Hello, everyone. Good afternoon and welcome to our session today on employment support for pure scenes with challenges background. Our session will be presented by Mika McNeil. My name is Becky Cagle, I'm with the University of Texas this, UNTWISE. We are part of the health and service here the you start the University of North Texas. Our webinar control panel is located on the right side of your screen but if you have any questions during this session, please use the question box located in this area. Now I would like to make sure you can hear me. Would you please type yes in the question box to let me know you're getting good reception.

Thank you. It takes a little bit to find. If you are familiar with our webinars, the platform looks a little bit different. They have made some updates recently. If you are calling him by phone only, you can send in your questions at UNTWISE.you and T .EDU. That will give you credit for the participation also. At the end of the session I will provide more information about how to receive credit for the webinar. Now I'd like to tell you a little bit about makeup. She is a consultant and a trainer at the University of Maryland school of medicine in evidence-based practice. And she trains and provides technical information assistance, and monitors the support implement programs in Maryland as well as nationally. She is also consulting in providing technical assistance to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in Baltimore and West Virginia to increase job development skill of homeless veterans the supported employment program known as a tree SEP employment specialist. Please help me welcome Mika McNeil. Go ahead makeup.

Thank you I appreciate that. Thanks for all of you have joined us today to talk about helping people who have challenging backgrounds. More about my background, I did start doing supported employment with people with a psychiatric diagnosis in 2000 that in 1998. And I trained at the University of Maryland since 2004 my primary experiences working with people in the community who are living with a psychiatric diagnosis. I always like to make sure people understand where I'm coming from. Because a lot of my references are about people who are diagnosed with with bipolar disorder, depression and things like that.

I want to get started. Hopefully, you will leave this webinar understanding how to use strength base principal to write an explanation out that letter to help people find employment who have a deficit background. You will leave this webinar with information on how to seek out employers who hire individuals who have these backgrounds. You will be surprised how many do knowingly. Hopefully, you will leave this webinar with some understanding on how to [ Indiscernible ]. For individuals who have that deficit background.

In 2009, there was a survey completed by what is now known as the [ Indiscernible ] Institute or the IPS employment center. The model of supported employment might train on is individual placement and its support. There is an entire summer New Hampshire that provided the research and continues to do research and implementation training and such in New Hampshire. They have changed their name. So you see in the slide assess Johnson & Johnson, that is what they were they are now one I call shorthanded [ Indiscernible ] Institute. When I say [ Indiscernible ] Institute. They completed a survey.
They wanted to know how many employers had knowingly hired individuals who had a -- disparity in the background. The reason why over the years there were some employment specialist out there who were actually finding jobs for individuals who had the justice and does justice involve background. So they went to those employment specialist to as them specifically what are you doing to help these folks become employed? And will you help us with the survey? There were eight states that participate in this survey. Washington DC. About 128 employers were survey pics 63% came back and said yes, we knowingly hired a person who had a felony in their background. That was pretty surprising. And so the survey went on to ask, why are what businesses stash what is your business? This gives you a bit of a idea of the businesses that had normally hired individuals without background. Accounting firms, gas stations, school districts, it let us know we came away with some -- what we see as typical employment for individuals who are entering into the community. From the justice system. A lot of times they are janitorial cleaning jobs. Or jobs of that nature. There is nothing wrong with that but that is what we tended to say. But when we started seeing retail shops, medical and health environment, it was pretty intriguing and refreshing to see that here are some of the offenses that individuals had the employers had hired and their offenses. You see sexual offense, domestic violence, reckless driving, manslaughter, gun charges. These are pretty serious offenses obviously. And even with that the individuals were able to find employment through these employers. When we asked them why, the employer can back and said basically the person who qualified was -- was qualified to do the job just as anyone else's applying for the job, the person presented well, had a resume, they had someone who was therereference or could bow to them. Whether it was a previous employer or even a family member. Or any other supporter. In the employer believed as they were leading -- reading the applicant's and resumes, the application that the applicant had made changes in their lives and they could see that the person wanted to move forward. And have a way to rebuild their lives now that they had reentered into the community.

