

Mountainland Participation Pilot Study: Final Evaluation



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INTRODUCTION

In the Spring of 2005 Mountainland region of the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) piloted a project, the purpose of which was to “increase participation by improving our [Mountainland region] service delivery and focusing on outcomes (Training Manual, 4/14/2005).” The manual goes on to note that the overriding concepts of the Participation Pilot are “to improve the helping relationship and negotiate participation.” The project is called the “Participation Pilot.”

To accomplish the goals of the Participation Pilot, all employment counselors received extensive training in the new procedures. Employment counselors were provided structure for placing customers in one of four tracks: assessment, fast track, skill building and social security. Employment counselors were given up to 90 days to assess the appropriate track for the customer. Once placed in a track, the pilot calls for frequent re-assessment to note progress, aggressive problem solving to support forward movement and the celebration of success to reinforce even small accomplishments.

In May 2005 the Social Research Institute (SRI) of the University of Utah was contacted to assist in the evaluation of the Participation Pilot. In a meeting between a representative of SRI and three members of leadership in the Mountainland Region, it was decided that the first step of evaluation would consist of feedback from employment counselors. The goal was to learn from the experiences of front line workers during the early stages of implementation. This input would be gathered through a confidential online survey and two feedback sessions.

The results of this study were submitted in the Initial Evaluation Report. Significant findings included a generally positive experience of the initial implementation of the participation pilot. Workers reported appreciations for tools which helped both them and their customers track progress and move toward program goals. Newer workers were the most positive toward the pilot. There were suggestions made for improvements in the process.

Leadership from the Mountainland region used this information as part of developing additional training for agency staff. This training was delivered during the first months of 2006. Several other “next steps” were discussed, including follow-up surveys with both DWS workers and customers. This reports presents the findings of the follow-ups surveys and the overall summary of the Mountainland Participation Pilot.

EVALUATION PROCESS - METHOD

Data for this stage of the evaluation process were gathered from two sources. First, all DWS staff involved with the Participation Pilot were given the opportunity to provide feedback through a confidential online survey and two feedback sessions. For comparison purposes, many of the questions used in the follow-up survey mirrored those from the initial survey. Next, customers who had received services under the new process were invited to participate in a short telephone interview regarding their experiences with various aspects of the Participation Pilot. As with the initial study, Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for this study was obtained through the University of Utah.

FINDINGS

DWS Personnel

Online Survey

A simple online survey was developed and made available to employment counselors, leads and supervisors between March 20th and 31st. There were approximately 50 workers (including all employment counselors, leads and supervisors) eligible to participate. As with the first online survey, each potential respondent received an e-mail invitation explaining the purpose of the study and providing a link to the survey. Informed consent was implied through choosing to access the survey link.

There were a total of 25 responses to the survey, but 7 people only answered the first couple of questions and did not complete any more of the survey. So while there was an overall response rate of approximately 50%, most questions had only 18 responses, a 36% response rate. Of the 17 respondents who provided the office location, 9 (53%) were from the Provo office, 6 (35%) from American Fork, and 2 (12%) were from Heber City/Park City. As with the initial study, most respondents, 15 (88%), were employment counselors and all 17 respondents had at least one year in their current position.

In both the initial and final surveys, workers were asked a variety of questions reflecting overall impressions about the Participation Pilot (See Table 1). While remaining positive, the overall impressions of the Participation Pilot went down between the two surveys. The use of the tracks has changed little over the months. "Skill building - barrier management" remained the most frequently used track. Nearly one quarter of respondents had some difficulty implementing one or more of the tracks. Open-ended comments indicating specific concerns (See Appendix 1 - Question 4) were generally negative toward the customer's participation in the track or noted that these activities do not "count" in the federal participation rates. In this final survey respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they regularly explain the track system to their customers. While most (61%) do not regularly explain the tracks, nearly a third (28%) do so under certain circumstances. These circumstances include situations when the customer is particularly interested in the process or to help explain conciliation issues (See Attachment 1 - Question 10). Respondents also used question 13 (See Attachment 1) to explain why they do not explain "tracks" to the customers. Several respondents felt that explaining this process would overwhelm the customers with too much information, especially since the 34 hour requirement was more closely tied to keeping the case open.

Attitudes towards the adequacy of training remained very positive. When asked in an open-ended question about additional areas of training needed (See Appendix 1- Question 6), 2 respondents saw no need for more training, 6 respondents shared ideas about particular areas including assessment, moving between tracks and how the tracks interface with other agency requirements, specifically the 34 hour participation requirement.

Improving the relationship with the customer was an important aspect of the Participation Pilot philosophy. In the initial study, a majority of respondents experienced the Participation Pilot as providing more time with customers and enhancing the employment counselor/customer relationship. In the final study these numbers were significantly lower with a majority of respondents indicating the Participation Pilot made no difference in either of these areas. When asked to explain their response, several respondents noted that anything which improves the

customer's experience of personalized care and attention to their goals from the employment counselor helps the relationship (See Appendix 1 - Question 13).

Table 1: Survey Results

Question	Initial Survey	Final Survey
Overall, what is your impression of the Participation Pilot?	N = 23	N = 25
Very favorable	12 (52%)	10 (40%)
Somewhat favorable	10 (46%)	8 (32%)
Neither favorable or unfavorable	1 (4%)	3 (12%)
Unfavorable	-0-	3 (12%)
Very unfavorable	-0-	1 (4%)
Tracks Which track do you find yourself using most often with customers?	N = 21	N = 21
Fast employment track	1 (5%)	2 (10%)
Assessment track	2 (10%)	5 (24%)
Skill building - barrier management	10 (48%)	10 (48%)
Skill building - low skill track	5 (24%)	1 (5%)
Social security track	2 (10%)	1 (5%)
Use tracks evenly	5 (24%)	2 (10%)
Are there any tracks you find particularly difficult to use?	N = 21	N = 21
Yes	5 (24%)	5 (24%)
No	16 (76%)	16 (76%)
Do you regularly explain the track system to customers when developing the employment plan?		N = 18
Yes		2 (11%)
No		11 (61%)
Yes, only in special circumstances		5 (28%)
Training How well do you feel the training session(s) prepared you to begin implementation of the Participation Pilot?	N = 21	N = 18
Completely	4 (19%)	1 (6%)
Mostly	14 (67%)	14 (78%)
Somewhat	3 (14%)	3 (18%)
Not at all	-0-	- 0 -
Customer Relations 7. Overall, do you feel that using the Participation Pilot provides:	N = 21	N = 18
More time w/ customers	12 (57%)	4 (22%)
Less time w/ customers	2 (10%)	2 (11%)
About equal time w/ customers	7 (33%)	11 (61%)
Don't know	- 0 -	1 (6%)

Question	Initial Survey	Final Survey
8. Overall, using the Participation Pilot tracking system:	N = 21	N = 18
Enhances relationship with customers	8 (38%)	2 (11%)
Takes away from rel. with customers	-0-	- 0 -
Both enhances and takes from rel. w/ customer	5 (24%)	1 (6%)
Doesn't make a difference in the rel. w/ customers	8 (38%)	15 (83%)
Participation	N = 21	N = 18
10. In general, do you feel the Participation Pilot:		
Increased participation	17 (81%)	5 (28%)
Decreased participation	- 0 -	1 (6%)
Had no overall effect on participation	4 (19%)	12 (67%)

From the beginning, increasing participation rates was a goal of the pilot. When initially asked about the impact of the Participation Pilot on the participation rate, a majority of respondents (81%) reported increased participation. In the final, the number of respondents who believe the pilot increased participation dropped dramatically to only 5 (28%). Most respondents (67%) felt the pilot had no overall impact on participation. Responses to an open-ended question (See Appendix 1 - Question 15) explained this shift. A few comments focused on customers getting "stuck" in one track and not ever moving forward. Several others viewed the 34 hour federal requirement as having the most significant effect not the Participation Pilot.

