

Direct Care Personnel Recruitment, Retention, and Orientation

by
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ABSTRACT

Several recent studies have shown that a lack of financial resources has historically been the primary obstacle to recruitment and retention of direct support professionals who provide services and support to people with disabilities. Given the limited funding available for most non-profit organizations, this report highlights incorporation of direct support staff autonomy, strong supervisory support, and effective training delivery methods as cost-effective alternatives to overcome the financial crisis. In particular, this report also recommends a systematic design of recruitment, retention, and orientation strategies based on a wide variety of direct support professional incentives and past experience.

FOREWORD BY JIM BEATY AND NATHAN PERRY

GOOD STAFF, BAD STAFF, NO STAFF AT ALL

To people with disabilities like us, it is really simple—if agencies have good staff, we have good lives. If agencies have bad staff who aren't trained, don't understand our disabilities, or have attitude problems, we suffer the effects.

We've been through the system, that's for sure! Institutions, group homes, special education, supported living, workshops, real jobs, and semi-independent living. We've had more staff than we can count, some good and some bad. But most of them have been caring and nice.

It affects us when there are no staff to hire or when staff leave. When there are not enough staff to work with us, it means that we sit around and are bored. For us, this leads to doing things that get us into trouble, like gambling, buying lottery tickets, fighting, or spending our money so we don't have any to pay our bills. It makes us feel like we are put on the back burner and neglected because there is no one there to help us with our shopping, banking, bills, solving problems, or working in the community.

When staff whom we really like are hired and then leave, it makes us feel lost and angry. It feels like we lose a friend and companion. There are a lot of past staff whom we really liked, but haven't seen in years and now miss. It seems like we just get to know them, and then they give up on us and quit. Then we have to start all over. Sometimes it makes us feel violated because they say they really care and are interested in our lives, but then they leave.

We don't like it when staff get hired whom we don't know or haven't met. Most of the time, we get to interview new staff and get to know them before they are hired. But sometimes they just show up.

Also, it is important for staff to be trained to understand us as people with specific disabilities. If staff don't understand Tourettes or autism, there is no way that they can understand us and provide the support that we need to live successfully in the community.

We think that it is really important that agencies and government do whatever they can to help people with disabilities, find staff who understand us, want to work for us, and are willing to stick by us. We also think that our staff need to get paid more money and be respected by society.

Jim Beaty and Nathan Perry are two consumers of services provided by direct support professionals in the community.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

This study examines the recruitment, retention, and orientation of direct support professionals (DSP) who provide service and support to people with disabilities. Staff who work and support persons with disabilities are leaving for other agencies that can offer higher wages. Many leave the disabilities service sector entirely.

More specifically, agencies like the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centers (SARC), which represents more than 10,000 people in Saskatchewan (60% of whom are persons with disabilities), have a shrinking pool of applicants from which to select. Those who apply for positions are less experienced and educated than those previously hired. Applicants themselves might have difficulties with language and communication, which makes supporting persons with disabilities even more challenging. Trained and competent care staff who are passionate for, and have a commitment to, ensuring people with disabilities enjoy full citizenship are in high demand. Recruitment processes are more costly than ever before and a hiring process can take months to complete. According to a breakdown provided by SARC (Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centers, 2002), the recruitment, hiring, and training cost of new care staff costs more than \$3,300 per employee. One should note that this amount does not include overtime paid to other staff while the position is not filled, opportunity cost of employees who leave their duties to conduct the recruitment or facilitate orientation and training, or lost productivity costs while the new hire is still training.

High turnover rates are a prevalent problem in this industry. For example, Massachusetts agencies are facing a 30-50% turnover rate. Ongoing vacancies lead to poor quality care and an increase in complaints (Connolly et al, 2000). Low wage levels also seem to be a long-term unsolved problem that lead to turnover (Lockey, 1999).

A recent interview (Governor's Planning Council on Mental Retardation [GPCMR], 2000) clearly demonstrates that the DSP profession not only involves caregiving, but also supporting, facilitating, and even advocating. DSPs are expected to possess an array of these skills. Currently, DSPs are challenged by the increasing needs of specialized health care, community inclusion, and individual support.