>> The other thing that employers paid attention to what the length of time from the offense. I know that I take the employment specialist here in Maryland out into the community and train them how to engage employers. I have come across quite a few employers who hire individuals who are -- you have a justice involve background. A lot of times they want to know how long the offense was for that. It's not necessarily how long the person has come out of jail or prison, but when the actual offense took place? That is something to remember. And people are usually coming out of jail and prison with some type of crime in place. So it just employment is on that plan. So it is a very quick turnaround from the point of reentering into the community to the community to employment. Sometimes it could be anywhere from two weeks to six months. From that length of time. We need to remember is not the length of time the person was away but when the offense took place is what the employers are paying attention to.

>> The other thing that employer said is that they actually were able to see that the [ Indiscernible ] they were honest. In the actually took responsibility for the offense. In the employers felt like they could interview and meeting with the applicant that they could see that this person is really trying to make a step to change their lives for the better. They also felt that the applicant would be dependable. They thought they would show up to work on topic they knew how to do the job that they were applying for. Those were some of the other things that the employer felt motivated them to hire the individual.

>> Some things that we want to make sure the applicant understands. We are helping people prepare for employment. If we want to bash we want them to be honest up front. We don't want them to feel like they need to hide anything. Obviously, if an employer is going to move forward with an applicant,
they're going to do it background check but they want to be able to see what is in that persons background as far as it relates to any guilty charges or things like that. Again, we want the applicant to know the do need to take responsibility for the offenses. From my experience I know I work with folks who have had a justice involve background. When asked them what was the offense and what happened? Sometimes there would be this tone of if this person had not been there I would not have brought them. For me that is not taking responsibility for what you did. That is actually putting the blame on the person that was robbed. So we want to hear the person take responsibility. Yes, I made a mistake. This is something that was poor judgment. I served my time for doing it. I don't want to be in that situation again. Obviously, dressing well. And then talk about work experience. Really show what skills you have when you were on the resume or in the interview. Many times people do come out of the jail or prison system with work detail experience. So I think it's really important to even put that on the resume. There are ways to design resumes around work experience that happened in jail or prison. Have good references obviously. And if possible, provide information about the individual bonding letter. If they don't have one, we encourage folks to work on being bonded. I will talk a bit more about bonding as we move forward.

>> There are some things to think about as a vocational stop. Making sure that we actually know the clients work history. As an employment specialist or vocational specialist, and nowadays is much easier to know the person's history. Because of the Internet and different websites that have public assess to people with justice involve records. We have Maryland case search back if anyone has been charged or convicted in Maryland system, we can put that person's name in and their record will come up. Also, it's important to have conversations. I know it can be awkward. Having this conversation. But it's important to have them. Again, I like to tell stories. One of his provider, I filled out an application for a gentleman and he got the job and everything was great wonderful. He worked for about two weeks. And then I asked him, have you ever been charged or convicted of a felony and he told me no. And so after about two weeks I get a call back from the employer who shared with me his background check came back and we will have to let them go. Why they hired him before the background check came back I don't know. I see that is a common practice. Anyway, I typically don't like to tell my clients you have been let go or fired. But in this case I did because I needed to understand what happened here. And as it turned out, I did not do my job. My client actually did have an extensive background. Lots of misdemeanors. Because of his mental health diagnosis he actually did not believe that he committed any of the offenses on his background. And so in hindsight, what I could have done was probably, researched it better myself. But had more intense conversations about some barriers that that person may feel could come up and also talking to that person's family members send doing other natural supporters in their life. Because they may have a history to share with me. So it is important that we know what our clients history is. And that they know and understand what they are justice to involved history is as well. Also staff, we want to make sure you strength-based language. We want to encourage her. When we were using strength-based language, we are talking to our clients and using it, we might be writing documentation, using strength-based language. But it's also important to encourage our clients to use strength-based language. The -- for an example, a lot of times when people come out of the judicial system they come out with a culture of prison or the culture of jail. And sometimes people are not called by their name. By their first name. Or the last By their first name. Or the last name. Sometimes they are given a number. Like an inmate number. Or a cell number. Or there is going to be a nickname pick in the example I'm trying to give is that when someone is no longer in that environment and they still refer to themselves as cellblock number this or that, actually, no, you are Jimmy Smith. Your human being. You are a person.
Or some people come out and say am a robber, a murderer. No, that is not your title. You are a person who is looking for employment and your name is Jimmy Smith. That is one example of how to use strength-based language to help people live their self-esteem. Encourage them. And then as we are writing letters and things like that, we will use that strength-based language in those letters. We want as much is possible to reduce the stigma that people bash person may feel. It will not happen overnight. We have to work with an individual one step at a time to help them understand how to use the strength-based language as they are describing their offenses and themselves.