Additional questions were added to the final survey to evaluate the workers experiences of the program over the year (See Table 2). Workers who generally felt supported in their efforts to implement the principles of the Participation Pilot, were able to clarify questions quickly, and grew in their level of comfort with the entire process. Additional visual aids to help explain

Table 2: Participation Pilot Experiences and Attitudes

Questions - N = 18	Strongly Agree or Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree or strongly disagree
When I have a question regarding the Participation pilot, I can usually find an answer within a day or two.	18 (100%)		
Customers generally understand the concept of tracks.	4 (22%)	8 (44%)	6 (33%)
I hope that we continue to use the track process introduced in the Participation pilot.	8 (44%)	5 (28%)	5 (28%)
I feel supported by my supervisor in being creative when doing problem solving with customers.	17 (94%)		1 (6%)
I would appreciate having more visual materials for customers to explain participation.	13 (72%)	4 (22%)	1 (6%)
I am getting more comfortable implementing the principles introduced by the Participation Pilot.	12 (71%)	4 (24%)	1 (6%)
I wish the Participation Pilot never happened!	2 (11%)	6 (33%)	8 (55%)

participation were desired by most respondents. As was indicated earlier, many workers do not explain the track process to the customers thus it is understandable that a majority do not agree that the customers understand the track process. Fewer than half of the respondents (44%) indicated agreement with continuing the use of the track process but an additional 28% did not agree or disagree. Only 2 (11%) respondents felt the Participation pilot should never have been introduced to the region.

When asked if they would recommend that the Participation Pilot go statewide, nearly one third (28%) thought this would be a good idea (See Table 3) and an additional third agreed but only under certain conditions. The types of conditions suggested include: using the process with new workers, making adjustments to the tracks such as changing the names, clarifying time frames and better defining terms such as "disability." (See Attachment 1 - Question 17).

Table 3: Taking Participation Pilot Statewide

	Yes	No	Yes - under certain conditions	Unsure
Would you recommend that this Participation Pilot go statewide?	5 (28%)	3 (17%)	6 (33%)	4 (22%)

Workers were also asked to indicate what changes, if any, they wanted incorporated into the Participation Pilot regardless of whether the pilot expands statewide (See Attachment 1 - Question 17). As with other questions, the focus of the responses was on the track aspect of the pilot. If the track process continues, some workers suggested the process be better integrated into working with the customer. Suggestions included a “track” slideshow, making the track appear on the plan, and providing more track options. Others suggested that the track process be optional, something which could be used by those who found it helpful or for new workers as part of initial training.

Feedback Sessions

As with the initial survey, focus groups were held following the online survey. The goal of these sessions was to expand on what was learned through the online survey and encourage conversation around additional issues which may not have been covered in the survey. All who had been invited to participate in the online survey were also invited to join a feedback group. These sessions, one for Provo area workers and one for those from other parts of the region, were held as part of the a Regional meeting.

Approximately 35 of the potential 50 participants attended one of the two sessions. All region offices were represented. A representative of SRI facilitated both sessions by inviting participants to comment on their experiences with the Participation Pilot. In general, group participants guided the conversation with the facilitator adding questions, when appropriate, to shed light on comments made in the survey. Participants were encouraged to be open in expressing both positive and negative comments toward the process as well as to raise questions and make suggestions for change.

To start the conversation, feedback group participants were asked to describe what they consider to be the important elements of the Participation Pilot. The element which came most

quickly to mind was the track system. Tracks were associated with aspects such as the process review, extended initial assessment, ongoing assessment, and the idea of creating an organized progression. Participants also mentioned relationship building with the customer which included improved customer “buy in” to the employment plan and celebrating successes. Early in the conversation it became clear that separating the Participation Pilot from the implementation of the 34 hour participation requirement would be difficult.

The comments from this feedback session were very different from the first session. The implementation of the 34 hour requirement certainly influenced the implementation of the Participation Pilot, but it is difficult, if not impossible, to know the complete impact of this additional program. Comments regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the Participation Pilot were laced with connections to the 34 hour requirement. The themes which surfaced from these feedback sessions should be viewed in this context.

Strengths of the Participation Pilot: Workers again talked about the Participation Pilot providing a structure to the case management process. This was thought to be an especially useful tool for new workers. The tracks provide a way of marking progress. The emphasis on the relationship with the customer and customer ownership of the process were also viewed as strengths. The progress review was a specific element which had many positive points.

The progress review calls for an overview of customer progress every three months. This is different from daily monitoring as it takes a more long term view of the process and progress. Workers like this process as it provides an opportunity for acknowledging small successes as a positive ways of moving customers forward who might otherwise be overwhelmed with long term goals and complicated plans. It was felt that when customers gain small successes and move forward it leads to larger successes. Once they get “on their way” people are less likely to come back. If there is little or no progress this issue can be addressed through the progress review as well. A customer may feel they are “busy” on a daily basis, but when looking at actual progress over a longer period of time the lack of movement becomes more apparent. This meets the goals of both the Participation Pilot and the 34 hour requirement.

Weaknesses of the Participation Pilot: Many of the down sides to the Participation Pilot were related to the track process. Some workers do not like the names of the tracks or what they view as labeling people by placing them in a track. Some find the documentation tasks laborious and redundant. Many of the activities in the tracks do not fit in the 34 hour count and thus count against the worker and customer. As with the previous feedback session, the most negative comments came from long time workers who have already developed their own way of managing cases and find the track process just busy work to put on top of everything they already do.

Assessment: The assessment aspect of the Participation Pilot was seen as both a strength and a weakness. Many appreciated the opportunity to take a little longer doing the initial assessment as it takes some customers a while to feel comfortable sharing their real issues. This principle does not work with the 34 hour requirement as there is a lot of pressure to move people toward 34 hours as fast as possible. Some also felt there needed to be changes to the assessment tool in general, for example, more focus on future goals not just past issues. The ongoing assessment is formalized in the progress review. The workers definitely recognize the value of being positive with customers about successes. But again, the small steps taken often do not meet the 34 hour requirement and so the activities must be expanded quickly to the customer “counts.”

Participation Pilot and 34 hour requirement: Workers specifically addressed the interaction between the Participation Pilot and the 34 hour requirement. In general, most workers acknowledged that the two programs had a similar goal, increased participation and

self-sufficiency, yet felt that the methods for achieving these goals were very different and often conflicting. The Participation Pilot takes time and focuses on the customer needs and pace. The 34 hour requirement focuses on numbers and closing cases as quickly as possible. It is feared this will increase recidivism. There were strong feelings that the two programs together create serious dilemmas for workers which turns into a “game” of coming up with countable activities. The initial feedback sessions were held just one month after the training for the 34 hour requirement. Respondents were at that time still trying to understand how the programs would work together. After about 9 months it is clear that the initial concerns about program compatibility have been realized.

Customer Surveys

The final method of data collection involved a short telephone survey of Mountainland Region customers who had received cash assistance for at least 4 months between June 2005 and January 2006. This criteria was set so that the customer would, in theory, have been through the progress review process at least once.

Each of the 187 potential respondents was sent a letter inviting them to participate in a short (10 - 15 minute) phone interview. The purpose of the survey, the voluntary nature of the survey and the terms of confidentiality were all explained. A week after the letter was sent phone calls were made to potential participants to invite them to complete the survey. The surveys were conducted during March 2006 and averaged 12 minutes each. The surveys were conducted by trained social work students who are also part of an ongoing DWS research study of cash assistance recipients. Up to three phone calls were made to potential respondents. Data were updated regularly from UWORKS. If no contact could be made by phone interviewers did a home visit to try to complete the survey. In the end, 99 surveys were completed resulting in a 53% response rate. Only 4 surveys were completed in person, the remaining 95 were done over the phone.

While customers were screened to make sure they had been screened (as described above), there was no limit to the number of months of cash assistance received. Respondents ranged from 5 - 34 months of cash assistance, with an average of 16 months. Cases came from all offices in the region: American Fork (15), Heber City/Park City (4), Provo North (51), Provo South (11), Spanish Fork (14), unidentified (4). Questions in the survey covered four basic areas: the relationship with the employment counselor, the employment plan, the track process and other unique elements of the Participation Pilot.