OBJECTIVES

This human resources study is part of a recently developed SARC human service plan to achieve a vision of persons with disabilities being able to remain a part of the Saskatchewan landscape and enjoy full citizenship in the province.

This study's primary purpose is to provide input into a cost-effective human resources plan for DSP. In particular, the major objectives of this study are to: (1) identify

the factors contributing to employee recruitment and retention; (2) examine existing practices in other organizations; and (3) provide a guideline and set of strategies to recruit and train new hires and retain current staff. With this set of strategies, each agency should be able to construct a well-tailored human resources plan, as well as answer frequently asked human resources questions, such as:

Recruitment

- What education and/or training is desirable before hiring?
- What job and/or life experience should a new hire possess?
- What values and beliefs should recruits hold?
- What behaviours indicate these values and beliefs?

Retention

- Why do people leave or stay with an agency? Why do they leave the field?
- What might convince an uncommitted employee to stay?
- What is the position/wage/reason/tenure of those leaving an organization?
- What effect does staff turnover have on clients?

Training and Orientation

- What kind of induction and orientation forms a realistic expectation of the organization?
- What are the best times and methods of delivery?
- What are the most cost-effective opportunities and career development plans? (SARC, 2002)

The next section provides a literature review on the current crisis in staffing problems experienced by agencies employing DSP. An examination of the practical findings from other agencies using a case study approach follows the literature review. In the third section, a set of key strategies to tackle recruitment and retention challenges is drawn from the literature review. Finally, to determine the most effective strategies for SARC, a suggestion is made to conduct a follow-up survey in the near future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

DEFINITION OF DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

The term “Direct Support Worker” is frequently used in this study. Recently, “Direct Support Professionals” has been suggested as an alternative because the job’s professionalism demands a set of complex skills, ethical awareness, and sense of trust and mutual respect indicative of professionals (Taylor, 1999).

This new definition was stressed in a recent story told by a DSP, Jeff Welch (1999): “We as Professionals, in the positive sense of the term need to recognize that those we serve are first and foremost friends, family members, neighbors, and members of our community.”

A wide range of individuals, such as people with disabilities or chronic illness and children at risk, need services and support provided by DSPs. They can have numerous job titles, including: direct care staff, personal care attendant, residential counselor, employment specialist, family advocate, job coach, and homemaker. These employees can be found in a wide range of settings, such as public and private group homes, institutions, home health care agencies, schools, vocational agencies, camps, and psychiatric facilities (Taylor, 1999).

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ISSUES

Shortage in the labor market

As the Canadian population ages, a greater proportion will live with disabilities requiring increased care. In spite of increasing needs, DSP staffing levels are decreasing. A noticeable shift to casual and part-time work in the DSP workforce is contributing to the work stress and job dissatisfaction that DSP’s experience.

In the United States, the unfilled vacancy rate is consistently at 7-15%, with a 4% decline in potential DSP applicants aged 18-44 years between 1995 and 2005 (Hewitt and Larson, 2000). In Massachusetts, there is a 55% projected increase in the number of DSPs needed over the next 10 years to provide services to the elderly and developmentally disabled populations (Connolly et al, 2000). The result of DSP shortages is that less educated, experienced, and skilled persons, such as high school graduates and recent immigrants, are hired to offset the shortage. This kind of short-term solution usually ends up costing more in the long run as it results in higher turnover and burnout rates.

In contrast, since 2000, Saskatchewan has shown a strong upward trend in the number of persons who provide rehabilitation services, and an increase in the population of women aged 20-24 years, who are most often the target DSP applicants (Statistics Canada, 2003). This trend in Saskatchewan does not downplay that the health care worker shortage is a common problem experienced across the country. The large expansion in

Saskatchewan is very likely due to job replacement. That is, based on Human Resources Development Canada's forecasts, 60% of the 2,600 job openings are due to replacement, not newly created positions (cited in Backman, 2000).