>> We will do a little exercise. This is the power of length that strength language and strength base exercise. Normally when I do this I’m standing up in front of a room full of people and they have the exercise in front of them. But, I thought we could still accomplish this. In this webinar. So here on the left you will see a list of deficit based language. Schizophrenic, borderline, unrealistic, weakness. This is language and terminology I was raised up in the mental health system using pick medical documentation. These are the words that I’m using. But what -- what I’m asking is we shift and -- from using this deficit based language into more strength-based language. Instead of saying a schizophrenic or water line, a person say a person living with schizophrenia. A person diagnosed with borderline personality disorder. What I am asking you to do is take a stab at may be one or two and what would you replace for some of the words on the left? I’m assuming Rebecca, there is a way that folks could answer the question box? Can they write that in there?

>> Just type it in the question box.

>> I will give folks a few more minutes. Just pick one. I did the first one so you can pick that. -- So you can't pick that one. I really gave it away.

>> A person with schizophrenia or with a borderline personality.

>> Okay. So I will move on to the next slide. Which will give us some of the suggested. Notice I said suggestion. The suggestions I will offer don’t mean nice speak only strength-based alternatives. There are many other strength base alternatives we could use. The clinical case manager, we could say a recovery coach. For frontline staff we could say direct support staff. Something that I personally stop saying is in the trenches or out in the field when I working outside of my office. I used to always say amount of field. The truth of the matter is I it out in the community. In the community people are living in. People are trying to find employment in. And to again reduce some of that deficit language being used. Non-strength-based. I just started saying community. That -- people don't live in fields and they are not trying to find jobs out in the field. A person living with substance use. Employment housing. If you’re familiar with the [ Indiscernible ], you may know that when they [ Indiscernible ] they certify that they no longer listed as substance abuse. They change the language to substance use. You would say living with or recovering from. Treatment team would be recovery team. High functioning bursting -- versus low function. I have also heard people say -- instead of setting high functioning say they are very independent. They don't need as much support or something of that nature.

>> Unrealistic, the suggestion is idealistic or has high expectation. If not compliant that noncompliance, person disagrees with work chooses alternative treatment. In my world, this gets used a lot. Resistance to treatment, resistance to medication. It's that they disagree with the treatment and want to choose another way of treatment.
So we see barriers to change, this is promoting a life worth living. It puts -- [Indiscernible] for the last example, this is a treatment -- treatment as a tool in recovery. Again, these are just suggestions that come from the strength-based curriculum out of Harvard. Also it's part of the person centered planning curriculum by Dr. -- by Dr. Noel Adams. This is something that has been taught largely in the state of Maryland. And across the country. In the recovery world. And in the mental health world. And we have seen some changes as we build our documentation around more strength-based language. It paints a different picture of the individual.