Relationship with the employment counselor: Respondents were asked to rate their overall relationship with their employment counselor as excellent, very good, good, fair or poor. The largest group (44%) reported an excellent relationship with their employment counselor. Only 19% described it as fair or poor. These sentiments were generally confirmed by several follow-up questions which asked participants to describe attributes of the relationship in more detail (See Table 4 below). When asked how much they were able to discuss their barriers to employment with their employment counselor, 76% said they could mostly or completely discuss these issues. When asked about the helpfulness of the employment counselor in resolving some of their barriers, 85% said they were somewhat or very helpful in resolving barriers. The emphasis on assessment was evident when 77% said the employment counselor had gathered enough information about the customer and the situation in order to give them the help that they needed.

Table 4: Interaction with Employment Counselor

Question: Complete the statement: My Employment Counselor	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
...treats me with dignity and respect.	58%	33%	7%	2%
...takes the time to explain program rules.	55%	34%	7%	3%
...only cares about getting the forms filled out.	12%	16%	45%	28%
...asks too many personal questions that are none of his/her business.	8%	8%	56%	27%
...only wants what is good for me and my kids.	39%	40%	19%	3%
...overwhelms me with so many things to do I am likely to fail.	9%	25%	47%	19%
...acts more like a friend than an enemy.	33%	48%	15%	4%
..did not give me a chance to explain what brought me in and what I need.	4%	13%	54%	29%

Employment Plan Development: Respondents were then asked about their employment plans. A full 95% said they knew what activities were on their plan. When asked if there were activities they asked to have on their plan, but were told they could not have on their plan as countable hours, 16 (16%) respondents indicated that was the case. These 16 were asked to talk about what activities had been denied and 11 of the 16 said a particular type of school or schooling plan had been rejected (See Appendix 2, Question B3). Respondents were also asked whether they remember ever being told there was a limit to the number of months they could receive cash assistance. Only 8% of respondents did not remember being told this fact. For those who remember being told there was a time limit, 86% could name the limit as 36 months. Other answers ranged from 6 to 48 months.

Ownership of the employment plan has been connected with improved success rates for FEP participants. Respondents were asked to describe who was part of making the employment plan. Most (72%) said it was a combined effort between them and the employment counselor, while 26% reported the employment counselor told them what to do. Ownership of the plan was further explored by asking to what degree the customer felt their views and concerns were taken into consideration in making the employment plan. A full 69% said their views were mostly or completely considered in making the plan. This participation led to 95% responding that they mostly or completely understood the current employment plan. Most (80%) also felt they were currently able to successfully complete all the activities on their employment plan. Those who felt they could not complete all assigned activities, most often sited physical and mental health issues, transportation problems, and feeling that it was too much/being overwhelmed, as the greatest issues.

Track Process: Customers were asked about their knowledge of the "track" aspect of their employment plans. Since discussing the track process was not a required or even recommended part of the Participation Pilot training, it is not surprising that only 17% of respondents had heard of the track process and another 12% were unsure. There were 11 respondents who said they

knew what track they were in, but upon checking UWORKS, only 3 had named the track correctly. In reviewing information in UWORKS it was found that a majority (63%) of respondents were currently in the skill building track, while 21% were in fast track, and 5% each in assessment and social security. There were 6 cases with no indication of the current track.

Employment plan activities: Those who did not indicate a track were asked to list the activities on their employment plans. The most commonly reported activities were: continue working at current job (15%), HS/GED (17%), worksite (23%), physical health treatment (25%), job search (32%), and mental health treatment (35%). When asked how much the activities on their plan had helped them take the next step toward employment 60% indicated the activities had helped a lot and another 26% said they had helped a little.

There was also an open ended question which provided an opportunity for respondents to talk about how the employment plan activities would help their situation (See Appendix 2 - Question C14). There were 9 (9%) respondents who could not name any way in which life would improve, but most could name at least one way in which they saw the employment plan activities improving their situation. The most commonly noted improvements were related to mental health (11), job connections and work skills (17), and opportunities related to schooling (24). The STEPS program was mentioned several times as a great resource for improving self-esteem and confidence. The worksites were often found helpful in increasing job skills and facilitating entry (or reentry) into the job market.

Participation Pilot Activities: Specific questions were asked to evaluate the customers experience with some specific aspects of the pilot. Customers were asked if they had ever gone over the employment plan with their employment counselor and talked about the progress that was made. A large majority, 79% said they had gone over the plan with their employment counselor. There were 46 respondents who said some changes had been made to the most recent employment plan. Another 85 (88%) reported having made progress in completing some of their plan activities. Of those who reported some progress, 51 (61%) said the employment counselor celebrated these successes a lot, while another 24 (29%) said they celebrated it at least a little. Respondents were also asked if they remembered being told that they would have to do a certain number of hours in certain activities as part of the employment plan. (This activity is more directly related to the 34 hour participation requirement.) Almost 90% of respondents remembered being told this information. When asked how many hours they were told they must do, the answers varied from 1.5 hours to 40 hours. The most common answers were 30 hours (26%), 34 hours (19%) and 35 hours (16%).

Respondents were given the opportunity to add any final thoughts they might have regarding any aspect of DWS or their experience with the agency. About 1/3 of the respondents did not have anything additional to add. Almost 1/3 had a positive comment to add and just over 1/3 expressed a negative comment. The negative comments often focused on specific workers, either eligibility, employment counselors or up front workers who the customer felt had treated them poorly. Some of the greatest frustrations included lost paper work, phone calls not being returned, being pushed to do too much too fast, and general feelings of being misunderstood. As one person said, "It was hard for me to go in when I was too overwhelmed. I just felt so awful every time I went in. She would get mad at me for not doing things. So I just stopped going in." Another customer noted, "They lose paperwork a lot and that is so hard. It was so scary to not have benefits when we need it. Most times they won't call you back when you leave a message."

While the negative comments included frustration with the process, the welfare system in general and DWS workers, the positive comments were almost always focused on specific workers. Customers spoke of their employment counselor as being a friend, someone who understands, who goes above and beyond the call. One person said, "My counselor is very kind and sensitive to our issues. She's taken her time to help us work through the system even though

we are a different kind of case. She has made it work for us." Another person said, "I specifically have been working with them for over a year and I have been very impressed. The EC becomes more of a friend and I could tell them every dirty detail, and they don't judge me." One person saw it this way, "They are trying their best to help me and it's basically up to me to do what I need to do to be successful."

DISCUSSION

The three data sources described above provide a variety of perspectives regarding the Participation Pilot. These can be used to form an overall view of the Participation Pilot as experienced by those most directly affected by it - the customers and the front line workers. After reviewing all data sources three areas surface as issues central to the discussion of whether to continue the pilot in this region and whether to suggest taking the pilot statewide. These areas include: implementation issues, relationship building, and the interface with the 34 hour federal requirement.

Implementation Issues

To make any program work there must be sufficient "buy in" from all levels. Initially, everyone from the management who created the new system to office managers and front line workers, seemed to generally appreciate the strengths of the participation pilot. In the first round of evaluation the feelings were very positive and while there were certainly areas for improvement (such as how to answer common questions, what to name the tracks, and the need for visual aids to explain the tracks process) most everyone seemed to view the Participation Pilot as having great potential.

Additional training was planned and completed to cover areas which seemed to have been missed in the introductory round and to answer questions that surfaced following initial implementation. While this training may have been helpful, in the second round of follow up focus groups very few workers could name important aspects of the pilot such as celebrating successes, the focus on customer ownership of the plan, and ongoing assessment and progress reviews to monitor growth in participation.

Some workers seemed to view the Participation Pilot as consisting only of the track process. If they viewed the track process as cumbersome or redundant, then the whole process was ineffective. Workers were quite open in admitting they do not use the track process or only use it as an after thought to appease the system. One worker outlined the process by explaining:

"I do not explain the tracks to my customers because it is too confusing to them. I already spend a considerable amount of time explaining the 34 hours per week participation requirement and going over which activities that are approved by the Federal Government for them to do, I don't feel like it is helpful at that time to explain a track to them. They naturally fall where ever when they choose the activities off my chart of federally approved activities. I then put them in a track on my own based on that. I might add that I do this after the fact and it is mostly busy work for me. I do not use the tracks on a regular basis for any good use."