A good quality and stable supply of qualified applicants is an important facet in the supply of DSP services. A strong economy is another important factor in creating a strong DSP job market. Without a strong economy, many educated and skilled professionals will leave Saskatchewan for provinces or countries with better job opportunities.

Factors contributing to shortage

Aside from the size of the applicant pool and economic status, the factors that affect DSP recruitment, retention, and training are interrelated. There are several factors that many researchers agree on, some of which are discussed below.

Low pay and compensation

Compared to other occupations, DSPs are paid low wages. In the United States, the national average hourly wage rate in non-agriculture occupations was \$6.54 (1989 US dollars). On average, mining workers topped the list with \$13.54, while DSPs were paid only \$5.58 (Braddock and Mitchell, 1992). The competitiveness of an organization's salaries and benefits has been identified as one of the most influential factors leading to successful staffing (Marquis and Huston, 1978).

Limited opportunities for career advancement

Money is not always the most important factor in recruitment and retention. In one survey on DSP career progression, it was found that the only avenue for DSP promotion was to the position of supervisor. However, added responsibilities along with promotion to the position of supervisor are often not considered worthwhile to pursue (GPCMR, 2000).

High turnover rate

DSPs often move into other fields that offer higher wages and more career opportunities. Alberta, for example, has a high overall turnover rate (34%). The four most cited reasons for leaving are: (1) low wages (27%); (2) returning to school (12%); (3) lack of hours (8%); and (4) job dissatisfaction (7%) (Alberta Association of Rehabilitation Centers, 1998). Interestingly, in contrast to the belief that low pay is the most common reason for a high turnover rate, a study by Kurtz et al (2000) showed that rates of pay were not a significant predictor of turnover. In a study on job satisfaction, Yamada (2002) asserted that "higher pay and benefits were indirectly associated with higher job satisfaction but directly associated with pay and benefit satisfaction. In contrast, a strong supervisor-staff relation increased DSP's organizational commitment and enhanced overall job satisfaction." These results suggest that an effective management style is essential to successful DSP retention.

Work environment issues

Lack of supervisory support and performance, barriers to participatory opportunities, the current shift from full-time to part-time and casual workers, and underutilization are all threats to DSP retention.

Supervisory training and support

A recent survey of supervisors found that 88% were aware that it was very or extremely important to have a positive supervisory approach to staff, although only 53% performed well (American Association on Mental Retardation [AAMR], 2003). Holding managers accountable for retention has been found to be one of the most successful retention strategies (Murphy, 2000).

Autonomy

Incorporation of DSPs into decision-making processes has been proven to be an effective method of retaining DSPs. Self-expression and self-determination should be realized in each day's work (Johnson, 1991). DSPs can provide solutions and input into turnover problems and productivity increases. For example, some agencies have initialized this participatory model as part of recruitment and retention processes (Larson, 2000).

Productivity and utilization

Low staff productivity and underutilization are considered serious impediments to service quality and staff retention in not-for-profit organizations. This is, in part, due to difficulties that managers have in measuring and improving productivity. Beyond performance appraisals, other methods for identifying costs and effective and efficient ways of work have been developed. One such method, called a quality group, involves a group of staff meeting regularly, providing suggestions, and evaluating strategies' effectiveness (DeMarco, 1983). A method of increasing efficiency in meeting customers' needs entails involving individual customers and families in the recruitment and training process (Alliance for Consumer Options, 1997). Beaty and Perry allude to this method in this report's Foreword.

Casualization

As noted previously, hiring casual or part-time workers is not a cost-effective method of solving worker shortages. However, casual workers offer flexibility in dealing with staffing shortages. The Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN) has pointed out that some nurses have personal reasons for working only part-time and should be given that opportunity (Backman, 2000). However, because casual workers may work for only a couple days or hours and then move on, concerns are raised about possible damage to full-time openings, reliance, and continuity of care in the long run. A more efficient way to deal with staff shortages is to release resources dedicated to casualization to the reinvestment in long term full-time staff training.