With that, the purpose of making -- of me bringing strength this language in this webinar is to talk about how to write a letter explanation. It would be attached to the application for the individual who is applying for the job. This can be a hard copy attached Burke or, to an application. I also recognize many applications are electronic but this can also be uploaded electronically. This is an example for Jeffrey Smith. It says dear Mr. William, in 2007 I was addressed to Fort carrying a gun. I was sentenced to two years probation which I concluded without violation I have not had any arrests or charges since that incident. The point of the first paragraph is to capture the leaders -- readers attention. The recruiter or the employer. So that they know, yes, you have to answer that question have you ever been charged and convicted of a felony? Then you would attach the letter. Please see attached. The first paragraph should be something that identifies this is what the charge was. And here is how long ago it happened. Here is what my sentence was. And here is how I completed it. And I haven't had any incidents says. You want the reader of the letter of it explanation to keep predicted the next paragraph is I recognize my behavior and decisions and I made at that time were not good. I recognize I not valued my life but the people around me. Again, going back to what employers told in the survey, that people took responsibility. They expressed remorse. Then here is this coming out in this letter to say that I know I made a bad decision. I want to make better decisions. I take responsibility for what I did. And I am moving forward in a positive way. As I pursue employment. At that point I decided I needed more structure so a landed a series of jobs that did not offer any structure. I decided to get into a trade. I completed a course in 2012. And have maintained the certificate ever since. This is showing some commitment to time in education. To learning. To follow through. This is what employers want to see when they are looking for an employee. Doesn't matter if an employer, they want to see [Indiscernible]. We want to have all applicants get ahead in the competitive employment as we know they're going to be so many applicants applying for the same position. I also went back to school in 2011 obtained my Maryland high school diploma. I'm currently in tending technology school. I think I am an excellent candidate for the position in your company. I would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you and further discuss my progress as well as the schools best skills I have for the job in your company. Thank you for your consideration. This is one example of a letter of explanation. Usually that's using strength-based language. I have another letter of explanation. Spit in early 2012, I respond to that I had negative soul. I was [Indiscernible] I have now been in treatment for four years and have had no other incidents. Mental health treatment makes it possible for me to make safe and responsible decision. The reason why I like to use two samples of a letter of explanation is obviously the first one is a letter of explanation for the offense. But this one is a letter of explanation for the offense as it relates to the mental illness. I recognize that with disclosure a person does not have to disclose a disability. But if they choose to disclose their disability, that they can use reasonable accommodations for the Americans disability act. If they choose to disclose their disability so they can get accommodations, it is okay to write a letter of explanation that identifies the mental health diagnosis within the letter of explanation ultimately, it will be up to the individual to choose whether or
not they are going to disclose which is going to show how the letter of explanation will be written. As it reads, I want to [Indiscernible] recognize that I was living with his symptoms undiagnosed, is not deflecting blame. It is identifying that there was something, there was a barrier in place. That was causing me to make really poor decisions and once I recognized it, I was able to get treatment for. So I do not -- identify [Indiscernible] it is not shifting responsibility in any way. I would appreciate an opportunity to meet and share with you the experiences and successes I've had since reentering into the community. The time I spent working at a shelter. The time I worked for the administrative [Indiscernible]. Either to learn and enhance my scale and I know I can do the work that you need done. I also bonded by the Federal bonding program. While I do not have a lengthy work history, you'll for my work ethic is strong. So again, this is just identifying what is true and honest about this person. They may not have the best work history. But, there is some experience that is happened since reentering into the community. There may have been some experience before entering into the jail or prison. Again that will come out in the resume. But here we are at least letting the employer know in the letter of explanation that I am still a good candidate. For who I am, I am still a good candidate. And I am willing to put forth the effort and work I need to work with in your business. Again, this is what we heard a lot from the employers when reviewing the surveys information.

>> I'm not sure if people are familiar with it [Indiscernible]. It's a movement that started during the Obama administration. It has grown a lot since then. Your heard me mention earlier on the application you have to answer the question, have you ever been charged or convicted of a felony? In the boxes, it is saying that you don't have to answer that question. That box is gone. It has been banned and not on application. It may still physically beyond the application or in an electronic application. But if you are in a state that recognizes on the box, or any county or city that recognizes been the box, is probably going to be a disclaimer on the application that says the question does not have to be answered. It's usually a bigger corporation that has one template or form for their applications. And maybe in other states for that corporation and the box does not exist. So that is why that disclaimer may be somewhere where you can see. With a box is completely removed. So it what happens it delays the background check. And it's asked later on in the hiring process. So the person actually gets through the application review. They get through the interviewing process. They may even get to the reference process. And that is looking at personnel references and past employer references. Before the question or the background check is being done. At that point, if someone chooses to, which would be a very specific conversation between the employment specialist and the client, they may still choose to attach the letter of explanation to their application. Or they may introduce the letter of explanation during the interview. But that is something you will work out with the client. Ultimately, the background check will eventually be run. So it will be seen. At what point does the applicant want to go ahead and introduce that background with a letter of explanation. But it does remove that barrier that we see. Because right now, in what I have seen over the years is that when the application comes through, as soon as they see that box that says yes, there is a charge for conditional felony, the application is then put in a void pile. Not reviewed any further. The person will not be called in for an interview. So that track for employment has stopped banning the box keeps it going a little longer. There are 24 states and about 100 cities that recognized in the box. I can tell you in Maryland Baltimore city recognizes ban the box for three or four years. Washington, DC which we border Emma some of the clients to find jobs in Washington, DC. Has been the box but the county, Montgomery County, I keep hearing has ban the box. No one can confirm that. Even the employment specialist working in that county have noticed they are not seeing the question on
applications as much as they had in the past. And there’s also talk about making the box a more statewide movement. I have not heard much more on that lately.