This attitude toward the tracks was reinforced by those who found the names of some of the tracks "labeling" and negative. While this issue was mentioned in the initial evaluation, no

changes were ever made to the names. Workers continued to resist engaging the customers in discussions about the tracks which might seem demeaning. Yet, while some workers struggled with the names of the tracks, there were also comments regarding the greatest value of the tracks which was providing structure and better organization to the employment planning process.

This aspect was emphasized as a potentially helpful tool for new case workers. It was suggested that some principles, if implemented with new workers during training, would be very useful in helping new workers be more effective from the beginning. Implementing the principles with new workers might also be more effective as seasoned workers were sometimes "comfortable" in their own style of case management and were reluctant to implement changes which seemed like a step backwards. New workers could, with the support of managers, use these principles from the start.

Importance of relationship

A significant portion of the Participation Pilot focused on ways to improve the worker - customer relationship. Extensive research and personal experience have repeatedly shown that when a customer has a positive experience engaging with the worker they are more likely to succeed in reaching the goals outlined in the program. Aspects of the Participation Pilot which address this goal include providing time for a thorough assessment, progress reviews every three months, and celebrating even small successes. These pieces all work together to help create greater customer ownership of the process and goals.

When workers in the focus groups were asked to describe the elements of the Participation Pilot the relationship building aspects were generally forgotten. Some workers already incorporate the principles into their everyday work but others do not seem to connect their actions with the relationship to the customer. As one worker said in the online survey, "The relationship that I have with customers has not changed substantially since I started working these cases. I have a job to do and they have goals to accomplish....The track system has not influenced the relationships, but has made the process more organized for me as a worker." This worker does not seem to recognize that being better organized makes a difference to the customer. Many customers who had negative comments spoke of lack of organization, lost paperwork and unreturned calls. Customers are affected by workers being more organized.

While some workers may not seem to recognize the relationship building aspects of the Participation Pilot, or the impact of their behavior on the relationship with the customer, something is "different" in the Mountainland region. Results from the ongoing study of FEP participants shows that Mountainland customers are significantly more likely to report a good to excellent relationship with their employment counselor. This has not always been the case. In statewide data collected between 2003 and 2005 Mountainland had positive relationship rates much closer to those of other regions. This difference indicates that something positive is going on in the Mountainland region affecting these rates. The impact of the Participation Pilot ideas could certainly be an important contributing factor.

Although the customer survey focused on several aspects of their experiences with DWS, when given the opportunity to add final comments regarding any aspect of DWS, most respondents referenced positive or negative experiences with the people of DWS. Whether it was a worker that helped in dealing with mental health issues, one who never returned phone calls or just the fact that the worker was changed 4 times in 13 months, these interpersonal experiences are what stood out most in a person's mind. In reviewing the customer survey data above there is

a consistent pattern connecting a positive relationship with the employment counselor and increased anticipation of a successful move toward employment.

Impact of 34 hour participation requirement

While the areas discussed above have been important in the development of the Participation Pilot, by far the greatest impact has come from the implementation of the 34 hour participation requirement. This requirement was trained and implemented just three months after the initial training for the Participation Pilot. It is unrealistic to think that an evaluation of the Participation Pilot can be done without factoring in the influence of the 34 hour requirement.

While the two programs both support the goal of increasing participation, they do so in very different ways. Employment counselors are aware of the different approaches and some have found it difficult to reconcile the two approaches. As one worker said, "I would like to stop receiving mixed messages....such as build relationships and negotiate the plan vs. everyone has to be at 34 hours regardless of their situations and be strict. It is too stressful to have so many conflicting messages." Another worker noted, "I'm finding great conflict between trying to be compassionate towards people's difficult situations (letting them work out their barriers) vs. strictly enforcing the participation requirements."

To some workers the 34 hour requirement feels like a process of manipulating numbers so outcomes look better. When asked to describe the effect of the Participation Pilot on participation, one worker wrote, "I think that the Participation Pilot and the new federal participation requirements causes us as employment counselors to code people's activities or represent their activities in such a way that makes it look like they're participating more, but in reality, nothing has changed for the customer." The workers are, in general, feeling more of the participation pressure than the customers. Again, only 19% of respondents could identify the 34 hour participation requirement, but every single worker is highly aware of this standard.

These frustrations were clear in responses to questions in both the online survey and the focus group sessions concerning participation and performance evaluations for employment counselors. When cases close due to employment income it reduces a workers participation rate and some workers feel "penalized" for these positive outcomes. There was a good deal of frustration directed at the "feds," making it clear that workers do not so much blame local or state leaders for the 34 hour mandate, but the larger TANF policy makers. These workers see the customers on a daily basis and they want the "powers that be" to know that it is not as easy as it seems to move someone into that level of participation.

Even though there was no intention to create this situation, it seems the Participation Pilot was a set up for frustration for some workers. Those who appreciated the values of the client driven process and pace were excited about the new structure. There is some sense of loss in what may be considered a regression to a "numbers game." On the other hand, a good number of seasoned workers seem determined to just continue doing things the way that has always worked for them. The Participation Pilot nor the 34 hour requirement were going to change the manor in which they engaged with customers or managed their cases.

Next Steps - Going Statewide

Like many other aspects of the Participation Pilot, the thoughts about recommending that the project go state wide changed dramatically with the introduction of the 34 hour requirement. The Participation Pilot really did not exist on its own long enough to evaluate the real impact of the Pilot outside the influence of the 34 hour requirement. While the Participation Pilot may not

be able to be adapted as a whole, it might be possible to incorporate individual aspects of the project into the DWS case management system. Elements such as the progress review process can stand on their own and serve a valuable purpose in meeting the goals of the 34 hour requirement. Perhaps presenting the ideas to the various regions in pieces might allow them to evaluate the merits of each piece and how it might fit in their unique regional situation. As the pressures to increase participation rates rises, it is likely that even the Mountainland Region will need to focus on aspects of the pilot which most quickly increase these numbers.

Workers made specific suggestions about what areas should be addressed before making a move to go statewide. These include: a focus on training new employment counselors with these ideas, continuing to improve the assessment process, provide visual aids to explain tracks to customers if they are used and create more tracks with positive names and descriptions to better fit the various needs of the customers. Attention to policy and practice which place customers and/or workers in a no win double bind is essential for creating a positive working environment and lasting success.

CONCLUSIONS

Like any introductory project, the final product often looks very different from the initial creation. It seems this is especially true of the Participation Pilot being implemented and experienced in the 34 hour requirement world.

The comments and insights of the workers and customers represented in this study offer insight into the hope, expectations, disappointments and experiences of those trying to live out the principles of the Participation Pilot in the ever changing world of welfare policy. Given this shifting environment it is unlikely the Participation Pilot will be able to continue as first envisioned. It is hoped that the insights of those who have contributed to this research will be considered in designing whatever will be the next steps for the Mountainland region and the state as a whole.

Appendix 1: Online Survey - Responses to open ended comments

4. For each track that you have found difficult to use, please explain what you have found difficult about using in that track:

Fast employment track

- Reason to close track is customer obtained employment. But I have to open this track if a customer is employed if the income doesn't close the case.

Assessment track

- We're always in the process of assessing- so this is always applicable.
- Even though you have 90 days to assess a customers situation, it doesn't count toward the 34 hours a week needed by the federal regulations.

Skill building - barrier management

- All customers have barriers- or they wouldn't have applied. Every track is in relation to a barrier.
- Many customers can't seem to manage their barriers and move to fast track many times they ended up in conciliation due to a lack of progress.
- This track and low skill should be combined because we don't get credit from the federal government for participation for having them in either track.

Skill building - low skill track

- Difficult to get customers to go on unpaid worksites and follow through in order to gain skills. Always a challenge to get training approved also.
- This track and barrier management should be combined because we don't get credit from the federal government for participation for having them in either track.

Social security track

- Because most customers want this as an option to not working.