Public policy issues

Uncertain funding opportunities

To date, the majority of funding for wages of care staff has come from federal and provincial governments. In 2000, the Canadian federal government spent \$4.2 billion less than they did on health care in 1994-1995 (Harris, 2000). Accounting for inflation, this figure should have increased to \$5.7 billion. Currently, federal government spending still has not returned to 1995 levels. The *Toronto Globe and Mail* reported that the federal government's major funding source was taxation and that any funding cuts would raise health care labour costs (Galt, 2002). As a result, the uncertainty of funding opportunities has put health care, one of Canada's key comparative advantages, in jeopardy.

Legislative and policy initiatives

A collaborative agreement to fund education and training activities was established between the Minnesota Governors Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and the University of Minnesota (AAMR, 2003). Furthermore, in 2003 the United States made a significant endorsement in the Senate calling for a national priority to ensure a quality and stable DSP workforce (The Kentucky Association of Residential Resources [KARR], 2003). In Saskatchewan, both the New Democratic Party and the Saskatchewan Party have incorporated recruiting, retaining, and training health professionals into their parties' respective action plans (Saskatchewan Election, 2003). This suggests that joint efforts between the SARC agencies and the provincial government can be undertaken to facilitate the DSP human resources processes.

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING ISSUES

Orientation

Research has shown that a well-established and -executed orientation program is a proven way to build organization expectations, loyalty, and team spirit to prevent quick burnout (Huston and Marquis, 1987). Many types of orientation structures are commonly used in direct service. Sample orientation tips based on Larson and Hewitt (2000) are provided in **Appendix A**.

Well-diversified orientations

New hires in direct support service are a diverse group with different ages, educational backgrounds, and previous experience (Larson et al, 1994). Special orientations should be designed to meet new hires' different needs. The previous experience that new hires bring in should be acknowledged and utilized.

Transition to new position and retention

Initial orientation and ongoing training are key processes in retaining DSPs. The

employees who orient new staff should be aware of the possible difficulties of transition to direct service positions. Many “retention bombs” happen in the first month of employment. Before they explode, issues can be resolved by finding out new hires’ needs and difficulties (Larson and Hewitt, 2000).

Training and delivery methods

It has been recognized that both orientation and training are essential to health care quality. Clients’ increasing needs add more complexity to DSP training. Training barriers can create impediments to health care.

Barriers to training

It has been reported that major training barriers arise from low wages and high turnover. Financial constraints amongst agencies, scheduling problems, and lack of personal incentives and supervisor support toward training have also been shown to be training barriers (GPCMR, 2000).

Training topics

The most frequently cited topics are safety training or training concerned with psychological issues of people with disabilities, such as medication training, safety, behaviour management, human rights, and social roles (GPCMR, 2000). A comparison of the “Most Useful” training topics is compiled in **Appendix B**, which is based on a recent survey conducted by the California Department of Development Services (2002).

Effectiveness of the delivery methods

Along with training content, delivery methods are another key issue in training effectiveness. Especially in non-profit organizations, a set of cost-effective training delivery methods are critical to overcoming the financial crisis experienced by agencies. However, several studies have shown that less effective delivery methods, such as lectures and films, were used most frequently (see **Appendix C**). DSPs have responded that the most preferred training methods were those that included practice and immediate feedback (Larson and Hewitt, 1994). This suggests that training methods should be consistent with DSP needs.

CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

In this section, a case study approach is used to demonstrate the best practices in other organizations. The cases were selected to ascertain the strategies’ major facets and effectiveness. Key points are also highlighted to better utilize lessons learned from the cases.

CASE I: HOW TO REDUCE TURNOVER (DITSON, 1998)

- Interviews: include both positive and negative features
- Realistic job ad
- Consistent expectations: check on previous work history and references
- Mentor network: an experienced staff role model
- Quality (advisory) group

In 1992, the Visiting Nurse Corporation of Colorado, Inc. (VNCC), a non-profit home health care organization in Denver, investigated reasons for the organization's high turnover rate by surveying current employees and organization schedulers. The survey uncovered a number of issues within the organization, such as excessive paperwork and inadequate communication with the workers.