>> This link here, if I can get it to open -- can you see that? National employment project. Spent yes, that is showing up.

>> Okay. That link I just clicked on will give you more information about them the box. And it will give you the most recent updates on cities and counties and states that recognized ban the box. If you have some time, I will scroll down, you can go and click on your state or cities in your state, I will click on Maryland. Look at that, Montgomery County. Then you click on the county and it will give you more information about what applies in the county. And then you would be able to move forward if they are recognizing as the employment specialist how to best advise your client as you are moving forward with their vocational rehabilitation effort. I’m going to click on -- that is not what I wanted to do. I will click on Texas. I think the majority of attendant -- attendees are in Texas pics -- Texas. So we have Austin, Dallas County, San and Tony -- San Antonio, and Travis County.

>> I will click Austin. This applies to city and private employers. Background checks only after conditional offer of employment. Wow. That even pushes the person further along in my opinion. Background checks are required for some position. Corporate EEOC criteria [ Indiscernible ] public and private employer. So, if you are an employment specialist and working in Austin, Texas, negative information about how to -- this applies in the community your client lives in. I think it’s great. To be honest with you, so I don't have a caseload anymore, I wish this existed when I had a caseload.

>> Moving on. Maybe. Individuals -- let me make sure I am on task. I did mention bonding earlier. I'm not sure how many folks are familiar with bonding. It is a federal program. It provides bonding for anywhere from the first six months of employment for hard to place applicants. There criteria -- the criteria about making sure that we understand what the bonding program is about. So we want to understand it as the individual helping our clients find employment. It's basically an insurance plan. It protects the employer so to speak. So if the employer hires someone who would be considered an at risk employer, and that person were to cause a monetary loss of monetary funds, then that employer would be able to get that money back because the person -- the employee was bonded. A person can be bonded and implements of $5000, 10,000, it depends on the individual and how they apply for the bonding letter and what they need. Most people get bonded for about $5000. And when a person goes to an employer, they let them know they have a bonding letter, that can enhance that person's possibility of becoming employed by that employer. So people that are eligible for bonding are justice involved applicants, people Rick covering from substance use, -- people recovering from substance use, people receiving Social Security entitlements, or poor credit history. -- I believe veterans are also eligible for bonding. There is no cost to the applicant as far as I know. I don't think that has changed. But if there were caused, some people may be able to have that cost waived. The fee waived. For anybody who works closely with your vocational rehabilitation Regency in your state, sometimes the vocational rebid television agency itself has people who are bonding experts. -- Vocational rehabilitation agency itself has people who are bonding experts. We have counselors. Sometimes the counselor can help the employment specialist help the client figure out ways to get the bonding going. I do have a couple of agencies here in Maryland that actually bond every client that comes through their door. By their door there is a ploy -- it's a ported employment or. If they are going in for supported employment services, then supported employment program will get the person bonded. At intake. And this link here -
- this link will give you more information about binding. It gives information for employers, different forms and toolkits people may need to get started with bonding. You see the video here. I would encourage folks to check out this website. Bonds for job.com. Where you will have access to the webinar afterwards. You should be able to click on that link and get yourself to this worksite. I think I have another link later on in the PowerPoint that actually identifies who your bonding coordinator is. So each community has their own bonding coordinator. And it will give you the name of the bonding coordinator and their contact information. I think that link will come up soon. The other thing we want to make sure we are clear on is the them ploy misstep has understanding that expungement. Some individuals can have their records the response. We need to pay attention to understanding how to explain expungement. Right now misdemeanors can be expunged. But felonies cannot. Usually if someone has a felony, they will end up being pardoned even -- either by the governor of their state or by the president of the United States. But there's also a movement in DC, because DC is not a state and it's been really difficult to navigate around expungement's in Washington, DC. Now DC has made it possible for some people to have their records with felonies expunged. There's been a big movement around that. It would definitely be worth looking into your local community to find out what your expungement laws are. There is usually a cost. For a single case, here in Maryland, where people can get their fee waived. It's important to know that if a person does put into have their record expunged, to make sure that they put it in the court where the arrest took place. So you don't want somebody to put in for an expungement in Montgomery county Maryland word to -- where it took -- when it took place in Prince George County. Be sure to make sure when the paper works but in that the request is going to the place where the person or the offense took place. You find out -- when you found it has been expunged, you need to reach out to the reporting entity to make sure it has been removed. That can be done by checking the mail and possibly writing a letter to see that the information has not been removed. If you see that, the reporting entities really do not know that an expungement hasn't happened. They are taking public records. They're putting it on their website. It doesn't always translate back when in an expungement has happened. If you go to K search.com, once an expungement happens, we would go on and put that person's name and pick to see that it individuals information has been removed. And then if not, we would take the necessary steps to reach that reach out to that antedate to ask them to remove the information. Maryland now has expungement.com. You can actually take the docket number or case number, cut and pasted into expungement.com. And it will tell you whether or not it is expungement and how to go about getting it expunged. I don't think all states have. I've just learned about that this year. And really have not had a chance to utilize it. I think that is great. It makes things a lot easier.