6. In what areas would you like to receive more training? Open-Ended Response

- Exact training on how long an activity has to be on the plan before it counts, when things count exactly (such as do things count when in problem solving), and also I would like to stop receiving mixed messages....such as build relationships and negotiate the plan vs. everyone has to be at 34 hours regardless of their situations and be strict. It is too stressful to have so many conflicting messages.
- How to move successfully from one track to another.
- None....as the process of the participation pilot went on, there was additional training--specifically, about the 90 participation review. That training helped immensely.
- I don't think we need any additional training; I think we just need to get tougher with our customers regarding participation requirements.
- More in depth assessments, more than what is on Uworks and need more tools or assessments that we can give our customers to understand them in a more complete way. Maybe take-home assessments to give customers, so they're doing the work. More emphasis on coordinating with

other agencies very closely and efficiently (I send emails with any notes and employment plans to all coordinating agencies, I think everyone should and customers would progress better). A lot more training on how to help people be successful in job searching. They just assume we should know and are expert job searchers, but we're not, there is no training on this.

I think it would have been helpful at the beginning to explain 'the vision' of the pilot and the purpose of all the busy work--especially in regard to the 3 month reviews with customers.

- Barrier Management

- When initially sharing comments during a group meeting with you, I recall most employment counselors reporting it as useful. Since then I've had conversations with 3 other employment counselors where we all agreed we changed our mind and 'tracks' is just busy work, and one more thing to have to check our CMCR for to ensure its there and accurate.

- I feel that it's a system that isn't really focused on the customer. Additional training could help understand what the pilot is trying to accomplish. Personally I feel we need to reconsider if we're pushing for numbers or if we're interested in helping customers progress.

10. Explain the type or types of situations in which you would describe the track system:

- I would use it to show a customer the over all plan....if they seemed lost.

- When the customer seems interested in the process behind their participation. They ask questions and seem to want more information or when I have to address participation concerns with them, I will share the timelines behind the tracks and reasons for them.

- In creating the employment plan and meeting about every three months or less to determine what track is right for the customer.

- Usually when meeting with the customer for the first time and I am explained the expectations of the program or with an older customer who I am explaining the changes in the expectation for participation in the program.

13. Please give an example or talk about a situation that explains why you choose the answer you did in #12:

[#12: In general, would you say that using the Participation Pilot tracking system enhances, takes from or doesn't impact your relationship with your customers?]

- I don't tell them they've been 'tracked.' I think the customers usually have been 'tracked' all of their lives, and I don't want them to feel labeled whether good or bad. But, I do discuss with them the course of action we are taking based on their individual needs, and that is a relationship enhancer.

- The track system is generally reviewed with each customer before the employment plan is negotiated. But a customers focus is on getting their benefits in there time of need.

- I have not explained the tracks to my customers. I have always explained participation and what types of activities need to be involved. I have used the tracks mainly for purposes of tracking rather than explanation to the customer.

- I liked the 90 day review because I could get a good idea from the customer what the customer considered was working and what was not working. Other than that...It seems like the tracks system could be best used by new employees. The reason I say that is because the experienced

worker will go through, in the minds, as they assess each customer, where the customer is and where the customer needs to go.

- I really don't think it makes a difference to most customers which 'track' they are in. Most only seem concerned with what is required of them to do in order to keep their case open.

- It depends on the customer's personality. Some people express that it helps them understand what our expectations are and therefore they appreciate the structure. Others say that it moves them along too quickly and pushes them into employment too fast before they have their barriers resolved. They tend to close off and become less cooperative.

- I do not explain the tracks to my customers because it is too confusing to them. I already spend a considerable amount of time explaining the 34 hours per week participation requirement and going over which activities that are approved by the Federal Government for them to do, I don't feel like it is helpful at that time to explain a track to them. They naturally fall wherever when they choose the activities off my chart of federally approved activities. I then put them in a track on my own based on that. I might add that I do this after the fact and it is mostly busy work for me. I do not use the tracks on a regular basis for any good use.

- I don't discuss it with my customers. I discuss long term goals and short term activities required to get there and how activities/tasks can be broken down into manageable steps. I address all barriers and not just one track. If I were to explain the whole 'tracks' pilot to a customer it could take most of an appointment- its not unusual for my customers to ask SEVERAL questions and voice SEVERAL objections and fears when they hear the '34 hour requirement.' Besides- some track options may not be available to some customers. We give our customer's so much information to process, that its easier to give them the most important info (which is the goal and what it will take to get there) not a philosophy. My experience has been that my customers progress most quickly when I do the following: explain the 34 hour requirement and which activities count, but explain its my job to help the customer work towards self-sufficiency and that as long as they understand the requirement they don't need to worry about the hours- I will do the adding and let them know if they are under 34 hours and together we will discuss what customer can do to increase hours to 34. This seems to help the customer focus on the goal/ desired outcome instead of 'am I doing enough to keep getting my money every month and not be in conciliation.' When I tell my customers I will worry about the numbers part I almost always see physical signs of relaxation and the customers attitude usually seems to change to an 'I can do this/ this employment counselor really wants to help me!' This goes a long way in increasing the customers disclosure of information and in helping me to understand what is really going on in the customers life. With this knowledge I can see the REAL 'tracks' that need to be focused on and not just one of 5 options given to make a plan look good.

- I rarely talk about the tracking system with customers. The tracks don't show up on their plans and they don't know what they are. If I try to explain to someone they are in the barrier track or the low skill track that could be very discouraging for them. Because of this I just don't tell them. The only customers I specifically mention the tracks to are those in the fast track. The fast track is a good way to describe those on their way to employment.

- The relationship that I have with customers has not changed substantially since I started working these cases. I have a job to do and they have goals to accomplish, I try to help facilitate those goals and get the best outcome for the customer within the parameters of the program. The track system has not influence the relationships but has made the process more organized for me as a worker.

- Enhances because they may feel that we care if they advance/ progress toward their goal they have set to accomplish on their employment plan.

- I just think assigning them a track is not going to enhance or take away from my relationship with my customer. I believe my relationship with my customer is not based on an assigned track but rather on how I treat them, whether or not they can trust me to do what I say and whether or not they feel like I care for them as an individual, respect them, and have their best interest as my focus.

- I work only with people in the SSI Track - finding activities that 'count' for people with disabilities has been a challenge and are rarely up to federal guidelines of 34 hours a week. My relationship with my customers hasn't changed because of the pilot since our goals are mainly in following through with SSI needs/paperwork.

15. Please give an example or talk about a situation that explains why you choose the answer you did in #14:

[#14: In general, do you feel the Participation Pilot tracking system has increased, decreased or had no effect on participation?]

- Well, when I discuss with them the path they are on to self-sufficiency it makes it easier to review progress and then they can see whether or not their plan needs to change for themselves. Thus, they increase their hours and/or change activities.

- I am more aware when someone is stuck in the barrier management and assessment tracks. It helps me to try and think of new ways to help the customer move forward

- I do not think most of the customers have a greater vision of what progression they are making as far as 'tracks' goes. I think that they are in the here and now and working out each day as it comes.

- It just seems like so many customers get stuck in barrier management. When they resolve an issue in their lives, something else seems to come up. I'm finding great conflict between trying to be compassionate towards people's difficult situations (letting them work out their barriers) vs. strictly enforcing the participation requirements.

- I think that the participation pilot and the new federal participation requirements causes us as employment counselors to code people's activities or represent their activities in such a way that makes it look like they're participating more, but in reality, nothing has changed for the customer.

- Since I emphasize the 34 hour participation requirement with my customers and focus on those activities, the track system does not effect participation in any way.

- Tracks takes away an employment counselors autonomy. Real-life problem solving takes creativity and requires 'thinking outside the box.' It's hard to keep the creative juices flowing when trying to figure out which little box a customer fits in the best. Working on all barriers at once seems to be the best approach. Mountainland Region is the only region participating in this pilot and Mountainland Region currently has the lowest participation rates in the state. Now, this may be only correlation, but it is something to think about!

- I think the pilot looks good on paper but it's not working as well for me as I thought it would. I don't think it's had an overall effect on participation. I think it's helped us as case workers learn how to approach situations differently but I don't think it's really changed participation of customers. We need to find a program that we could feel comfortable explaining to a customer and not feel that we're being demeaning to them in anyway.