In response to issues reported by workers, the organization restructured the job interview process by including both positive and negative features of the job. That is, more details were added to job descriptions to better specify tasks, physical demands, and expectations. This new description was then presented during the interview and at the orientation process. The organization also readjusted their recruitment strategies by focusing on word-of-mouth recruitment from existing employees. They learned that strong employees tend to refer friends who share their work ethics and values. Moreover, the agencies established consistent expectations based on previous employment history and regularly performed reference checks on all applicants.

To increase orientation effectiveness and strengthen communication with workers, a schedule specifying the time, location, and purpose of each orientation phase was distributed to new employees. Checklists were designed to ensure that each new employee received the same information. Additionally, training was offered to help workers complete paperwork, which, in general, was streamlined as much as possible.

In 1994, the organization introduced a mentor system for new workers. The system gave new workers an opportunity to watch experienced workers perform care. It also allowed experienced workers to demonstrate their skills to new hires. Mentors evaluated new employees' basic skills and served as role models to new staff. The criteria for mentors included employment for more than one year and demonstration of sufficient skills.

Finally, the organization formed an advisory group to discuss issues, make recommendations, and provide peer recognition. Recognition was offered in terms of t-shirts, discount coupons, and recognition certificates for long serving employees. In addition to monthly newsletters, weekly updates on a designated voice mail message line were also provided because it delivered low cost current information.

Based on these efforts, the organization's part-time worker turnover rate significantly decreased from 95% in 1990 to 66% in 1996. The number of new hires who quit before making the first home visit also declined, from 60% to 25%.

CASE II: A SCHOOL-TO-WORK MODEL (WALLACE, 1998)

- Write research papers to define human services and support workers' duties
- Assess career interests to analyze education requirements, physical demands, temperaments, earnings, aptitudes, and so forth of a particular career category
- Practice seeking employment opportunities in human services
- Develop an approach from school to a preferred job
- Discuss career patterns and how to build a portfolio

A school-to-work model is designed to provide better education and employment opportunities, adult role models, and various post-secondary options for all students. Young adults, through school-to-work experience, can strengthen their competence, confidence, and career developments. This model was developed and tested at Tyngsborough High School in Tyngsborough, Massachusetts in 1996.

In the spring of 1996, 120 grade eight students participated in a project designed to test the school-to-work model. A common lesson format was created, which included "identifying objectives, classroom activities and procedures, materials, minimum skills to be taught, and evaluation" (Taylor et al, 1997, cited in Larson et al, 1998).

The challenges and benefits resulting from these efforts included:

1. The skill standards assisted the school in developing its first school-to-career plan.
2. School staff felt that conversation among instructors, business partners, and students was more realistic and meaningful for students while working with the skill standards.
3. Talking to professionals helped students better understand realistic salary expectations after leaving high school.
4. Through participation in field test activities based on the Community Support Skill Standards (CSSS), the students better understood the needs and expectations of human services industries.

As a consequence of the program's success, Tyngsborough High School made plans to expand this project by developing career exploration activities for students from seventh to ninth grades, and creating more opportunities for site visits and internships for students in both grades eleven and twelve. This School-to-Work model provides a

pool of reliable potential DSPs, significantly reducing the cost of training employees and retention.

KEY STRATEGIES

The strategies outlined in **Tables 1 to 3** are a result of the analyses and literature review presented in this report’s previous sections. As recruitment, retention, and orientation are three highly interconnected areas, strategies listed under one area may support others. For the purpose of clarity, strategies are only listed once in the most relevant area.

Table 1. Recruitment Strategies.

