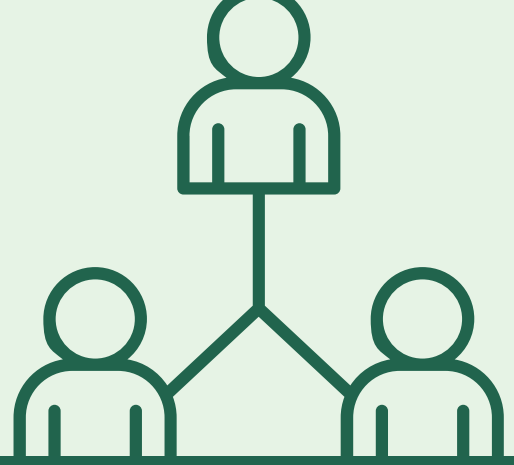




Community Partnerships

How to Pitch a Partnership with Your Economic Empowerment Program to: Employers



Purpose

This resource provides: (1) a list of roles that employers can play in supporting economic empowerment programs; (2) a sample “elevator pitch” you can use in outreach to employers help them understand how a partnership may be mutually beneficial, and (3) a list of common challenges inherent in partnerships with employers and strategies to prepare for and mitigate those challenges.

How can employers support the economic empowerment program and participants?

Identifying roles that employers can play in a strategic partnership can help you determine whether you need this partnership and how to tailor your outreach to them.

Employers can:

- Host career panels and workshops where survivors can learn about roles and opportunities within the industry, and the skills/credentials needed to succeed in their companies.
- Offer internship or job-shadowing programs that allow survivors to build their experience, explore and identify opportunities within that industry or company they could pursue.
- Initiate a recruitment and hiring agreement where economic empowerment providers are notified of current and upcoming job opportunities, along with descriptions of ideal candidates who meet the employer’s needs.
- Create customized on-the-job training and/or apprenticeship opportunities in the company where public workforce dollars can be leveraged to cover training costs.
- Provide mentors to support survivors in exploring career options, navigating workplace culture, developing relevant professional skills, and general career advice. Company staff can provide the mentoring as a volunteer initiative or through in-kind hours.

Who is this resource for?

This resource is for organization and/or program leaders administering economic empowerment programs, and program staff who provide direct services. It may be useful in both crisis intervention and long-term services.



- Assist in designing training for participants to ensure they are gaining the appropriate hard, soft, and basic skills needed for a job opportunity or industry.
- Provide financial or in-kind resources that can support program gaps, such as donating equipment, sponsoring skilled training for qualified participants, and program events.
- Become board members for the victim service organization.

How to pitch a potential partnership with employers

This section provides sample language to use when seeking to build a relationship with an employer. This “elevator pitch” can be tailored to fit the specific training and employment needs of your community and can be incorporated into initial email outreach or introductory meetings.

Introductory Email/Outreach Template:

“I’m reaching out on behalf of [Agency Name], a local nonprofit dedicated to supporting individuals and families affected by [type of victimization, e.g., domestic violence, human trafficking, etc.]. We are currently seeking employers to support our [name of economic empowerment program] with [Insert role you are in need of]

[Program name] aims to provide survivors with the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to achieve financial independence. As an employer, you play a critical role in providing job-shadowing, on-the-job skills training, and employment opportunities for qualified participants.

A partnership with us can help you access a consistent pool of candidates that are pre-screened and trained in [insert skills or strengths of survivors that fit employer needs] to fulfill gaps you may have in talent. We provide wrap-around supports to participants in our program, including ongoing case management, job coaching, and links to multiple community resources that address common barriers to workforce retention and productivity. Lastly, through partnership we can fulfill your company’s commitment to give back to community through [insert initiatives from employers’ corporate social responsibility or community engagement strategy]

If you’re interested and would like more information, please reply to this email or contact me directly at [phone number or email]. Your contribution, no matter how big or small, will make a significant difference in the lives of those we serve.”



What are common challenges in engaging employers, and how can these be mitigated?

This table lists common challenges that may occur in engaging employers and potential solutions to navigating those challenges.

Potential Challenge	Potential Solution
Challenges in Navigating the Partnership	
Language and Information Gap: Employers view partnership with social service programs as a burden rather than an advantage because victim service providers neglect to develop the business case for partnership. Victim service programs are used to partnering with social service entities that are often focused on mitigating barriers. As a result, a culture and language gap exists needed to convey the benefits of partnership to employers and provide solutions that meet their priorities.	Research Employer Needs and Develop Business Case: Victim service providers should identify the skills that local employers seek from the current labor market. These skills should be incorporated into work-readiness training or utilized to identify the strengths survivors have that could fulfill those skills. Partnership goals can be built around these identified skills.
Time Sensitive Career Readiness: Employers are seeking workforce programs that can respond quickly and with enough flexibility to meet employer needs. As a result, employers may provide opportunities that victim service agencies aren't equipped to fulfill. For example, an employer may need to fill 10 roles within the company immediately but only 2 survivors are ready. This may cause employers to feel that the organization isn't prepared to meet the demands and seek a partner who can.	Partnership with Other Organizations: Victim service providers are encouraged to partner with other workforce development programs to enhance the pool of talent that employers can choose from. That way referrals to job-ready candidates can be made to maintain that partnership and help establish reliability with employers.
Limited Capacity to Maintain Partnership: Employer engagement requires a high level of consistent communication, ongoing support and adaptation that programs may not have the capacity to meet.	Invest in Business Service Representative: Traditional workforce development programs have a "business service representative" who utilizes business-minded skills to understand the current labor market and needs of employers. Victim service providers should invest in a similar dedicated staff role that can outreach to employers and provide ongoing support to address any challenges that may arise within the partnership.



Potential Challenge	Potential Solution
Challenges Survivors Face When Engaging with This Partner	
Survivors Unsafe in Workplace and/or Loss of Job Due to Impacts of Violence: Survivors often face barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment because of the abuse they have endured. Resource: The Intersection of Work and Abuse	Educate Employers and HR Professionals on Employment Rights for Survivors: State employment laws for survivors exist around Leave from Work, Reasonable Accommodations, Eligibility for Unemployment Insurance, and Discrimination Against Employees Based on Survivor Status. Educating employers, HR professionals and survivors on how to access these rights could provide survivors with tailored protections so they can keep their jobs, stay safe, and maintain economic security. Resource: Advancing Safety through Employment Rights