- Track system has helped those who can move forward quickly, do so. However, it has left the workers in a dilemma: You end up with cases that aren't making good/fast progress and therefore participation rates are jeopardized reflecting poorly on the worker.
- Not an overall effect at this time but it may in the future. The few customers that I put into the Fast track seemed to like the fact they were ready to work but a few were not.
- I think most of my customers when they understand the idea behind the increased participation
- It hasn't had a change for me and my caseload but I can see the potential of it increasing participation in 'normal' caseloads where the customers CAN participate fully.

17. Under what conditions would you suggest the pilot go statewide:

- As I said before....It would be a good tool for the new employment counselors. Also, I think it would be beneficial for all employment counselors to do a 90 review with their customers and have feedback from the customers to see what is working and what is not working.
- If the assessment and barrier track can only be used for 3 months due to the new federal requirements, then we need to learn to assess people much better, on a deeper and more complete level, and we need to coordinate very closely with other agencies in getting barriers resolved quickly. We need to be more liberal with our Y funds to get barriers like transportation, clothing, communication, and mental health stabilized as quickly as possible.
- that they are simplified with:i.e. assessment 3 months, disability track IF APPROPRIATE, and work track. We REALLY need to teach everyone what the definition of disabled is, otherwise people need to go to work.
- The names of the tracks should be changed if we should be discussing the tracks with the customers. I'm not sure how to describe them but the current names are such that I wouldn't want to 'label' someone with that track.
- If the assessment track time frame of 90 day counts toward the 34 hours a week needed for the federal government then have the assessment track only last until 20 days after their case opens. The barrier management and skill building needs to be combined because neither of them count toward the 34 hours a week of needed participation for very long at all. Except for if a customer is in training/ schooling.
- I just think it should be implemented the way it was with us.
- That those customers applying for SSI and are good candidates for SSI should have some kind of exemption from the 34 hours a week requirement. Also these cases should not count against the worker in the required percentages for participation.

18. Whether the pilot goes statewide or stays only in the Mountainland region, what changes would you recommend be made to the Participation Pilot?

- Every office needs to be on the same page, we all need the exact same information, and management needs to stop sending mixed messages.
- Please refer to question 17's answer.
- I think there needs to be better teaching points with the customer up front, i.e. If you have barriers to work out, you have three months ONLY to take care of them, and then you WILL fulfill the participation requirements at that time. I think the new conciliation process may help with that, but I'll have to wait and see.

- The things I mentioned in the last answer. Also I think we need to communicate how requirements are changing for our customers with other agencies. We need support from people like substance abuse treatment providers, DCFS, Voc Rehab, human services, courts and such. I think DWS needs to hire coordinators to coordinate services more efficiently with other agencies. Employment Counselors don't have time to do it well with their demanding caseload. One coordinator per couple of teams could advise employment counselors and outside agencies on making plans and expectations for customers congruent. It would be a great service to everyone!
- I would recommend it being a OPTION to put people in tracks. I know there are others who use the track system and really enjoy it. I personally don't and think it just adds work to my day and another thing to worry about. Still, I would not be opposed to other people doing the track system, and I think it might even be a good training tool for those just starting out with employment counseling to get a more visual picture of the goal.
- I would like to see it put into the new hire training and give in depth training on the meaning of disabled to seasoned workers.
- Create more track options. If the customer is supposed to know what track we list them in, then have it show on the printed version of the employment plan. Allow more than one track to be on a plan. Create a 'tracks' slideshow for the customer and have 'tracks' be meshed with 34 hours in a more obvious way so it doesn't seem like we have overwhelming expectations for our customers. Add tracks to the FEP pamphlet and to the program agreement. Use problem solving when a customer can't stick to one track (if they seem to change frequently to avoid doin much of anything). Providing the barrier options just gives the cust more excuses not to participate. Either make tracks all important- or be done with it.
- Same as I've mentioned above.
- Have a slide show that applicants watch prior to meeting with a worker so that they are better informed regarding the worker's role. That way they wont be surprised to find out that they need to make progress (quicker than they may have intended).
- Same conditions as in #17.
- Not have it, just one more thing we have to do.
- None that I can think of.
- See my answer in #17.

22. Additional comments:

- I said all I have to say!
- nothing
- I feel with participation we are helping our customers move toward employment and taking the steps they need to become self sufficient.
- I thought this was supposed to be anonymous-otherwise I wouldn't have written all I did. If the info on screen 13 is available to management I don't think it will be very hard to figure out who wrote what.

Appendix 2: Customer Qualitative Comments

B3. What activity or activities did you ask to have on your plan that were not put on the plan?

- 30 I asked if I could go to massage therapy school as part of my hours and they said they would not count it as my hours.
- 48 I asked if I could go back to get school to get a degree (AS) or vocational school for certifications. I was told they wouldn't be able to provide me that.
- 57 Get GED -EC told client's mom it would be a waste of time.
- 58 She wouldn't let me go to school to get my day care licence because she said it would not pay enough. It was all about what she wanted not what I wanted and what was good for me.
- 59 I wanted to go to school (photography, holistic medicine or general education) and they said they would not be able to help me. (By supporting me financially) or count it toward my hours.
- 60 I asked to have some of my schooling to count as hours they wouldn't count (studying and attending classes).
- 65 I had school interests they didn't support. She wanted me to work.
- 71 I wanted her to give me more time to take GED and she isn't letting me do it.
- 81 She had a great experience and said she is just getting ready to close. She did say the reason why they haven't gone over the plan is because R missed the last appointment.
- 90 They said no help with schooling because I have F1 forms- for disabled people. So they said I have to do it but I want to go to school to see if I can do it before I fill the forms out.
- 92 Work study. At first my EC told me it was okay and then after I finished all the paperwork, she told me no. So I didn't get child care assistance.
- 96 I wanted to go to school to become a real estate agent or a yoga instructor. I'm going to real estate school and doing an internship but they won't put it on my plan.
- 97 I wanted to go to school to be an LPN but they said that the funding for school didn't last that long.

B11a. If activities were changed on your employment plan in the recent past, what were the main reasons for the change in activities?

- 1 Found out she didn't need to finish the math program she was in, in order to move forward with school.
- 2 I moved and so I will be able to go to school now as I live closer to the school.
- 9 I decided to go back to school so we put that on my plan.
- 13 Activities change as I progress.
- 16 Changed because she got a job now.
- 18 Adjustment were made when no transportation.
- 19 We hadn't decided what to do, that is what to focus on and so.
- 22 I was having a hard time getting things done and they made it easier for me.
- 25 She quit her job and had to start looking over again.
- 26 As I complete goals I get new ones.

29 I got a different job where I would work less hours (under 30 hours) but make more than I
did at the
other job. I also start working on my child development associate credential (CDA).
30 Yes, I was at a work site and it wasn't a good placement. I had a lot of stress and wasn't
comfortable. They took me off and got me into counseling.
32 I had things on my plan like taking computer classes and getting my GED but it was taken
off temporarily because I am getting shoulder surgery. The pain and problems I have had
from my shoulder have prevented me from completing my classes.
35 I am getting close to the limit on how many months of cash assistance I can receive. They
change my job search activities to me getting signed up for and in vocational
rehabilitation.
37 They said new legislation form doing just job search and volunteer hours to doing 10 set
hours a week at a work site.
38 I think because my daughter turned 18 years old and I got a new counselor only a month
ago so it changed them too.
39 Finished a goal that we set together.
40 It changed because I got a part time job.
42 I complete some things and then go off. We decided schooling was better than work at
the time.
43 It changed because I got a job and then changed back to job searching when I lost my job.
49 I wanted to complete an office management classes at Mountain and Technology College.
It would get me certificate but DWS wouldn't approve it for me to take the class because
it was too much money.
53 I couldn't get them all done so they took away some of the things they wanted me to do.
56 Completed activities and moved on to others. We updated things every three months to
see what I should do next.
59 My counseling and other classes (parenting class) have been changed as I have completed
things.
61 I need to fill more hours so she assigned me more activities to do like more group
therapy.
62 It was harder for me to find day care in order to do the job searching and classes. So she
split up the hours more so it would help with getting day care.
69 To get me a little more motivated she is getting me to go to group therapy and do all I
need to do.
71 Because I have had other things that come up. So she had to changed some things on my
plan. When she had to do this she puts me down and degrades me.
73 Health got worst so the activities changed. Had transportation problems and so want to
change the plan.
74 We go over the plan every time I get together with her, it changes when my physical
health gets really bad and I need surgery. She is as concerned about getting me physically
well as getting me into a job.
78 They had a steps program with 2 programs and I finished step one but step 2 was
cancelled and I needed to change so I have new activities on it. We are meeting to change
tomorrow.
79 I want to go to school and they wanted me to do an internship. So we added the
internship. They wanted me to prove that I would stick with school.