>> These are more links that you all can use to get more information about state specific information. This one is not coming up so good. Let's see. Well, let's try that again. So this expungement and criminal information is not loading properly on my end. Wait a minute. I may have spoken too soon.

>> Let's see if I can get it over here. Okay. Here you can click on your state. I will go to Texas. Click on that. This will give you information about what can be done for criminal records in the state of Texas. So I encourage folks to look into that. Look into that link. Also, this is what I was talking about. Where you should be able to figure out who your state bonding coordinator is. They've change the website a bit. They used to have a list of all the states. Apparently now you have to type it in. Again, research -- resources that will be helpful. I don't think it's just typing in Texas will work. Yes, there is a name for the bonding service coordinator. The address and also a phone number and an email. Again, I think it is my
understanding, not everyone on the webinar, not every participant is from Texas. So if you are not, please take advantage of this and type in your states information and see what you can learn.

>> I think I have a couple of questions for you about this. When working with someone, how much time do you think a provider needs to carve out to look at them taking care of it -- expungement or to get bonded? How much time do you think that typically is going to take?

>> So the bonding process is fairly efficient. And can happen in a matter of weeks. Again, the few programs I referenced in Maryland built the bonding at the intake process. In a few weeks they had their bonding letter back. In most cases, during the intake process, it takes anywhere from 30 to 40 days or so to get the whole thing rolling for the individual. I think as far as a timeframe, it would nicely roll into that for bonding. For expungement, that takes a little longer. I'm not clear specifically on how long. But I would definitely say you want to give folks a few more months in that. That doesn't necessarily mean that you could not search for employment during that time. If you're using some of the other tools and ideas, with a letter of explanation, and the person's body, an employer may actually go ahead and hire the individual even though there is -- they're still in the process of working through the expungement. I don't know effect gets the answer. Bonding a few weeks and expungement a couple of months.

>> Yes. Thank you.

>> Was there another question?

>> We may have some at the end.