Strategy	Description	Sources
(1) Build a national recruitment network	Link efforts with other community and nationwide agencies using common brochures, recruitment materials, and marketing strategies.	Taylor, 1998
(2) Create systematic work opportunities by introducing young people to direct support service	Creation of “School-To-Work” programs, volunteer opportunities, service-learning, and other student extra-curricular service efforts. Encourage agency tours and visits for youth groups. These kind of opportunities will provide a first-hand experience to potential applicants.	Wallace, 1998
(3) Realistic job description	Ensure a good fit between candidate expectations and job reality. Methods include videotapes, booklets, work sample tests, and structured interviews that give the candidate thorough information about what the job entails.	Taylor, 1998; Ditson, 1998
(4) A contingency-based hiring process	To reduce the hiring process length, staff can be quickly hired contingent on the first few months’ performance and positive references.	Larson and Hewitt, 2000
(5) Create incentive referral program (known as “recruitment bonus”)	Incentive programs for existing employees and volunteers to refer friends and acquaintances as job candidates.	Dykstra, 2001
(6) Initialize a long term recruitment partnership	Foster ongoing relationships with career placement specialists, guidance counselors, post-secondary educational program staff and others who may direct candidates to jobs.	Taylor, 1998
(7) Appoint DSP as a member of recruitment team	Develop a better understanding of the nature and needs of DSP workforce.	Jaskulski and Ebenstein, 1996

Table 2. Retention Strategies.

Strategy	Description	Sources
(1) Implement worker-centered orientation	Help new hires in overcoming initial work-based learning and socialization difficulties.	Jaskulski and Ebenstein, 1996
(2) Build a co-worker network	Provide new recruits with mentors who are more “seasoned” co-workers. Provide workers who are in isolated locations with opportunities to network with co-workers.	Larson et al, 1998
(3) Reward excellence	Develop peer-nominated excellence awards. The rewards should be as tangible as possible, such as money or gift certificates.	Larson and Hewitt, 2000
(4) Create flexible benefit programs	Retirement/pension plan packages, family benefits.	Larson et al, 1998
(5) Develop relevant career pathway	Assist staff in identifying relevant career paths within the agency and support these paths through competency-based training that leads to a valued credential, wage increments, and other forms of recognition.	Wallace, 1998
(6) Incorporate education advancement	Link agency training with opportunities for higher education and career advancement. Provide educational loans, bursaries, and support to take relevant courses contingent on length of stay.	Murphy, 2000; Larson and Hewitt, 2000
(7) Create a supervisor help program	Provide personal experience, support and advice. Help new hires acquire a smooth transition to full time equivalent (FTE).	Ditson, 1998
(8) Invest in training supervisory skills for new supervisors	Supervisor-staff relationships are critical to retaining DSPs. Provide training in conflict resolution, empathic listening, leadership, and instructional techniques	Larson and Hewitt, 2000
(9) A “before I accept your resignation” chat	Save employees by having an appropriate conversation to figure out why they quit the job. As a last-ditch retention strategy, 75% of the time this kind of conversation fixes the situation.	Larson and Hewitt, 2000

Table 3. Orientation.

Strategy	Description	Sources
(1) Conduct a comprehensive view of DSP role requirement	CSSS is a competency-based framework describing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes consistent with exemplary DSP performance. These standards have been adopted by the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) as the basis for requirements of a national, voluntary credential under development for direct support professionals.	Taylor et al, 1996
(2) Identify direct support training needs	Although a national skill standards set has been identified, a systematic means is needed for identifying ongoing direct support training needs, including subject matter, methods of delivery (e.g. classroom, video, multi-media CD-ROM, distance learning), times of delivery, and current existing and needed access. This process requires constant attention as direct support work changes and matures.	Larson et al, 1998
(3) A training agencies network	Collaborate with other agencies to exchange training materials or spaces and develop joint training programs to manage costs.	Larson and Hewitt, 2000
(4) Tailor specific training plans for DSPs with different work knowledge	Recognize that basic information is not suitable for experienced staff and that more advanced courses are needed.	Larson and Hewitt, 2000
(5) Set up a “Putting People First” conference: Develop resources and offer educational venues (e.g. workshops, videos, on-line resources)	A “Putting People First” conference provides both opportunities for DSP to understand their role in the overall service delivery system and much needed opportunities to network with other DSP.	Larson et al, 1998
(6) Create a mentor system	Provide opportunity to watch experienced workers perform care. Mentors evaluate new employees on basic skills and serve as role models. Mentors have to be someone being employed more than one year and having satisfied all their job requirements to be selected to perform for new employees.	Ditson, 1998
(7) Staff development program	Various and ongoing development programs. At least 80 hours of yearly training with a part of the training, for example, to develop a project that would make the agency a better place to work.	Dykstra, 2001
(8) Create a training incentive program	Create training modules with a certificate and money bonus upon completion as incentives	Larson and Hewitt, 2000