- 82 I guess I'd say she gave me more hours to do every week. And look into hours of college seminars to see what my skills are.
- 86 I decided that instead of just getting my GED, I wanted to get my high school diploma.
- 88 I have a form 1 saying I am disabled, but DWS policy is that everyone has to do 34 hours a week. Before I didn't have to an internship, but now they're making me.
- 89 It was basically because I was feeling better after having the baby so I could go back to work.
- 90 They decreased the activities for now. My husband was suppose to be in school and work search but too much when going to school and working.
- 93 The change in work study. I had to quit my work study job because they wouldn't count it for child care purposes.
- 94 Because having hard time getting all my hours in for a week. They give me credit now for studying at home. I get 2 hours study time for every 1 hour in school.
- 95 Because of mental health issues. I needed counseling.

B13. Main reasons can't complete activities on the employment plan:

Other:

- 4 Unsure if job site will follow through after job offer.
- 34 Because of my learning disability in reading and writing.
- 57 They keep setting up appointments when I have Dr. appointments for my kids.
- 71 Might fail my GED test because she wont give me time to study before

C3. What other activities are you doing as part of the Social Security track:

- 47 Having neurological test done. Meeting with a therapist and psychologist. Reading the book "I don't have to make it all better"
- 85 Have not made plan yet. Has an appointment tomorrow.

C4. How do you think your situation has or will improve from doing these activities?

- 36 I hasn't improved my mental and emotional state is getting worse. I'm having to do all the paper work it is very overwhelming. And it doesn't seem like I will get approved.
- 47 I think it will help my employment counselor see if I qualify for SSDI.
- 85 N/A no plan yet.

C5. What other activities are you doing as part of the assessment track:

- 52 Attending Provo College for associates degree. Has to turn in grades and keep track hours at school.

C6. How do you think your situation has or will improve from doing these activities?

- 52 I will be able to find a better job after I graduate.

C7. What other activities are you doing as part of the Skill building track:

- 75 Drug treatment

C8. How do you think your situation has or will improve from doing these activities?

- 21 I have been noticing it improving as I am thinking more on track and not being scatter brained. Trying to deal with ADD and depression.
- 24 I have been through a lot so counseling will help me talk things out and I can get it out.
- 40 The training helped me get my part time job. My part time job is going to help me get my education because in six months I can get tuition assistance.
- 99 My education will allow me to get a job that will provide a higher income to support my family.

C9. What other activities are you doing as part of the Fast Track:

- 73 Internship-DWS therapist for drug withdrawal from Valium.

C10. How do you think your situation has or will improve from doing these activities?

- 5 I'm sure it would improve significantly. Because if I get a job I know things will be ok and work out.
- 73 I was feel better about myself so I will feel stronger and be able to get off state assistance and be able to support myself.

C22. Other activities:

- 1 22-Research what school are best to go.
- 3 Take parenting classes.
- 4 Take one or two coursed in Excel.
- 6 Wait for to hear if approved for disability and bring form in right away.
- 7 Keeping current job.
- 8 Getting a restraining order against my husband.
- 9 Working. Commuting to work.
- 10 Working.
- 13 Job- 10 hours a week. Drug- 10 month appointments on time.
- 14 Drug Court.
- 17 Keep up with needs of mom and daughter.
- 22 Keep up on household chores.
- 26 Working.
- 29 Working at job.
- 31 Working at job.
- 35 Getting signed up for and in vocational rehabilitation.
- 38 Get heat assistance.
- 39 Go to job.
- 40 Working at job.
- 41 Getting day care license.
- 45 College information about what's offered.
- 49 Working at job for 40 hours a week.
- 50 Working.
- 51 Send a copy of anything I receive form social security. Im in the appeal process right now.

- 57 Voc rehab.
- 59 Work
- 60 Take drivers education test.
- 62 Work with ORS and keep in contact with.
- 64 Parents who care-parenting class.
- 65 Get on WIC. Get multiple estimates on car repairs. Apply for HEAT.
- 66 Continue working.
- 67 Go back to work full time once the baby is born.
- 68 Take husband to doctors and physical therapy-keep track of husbands paperwork.
- 70 Care for children and wife while she under goes cancer treatment.
- 71 Take kids to therapy.
- 72 Appointments with worker.
- 74 Work with voc rehab as much as possible-do voc rehab assessment.
- 76 Continue working- Try to become a merit employee - Get health insurance.
- 77 Log doctors appointments - Vocational rehab
- 78 Gather info on criminal justice school programs.
- 79 Keep working at my job.
- 80 Do what DCFS wants me to do.
- 82 Take seminars to gain more skills and see what my skills are and what jobs will be best.
- 87 Life skills class called impact.
- 88 Work with legal aid to finalize divorce.
- 89 Attorney appointment.
- 94 Keeping current job.
- 96 Have a full time job a month ago.

C14. How do you think your situation has or will improve from doing these activities?

- 1 I don't think they will. I am thinking about just dropping it as employment will be better for my mental health. I am so confused.
- 2 I am going to go to school to learn about what I am doing at the work site.
- 3 I don't know if it will improve.
- 4 I am hoping I will be full-time employed and she has helped so much with specifically looking up jobs and classes for me.
- 6 It has helped improve my situation. Even though I wasn't required to take classes did anyway and found them to be helpful.
- 7 With bachelors I will be able to move out of parents home and support me and my daughter.
- 8 I didn't have to look for a job because someone I did business for in the past called me to offer a job.
- 9 It motivates me. To see my goals on paper helps me to do them. It will help tp stay healthy my going to my Dr.'s appointments. Going to school will help me get a better job.
- 10 I was at a work site at an agency that provided employment counseling for people who recently lost their job. While I was there I was able to participate in workshops on resume writing and interviewing and helped me in my job search.
- 11 I found a job, but I haven't started mental health counseling or GED yet.
- 12 I will be able to support myself and a 5 year old because my education will help me get a better job.

- 13 I think she has me working into things again. Getting used to working again before jumping in. She wants on to succeed permanently and get good job in the future.
- 14 I am improving my skills. I am learning to go back to school. Better social skills. Learning to hang with better people. Improves communications and time management skills.
- 15 It's going to make a positive difference. I've learned a lot of good skills that I can apply to my life now. They are life skills that make more sense now.
- 16 I feel more confident in what I am doing now.
- 17 I will have my bachelor's degree in a year and a half and then I will be able to get a really good job.
- 18 It will be better as I will be confident in myself more with my GED. A good impression to others.
- 19 They have gotten me more excited about school and getting a degree in the future.
- 20 They putting much for and one to go to Wasatch Mental. I was resistant but now I have meds that work for most times of my life but too much stress is still too much.
- 22 Will help me get my SSI-just trying to get over my stroke.
- 23 Not at all because I really need disability even though I have been turned down twice.
- 25 Improve job search skills. Help me learn about what he really want to do.
- 26 They made my life better. It's help me get my head on my shoulders. Be a better mom and maybe get me ready to go back to school to get a better job.
- 27 My substance abuse treatment will help me to get stable so I can get a job and keep it. My schooling going to help me become more employable and get better, higher paying jobs.
- 28 My volunteering is getting me experience in the field I want to work in. Experience working with the public and possibly job opportunities in the future. My school is getting me the degree I need to become a library technician.
- 29 The things I am doing (going to school, getting my child development associate certification and working at my job at head start) are setting me up so I can get a full time job, with much better pay as a teacher.
- 30 I'm getting the mental health counseling that is helping a little but right now I'm not going to work. I don't want to leave my son and miss out on raising him, I don't trust the day care centers I would have to bring him to and I don't feel mentally ready to start working as fast as they want me to.
- 31 Getting counseling is going to help me with my depression. Working and volunteering at my kids school helps me with my depression because I am active. Plus I always wanted to be an elementary school teacher so it is giving me experience that may help me get a job in the future.
- 32 I am getting shoulder surgery and that will be able to complete my schooling and computer classes and get a job.
- 33 It has helped me get on track to get my GED and the day care helps has made it possible for me to get a job.
- 34 Going to my counseling appointments is motivating me work on my issues and depression. It is giving me skills so that I can deal with my depression better get a job.
- 35 By completing these activities I think I will be able to get a job. The steps program and vocational rehabilitation.
- 36 My employment plan activities aren't going to help me get a job. They would only help me get my disability. My situation isn't improving it is getting worse. My mental and

emotional state is getting worse. I am very stressed out my all the paperwork medical and mental health terms. And it doesn't seem like I'm going to get approved because I am so young.