>> Moving on here. Another tool that folks can use his life mapping. This is something that came from this survey. That was conducted. With life mapping there is actual tools. It's just a regular sized piece of paper. At has barely similar set up. In the middle it's the applicant's name. In surrounding the center are these other pieces. And you are asking a point, who in your life has the power to hire or earn their own business? Asking who in your life. These are people that know the applicants. When we go out and do job development and walk up to an employer we don't know, we call it a cold call. But in this case, with life mapping, these are what would be called warm calls. Because they know the individual already. They know their background, they know their circumstances, and if it's a family member, they've known them all their lives in most cases. The applicants might say my managers not my mom manages an insurance office. And my friend owns a bridal shop here now you have people who know the applicant. They know their circumstances. They know what was going on in their life most likely when things took place in that persons life. And so is the employment specialist, you could then approach these employers as you would any other employer. We are not saying we want these people to show favoritism. We still want folks to go through the competitive hiring process and to be hired fairly. Based on their work experience and things of that nature. But we are approaching them as we would any other employer. We would identify as an employment specialist, how we support our clients and employers. But we also know that because this is a warm call, that the potential employer may be more willing to hire our applicant. Sometimes though, I've seen families that shunned away or scared away from hiring their family members who have a challenging background and/or a disability because they feel like when I sing them in my family environment there is so much going on. And that person needs so much attention that I just don't think it would work in a working environment but honestly, people change when they get in a work environment. They recognize and through us is employment staff culture coaching them, we are helping them learn and understand that you are in a work environment. But as your employer's Emma --
we want to explain to family member employers that this is the same attention and service that we would provide any employer. And we would explained that this person has been through the same process. There are things that you have had to deal with in your family environment, these may not even the service in this environment. It takes a little bit of talking through and helping to work through, but it has worked well. I was in a situation years ago, where person works for the family business. In the employment specialist asked the dad, the dad said it's too much when we are at home. We just don't have time. Were what we would have to do any work environment. The employment specialist said I hear what you said. He came back a week or so later and he approached the dad as he would any other employer. He explained things. From an employer employment specialist perspective. The dad said fine, give it a try. He hired his son. The business was moving -- molding teeth, and so what he was able to do was be responsible for mixing the ingredients is that eventually mold it to the teeth. He would mix that up and give it to the dad and that dad would go on and mold the teeth. It worked out really nicely. It's something to think about when you think about job development for individuals without challenging background.

>> Job development strategies. I encourage folks to really get out there in the community and visit the employers before they job seeker. To build the relationship with the employer. Across the board. Not necessarily -- it's very important to get out and the community and talk to and meet employers. Find out what their needs are. And if you do this prior to the job seeker meeting the employer, it gives you an opportunity to build a rapport and really give you a foot in. And gives the client a foot in as they then do submit their application. I recognize that you can best do this when the applicant has agreed to disclosure. The applicant is going to disclose if they have a disability. But if they are not going to disclose the ability test disability, and it's just about the person with the justice involved background, there's really no requirement for agreement of disclosure because there will be -- the employer will run the background check and they will see eventually that there is a justice involved background. Talk to the person who has the power to hire at that job, though. It's one thing to walk in and talk to her receptionist or talk to an associate. But if you don't talk to the person who has the power to hire, you really haven't talked to anyone. So when I walk into a business, I always ask is the hiring manager available? Where's your HR department? Who is the hiring person? How do I get to that person? Once I get to the hiring person, that I do my little spiel. It's also important to find out what the company's policy is. I discourage people from saying, do you hire people with a felony? Or do you hire people who are ex-offenders? If you notice, I've been saying justice involved background. The entire time of the training it is a more strength base language. Instead of saying that, and asking that question, the question is what is your policy about hiring individuals who are justice involved? For instance, sometimes employers will look at you and say what? I would quickly follow that up with since you run background checks. Tell me, specifically, what is your policy? I've had Home Depot tell me we don't hire people who have felonies on their records. I have had Lows tell me, we will hire somebody with a felony bow we look at each case individually. I have had one store tell me they specifically know. We don't hire people with felonies. I've target tell me if we see [ Indiscernible ] merchandise on background we will not hire the person. I've had [ Indiscernible ] tell me they higher -- the main thing they look at is how long from the offense and what the offense was and that will help determine where they put them in the grocery store. For instance, if it is theft, then they probably will not per that person on the cash register. That will not put that person in the cash register. What is your policy around hiring people who are justice involved quite that way when you know what the policy is, when you go back and look at your caseload, with the applicant that you are working with, and you know there is a felony here, or a
theft merchandise here, you will not take that theft merchants dies applicant to target. Because you
know target will not hire that person. It really cuts down on some heartbreaking moments when the
person gets so far along in the application process and then stopped when the background check comes
back. Can be devastating for the individual, for the family members, and ultimately for the employment
specialist because you put so much work into this particular employer for this client. And you thought
everything was going great and then you get hit with the wall of no. So just having that understanding of
what is the company's policy and looking at your caseload and figuring out who is the best applicant to
take to this employer.

>> Keeping track of your employer contacts is so important. And having some type of tracking tools it
lets you know the demographic information. Address, phone number, name, contact person. Keeping
track of that can be very helpful. Maybe someone isn't hiring at the moment but you have me the
contact. Or maybe they are hiring at the people that you are searching employment for at that time just
that don't have the experience the employer is looking for. And then you'll get someone in your
caseload down the road. And you will remember that. And I have that employer and go to your contact
list. And reach back out to that employer.