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER STUDY

- *Conflicting evidence in the research literature.* One research finding might contradict another. For example, a recent survey in Wisconsin showed that DSPs were overwhelmingly satisfied with their jobs and no high turnover rates were found. This was despite a finding that 67% of employees rated their salaries fair or poor, and 90% indicated that an increase in wages would increase their job satisfaction (The Wisconsin Council of Developmental Disabilities, 2002). The literature review conducted in this study focused on the most common research findings from which bases of good practices arise.
- *Quantification of human resources impacts.* Based on cost-effective principles, improvement in productivity after training, the effectiveness of different training delivery methods, and other human resources processes need to be quantified in some manner. As cited in Huston and Marquis (1987), Cascio (1982) provides an excellent description of techniques enabling calculation of the financial impact of human resource outcomes.
- *A need for local perspective.* This study's recommendations are drawn from existing research results, as opposed to collecting new survey data within Saskatchewan. In that respect, a commonly used practice in other organizations might not be the best strategy for SARC. Implementation of good practices drawn from other organizations should be balanced against SARC's specific needs.
- *Ongoing examination of the effectiveness of the action plans.* Finally, the effectiveness of adopted plans and training should be assessed through ongoing evaluation. It is crucial for SARC to have DSP input into training content and methods. A follow-up survey as part of a longitudinal study is needed to examine the effectiveness of any human resource initiatives.

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Appendix A. Sample Orientation Tips .

Tips	Description
(1) Welcoming gifts	Welcome baskets with mugs, logo pins, pens, balloons, t-shirts, or baseball caps.
(2) Job shadowing	Pay new hires for double coverage with a mentor for at least 1-2 weeks.
(3) Pacing and learning	Focus on information needed for initial daily work as opposed to general policy and procedures.
(4) Active and interactive training	A. Include self-advocates and family members as part of the active training team. B. Use storytelling to explain work and expectations.
(5) Network new staff	Connect and reconnect new staff with their new cohort

Source: Larson and Hewitt, 2000.

Appendix B. “Most Useful” DSP Training.

Topic Ranking	Description	Percent of Responses
(1) Medical management and safety training	Proper and safe practice and handling of medications (e.g. hand washing/gloving).	41.5%
(2) Human rights, choices, and respect	Respecting and understanding individual human rights and choices.	26.1%
(3) Positive behaviour support	Understanding the causes of behaviour issues and avoiding insufficient/negative service.	17.0%
(4) Communication	Being able to communicate effectively including with people who are non-verbal.	13.6%
(5) Social role and other	Awareness of situations affecting clients; person-centered planning involvement; supporting of applicable laws and regulations, and staff and supervisors’ roles; empathetic support for integrating clients into the community.	Each received 5% or less.

Source: California Department of Developmental Services, 2002.

Appendix C. Effectiveness of delivery methods and retention.

Effectiveness Ranking	Retention Percentage	Frequency Of Use
(1) Immediate use of new skill (e.g. One-to-one instruction, practice of skill)	95%-75%	87%
(2) Skill demonstration	30%	26.1%
(3) Formal classes	N/A	85%
(4) Film/videotape	20%	85%
(5) Reading (training modules or rules)	10%	89% or more
(6) Lecture	5%	89%

Source: Larson and Hewitt, 1994. Effectiveness ranking and frequency of use are based on Larson and Hewitt (1994). Retention percentages are based on Templeman and Peters' data (as cited in Larson and Hewitt, 1994).