

Programs on Paper:
An Examination of Virginia's Service Delivery Area
Job Training Partnership Act Title II-A Job Training Plans

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(ABSTRACT)

A key purpose of federal job training policy is to ensure that the workforce has the skills necessary to obtain and retain gainful employment. The purpose of this study was to describe and compare key elements of Virginia's fourteen service delivery area (SDA) plans in order to determine how they would deliver programs to achieve the stated purpose of JTPA Title II-A, which targets disadvantaged adults. In addition, the plans were evaluated as to their potential to guide successful program implementation.

The plans were reviewed to describe and analyze who is trained, how they are trained, and what objectives the plans establish. The plans were ranked as to their fulfillment of eight criteria drawn from JTPA studies on successful program strategies and from education program planning literature.

Though the plans provided basic descriptions of SDA efforts to train disadvantaged adults, they did not reflect full use of successful strategies or education program planning techniques, especially in the areas of linking training to the local labor market and using overall evaluation. The SDAs did not use the plans to distinguish their local level activities, opting most often to meet minimal compliance with plan guidelines as to the information provided. The individual being trained is underrepresented in most of the plans. A few plans did meet many of the criteria and demonstrated how these strategies and planning tools can be reflected at this early stage of program implementation.

The plan preparation guidelines themselves were found to be a factor in the limitations of the plans. Changes in policy requiring plans to better detail their programs could enhance their effectiveness as planning tools.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to Bea Powell Evans, my mother, for her support and encouragement as I pursued my master's degree. My thanks and love to her always.

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