>> The processes. Once an application has been submitted, basically, especially with the online
applications, figure out what the hiring process is actually before submitting the application. For the
online application, my question is to the employer, once an application is submitted, what is your hiring
process? How do you go about retrieving the application? Does your headquarter send it to you? Is it a
red light, green light, red light situation. Keywords? Are you able to pull the application? If you can figure
out what the hiring processes, it will help you better prepare yourself and your client to the next step.
Once the application is submitted. In finding out if they are willing to pull the application. If they are,
who is the person that I is the employment specialist, that I need to contact to ask them to pull the
application? It's better to know ahead of time because that way you submit the app, you pick up the
phone, you call that person. You say this is Mika, I spoke to you the day. My client has submitted an
application. His name is Jimmy Smith. You mentioned you would be willing to pull. And yes I will pull that
application. That puts your clients above all other applicants a little bit faster.

>> With this strategy, it's better to know who the contact person is prior to submitting the application
because if you wait until you submit the application, and then you reach out to the employer knew try
to figure out who to why call or who do I contact to pull this application, sometimes it can take two or
three days to figure that out. And in the meantime things have been rolling. And the application may be
gone. And so by gone I mean in an electronic world, it may not have met the standards they were
looking for. And so they have discarded the application. And they are not able to pull it. Another thing I
have said to employers when I'm asking about whether they are willing to pull the application, I will say
what would prevent an application from making it to you? I want to know that. They will tell me if they
left anything playing. Availability. And they will tell me something else and I might say some of my
applicants don't have the best work history. They don't have the best they don't look the best on paper
but once you meet them and realize the type of employee you could have, you may be sold on working
with this person or hiring this person. And so it's really trying to get the employer to hear me. And being
willing to pull the application just in case it will end up not being discarded. Again, I need that
application to be moved up front of the pile so that it can be pulled by the employer. I think it's
important to say thank you.
We are past 2:00 now. The attendees, if you want to stay on, you may. Please review the information about how to read last year certificate if you are listening by phone.

I’m sorry.

I did not realize I ran out of time.

Saying thank you is a good thing to do a thank you card. Drop it off or put it in the mail. Thank them for taking the time to speak with you. And the last tran20 approach is [ Indiscernible ] getting back to work. I’m here in the community to learn about employees need. Do you have a moment to talk with me? You come back at a more convenient time? There’s a lot of stuff I left out of the approach. I’m trying to get the employer to talk to me and agree to hear me out or answer questions. [ Indiscernible ] is just quick. I am out here looking for employment. I’m helping people meet their needs. The employer love to let us know what their needs are. Ask questions. As with their hiring policy. Explain how you support employees. Ask if they have any questions for you. If you’re working in rural communities, look to your agency partnerships. Most agencies have board members. Look to the board members. Find out who within the agency who partners with the agency that owns businesses or is in the business community. And asked them about potential employers that they can refer you to. And would there be a reference for you. Any employer you are currently working with me want to be a reference. Any employer you have a great relationship with, asked them if they would be willing to be an employee the reference. Pay attention to community events that happen. Somebody put them together. So there can be very great opportunities for employment. Especially in rural communities where there aren’t a whole lot of businesses in whatever [ Indiscernible ]. You can get great exposure by figuring out what community events are happening. Who puts them on. And what support they need. I’m sorry I ran out of time. I am done.

Any questions?

You had me on the edge of my chair. I have learned so much. Does anyone have any questions for Mika? I think you have answered the ones that were there. At this time I want to thank you so much for being with us today and sharing this wealth of knowledge and experience with us.

You’re welcome. Thank you for happening -- having me?

We have recorded the webinar and it will be posted on the you into website. And UNTWISE will send you an email with an evaluation link for this webinar. We really appreciate you completing this survey the feedback is vital for us in approving -- improving our webinar listings for a certificate of completion will be uploaded for all of your users in your portal in the next 3-5 days. As always, we are offering Searcy credits for the session. Please contact us at UNTWISE if you need a Searcy form. I want to thank everyone for their attendance and attention. It’s late afternoon, Mika. I hope you all have an excellent day. Thank you so much.

Thank you.

The webinar has ended.

[ Event concluded ]