.

Also notice that this is a multi-dimensional model with multiple gears. Each gear impacts another; when one is moving they all are moving; and no one gear stands alone.

This represents the interconnectedness and simultaneous movement of your role as it supports offender job retention by involving:
Case Planning

Communicating

Collaborating

Community

Case planning with and for individual offenders is essential to successful job retention. The case plan needs to include the following:

- Contingency plans in case any part of the action plan has to be modified
- Offender understanding of job loss indicators and a commitment to retention
- Plans for advancement beyond the entry-level job the offender may currently hold
- Coaching by you at critical times and ongoing follow-through

In an NIC study of retention in 2000, 77% of the 700 practitioners surveyed reported case management as a very important component of job retention.

Communicating as a strategy for job retention involves using good facilitation skills between and among the offender, you, the employer, the family, and collaborating agencies. Achieving and maintaining this communication involves

- genuine buy-in by all parties to the job placement and retention plan.
- continual assessment and re-assessment of the fit between the job and the ex-offender since practitioners in the 2000 study said that job match was the single most critical key to job maintenance.
- acceptance of accountability by the ex-offender, the case manager, the employer, and the collaborative
agencies for the success of the job retention plan.

- continual attempts to identify and use the strengths that the ex-offender has in job skills, personality characteristics, and support system.

The third gear, **collaborating**, highlights the importance of the various stakeholders’ – the retention team, employers, and referral agencies – continued effort in providing the services that each provides best and in dovetailing those services.

The fourth gear, **community**, reminds us that the ex-offender’s job retention plan – in order to be effective – must be surrounded by a community of individuals who have vested interest in making the plan succeed. These entities include

- the case manager representing his or her agency
- the ex-offender, who plays the key role
- the ex-offender’s personal support network, such as family and friends

**Performance objective:** By the end of this module, participants will be able to

2. state at least four common job loss indicators.

Nearly 90% of surveyed practitioners in the 2000 NIC retention study indicated that they observed job loss indicators. This fact requires that offender employment specialists develop appropriate, professional relationships with offenders that will allow early detection of job loss indicators.

The most common job loss indicators are
listed on the image now being displayed. As already stated, a good match between the offender’s characteristics and the job’s requirements was reported as the single most critical key to retention. Thus, any expression of job dissatisfaction by an offender is an important warning signal.

Practitioners overwhelmingly identified substance abuse as the most common obstacle to offender job retention…thus, it is a second critical warning signal.

The remaining items on the list – unstable living arrangements, chaotic family life, not showing up for work or missing appointments, staying out late possibly with old buddies, and expressed concern by family members – are additional clues to impending job loss.

Recognition of one or a combination of these job loss indicators by an offender employment specialist is a sign that it may be time to activate the offender’s contingency plan.

**Performance objective 3:** By the end of this module, participants will be able to

3. identify three planning strategies that can be incorporated into the retention planning process.  
There are three types of planning that can be applied to job retention for offenders:

- Retention planning  
- Contingency planning  
- Advancement planning  

Let’s look at each of these three.

In retention planning, an offender employment specialist proactively and in advance of noting job loss indicators, does the following:

- identifies potential problems related to
job maintenance
• creates a plan to address these potential problems in order to minimize risk of job loss
• builds the plan on the offender’s strengths

Reasons for engaging in such planning include the following:

• Transition out of a correctional facility is often a time of chaos and disorganization. A well-thought plan that builds on an offender’s strengths and coping skills gives the offender more control during an uncertain time.

• Criminal thinking is impulsive (spur of the moment decision-making) and lacks critical reasoning. A plan assists the offender to refrain from making impulsive decisions that may endanger job retention.

In contingency planning, an offender employment specialist works with an offender and his/her support system to develop a back-up plan to put into effect if the current job is lost. This contingency plan needs, of course, to also address the specific problems that resulted in job loss.

Contingency planning is a variation, or a second step, to retention planning. Contingency planning focuses on what to do if job loss triggers appear. A contingency plan is very similar to a crisis intervention plan in which you develop a response regarding how you will cope if an unwanted event occurs.

To create this backup, or contingency, plan, the employment specialist and the offender will

• identify the job loss triggers.
• develop appropriate responses to job loss triggers.
• develop multiple options (If A happens, I can do Plan B or Plan C.)
Research shows that role playing responses to triggers will improve the actual responses to these stressful situations.

In **advancement planning**, an offender employment specialist works with an offender, and perhaps also an employer, to develop a plan that will result in some degree of career progression. It is very common for offenders to begin employment after leaving a correctional facility with a low-paying job. This condition results in the need to work overtime to make enough money to survive. The overtime work contributes, in turn, to family problems and general fatigue.

For these reasons and because of the critical importance of having a good job match, it is imperative that employment specialists work with offenders to develop a longer-range plan that will allow them to fill a position that may be a better job match and pays higher wages. Such a plan may involve acquiring additional training or education.

Advancement planning occurs when the offender and the employment specialist set employment goals and create a plan to achieve those goals. The key to success with this approach is that the goals are incremental and achievable.

An interesting component of advancement planning is coaching offenders regarding when, how, and why to quit a job. Sometimes quitting a job is the right
choice. Other times, quitting is a permanent solution to what is a temporary problem. The reality is that work is not always enjoyable, and some days it’s a pure struggle. Role modeling and discussing coping skills, problem solving skills, and decision-making skills with an offender will increase their comfort with the reality of the world of work.

**ACTIVITY: Retention Planning (60 minutes)**

Retention planning is a proactive approach designed to prevent job loss due to an offender’s response to his or her job loss triggers. In this activity you will have an opportunity to develop a retention plan. You will

1. **Individually review your assigned client case for job loss indicators and develop a Retention Plan (page 13) which addresses the following:**

   - Identify job loss indicators (high risk situations, people, places).
   - List one or more interventions for the identified job loss indicators.
   - Develop a plan and a back-up plan for identified job loss indicators.

2. **After 20 minutes, the instructor will assign each person a partner. Each person in the pair will take a turn at**

   - briefly sharing the facts of their individual assigned client case.
   - sharing the developed Retention Plan (page 13)
• receive feedback on the plan from your partner.

• incorporate the feedback into a second version of the plan, called Retention Plan - Revised (page 14).

3. After 10 minutes, the second partner has 10 minutes to

• briefly share the facts of his or her individual assigned client case.

• share the developed Retention Plan (page 13).

• receive feedback on the plan from the partner.

• incorporate the feedback into his or her written Retention Plan-Revised (page 14).

4. After 20 minutes, the instructor will ask for participants to share job loss indicators and retention plans with the larger group.
Figure 10.1 The Job Retention Process Model
# Retention Plan

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<th>Assessment Area/Job Loss Indicator</th>
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<th>Intervention Needed</th>
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<td>Transportation for work</td>
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<tr>
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