37 Hopefully I will get a job.

38 I don't know how to answer because I am feeling stuck until my SSI goes through. At least I am still in the program and at least getting medical assistance.

39 Just makes me more comfortable with what I have to do.

41 It will help me get a job in day care. I love to work with children and I need classes to get my license.

42 Finished school and now looking for a job in my field. It has helped me by taking little steps and built confidence. Im not on my own all the time.

43 All the job searching is helping me be aware of jobs and apply for jobs which will help me get a job. My only problem is that the accident I was in has really messed up my back, neck and shoulders. I'm in so much pain I can't even pick up my daughter. Doing the job searching isn't helping me to get better it is making it worse.

44 I'll be able to get a job in the pharmacy tech area after I graduate the school helps place me as well.

45 I feel better about myself. I was in such need of one to me therapy and the steps program. It has helped me move forward again. It has been a life saver.

46 The things that my employment counselor has had on my plans in the past has been going to my court hearing, attending substance abuse treatment counseling. These things are helping me so I can get my record cleared.

48 The steps program has helped me to not want to be on welfare. It has helped with me gain motivation.

49 I have taken the resume classes, interviewing classes, life skill classes have been a little helpful in me getting. The most helpful.

50 My counselor has helped me to assess my situation and the medication is improving my mental health state.

51 Once I get the gastro by pass surgery, my health situation may approve. My mental health counselor is someone who I can rent to. Other, than that she can't help me much. I wont feel better until I get into different housing and Im waiting to get housing assistance.

53 It helps me keep up very healthy.

54 It has improved a lot-it has been teaching me to get interested in secretarial work or art.

55 I'm not sure it will improve. It hasn't yet.

56 I have a GED now so I can apply for more jobs. Finished treatment so I can get a full time job during the day.

57 These things will help me get a job so I can get in my feet and away from DWS.

58 Not at all-what I have done has been on my own -not with their help. I just found a job on my own cause she would never help me.

59 The internship is helping me get job experience and build skills. It is like free training and may help me get into the career in the future. The counselor will help me with my personal issues which will help me with holding down a job.

60 Going to school will help me be more employable. Getting my license will help me be independent get to work on time, take my kids places and get a job farther away. Getting counseling and medication has helped my anxiety to that I can handle having a job and all my other family responsibilities.

61 The internship will help me get skills and work experience to help me get a job latter.

62 I have learned how to make a resume and doing the job search helps me to be aware of the jobs out there and applying for them.

63 The work site is helping me with my receptionist skills and getting work experience. The job search is helping me find and apply for jobs out there. However, the resume and interviewing classes haven't helped me at all.

64 Better find out more about physical problems so I can move forward. Learn how to be a parent to teens.

65 Each thing itself would have been a good thing. I need transportation, resources, etc, but all together it was too much to do.

66 The early activities were not good for me, They were focused on younger people or ones who had less work experience. The workshops were a waste of time.

67 The cash is helping us just bridge between my husband's accident and me going back to work after the baby.

69 Three months ago I couldn't even step out of my house-now I can do like things like going to the grocery store and begin to care for my kids. It's a good step for me.

70 Wife has two more weeks of radiation treatment and we will be alike to get back to normal. It has been good to be able to help her.

71 It will get better because I will have DCFS out of my life.

72 Maybe be able to focus more set up and get there on day.

74 I will eventually get SSI and I will be ready to live on that to support me and my son. The form is help what I need for medical.

76 It will improve because interviews to become a merit employee and once I get that I will have the insurance. They have helped when I have been discouraged.

77 It will improve because I will get a new line of work and be more self-sufficient. I can't do the line of work I used to because of my physical abilities.

78 It's helped me a lot with my kids so I can be less cranky and more patient with them.

79 I don't think it will improve. They don't really support me. They put me in the internship to see if I wanted to do it and I knew I did so it was going backwards.

80 Graduating - it will help a lot because a lot of jobs want you to have a diploma. Doing what DCFS wants me tod o ain't going to help my employment.

81 It gave me the push I needed. I was ok with going slow and she pushed me to do 5 interviews as week. I didn't know I could do that and she really helped.

82 Well, I have gained a lot of knowledge I am closer to a college diploma so I can get a better job since I don't have any skills.

83 I've learned stuff from classes and made connections from knowing people. The classes and people can help me get in a good job.

84 I'll be able to get a better paying job once I get my medical assisting certificate.

86 I want to become a counselor so I need to get my high school diploma, before I go onto college.

87 The life skills class has taught me to reach for my goals.

88 My employment counselor made me aware that medicaid could possibly pay for gastric by passurgery. If that could happen my health may improve.

89 It just helps me to get back out after having the baby. I am also going through divorce. They have helped me to get back on my feet slowly.

90 Well, I hope to get better physically by going to the doctor. Will my statement in this study really help things change because I would really like to see things in the system change.

- 91 They will help me get more stable mentally and overcome substance use.
- 93 I got my preschool teaching certificate. But the greatest benefit was getting child care assistance.
- 94 By getting a better job in the future because I'm going to school now.
- 95 If I keep looking, I'll be able to find something in the health industry, a job that's good for me.
- 97 It didn't help me get the job I have or help me at all. The job just called me and asked if I wanted to work for them. I didn't give them an application.
- 98 The physical therapy will make it so I can use my hands better.

C17. Any additional comments about your experience with the DWS employment counselor, employment plan or the agency in general? 13 = No Comment

- 1 I don't understand this system at all. It seems so complicated. It makes me grumpy thinking about that place. The people scare me but they make it too hard. I feel like I am begging and it is awful.
- 2 Just wonderful all together.
- 3 My employment counselor wouldn't believe me that other day that my daughter needs surgery and she made me get a doctors note. That was frustrating.
- 4 My EC has been great and really so helpful.
- 8 I thank God for you guys and please don't stop giving cash assistance until my daughter has moved out of the house.
- 11 I had a pretty good experience. My employment counselor in American Fork was great.
- 12 They've been better than in Tuscon. In Tuscon they wanted you to get a job right away and they weren't willing to help as much with schooling.
- 13 This EC has me do things that make sense and that match with my life and my goals. There are a lot of EC's who don't know how to do their jobs. But I was also not honest before as I was on drugs. I am clean now and have a trusting relationship with my EC. It is really nice.
- 14 My EC is awesome! She clears problems with my eligibility worker. The EC got my child care reopened when they got my case mixed up with someone else.
- 15 Being able to deal with depression and keep working. Learning to pay attention to what I need and ask for help when I need it. Was learned good communication skills and listening to myself as well. Live almost run out of months and this last time has finally been helpful. This last time has made the difference. I feel so much more confident than I have in the past. They must be training people better now because they are really helping me now.
- 18 They have been helpful to work with. As long as I pull my own part they do their part. Like when I got a car my EC was really excited for me and told me she could help with registration. She was really supportive of me.
- 20 They lose paperwork a lot and that is so hard. It was so scary to not have benefits when we need it. Most times then won't call you back when you leave a message.
- 21 I don't I would be able to make it without them.
- 22 They need to pay more for the benefits. The food and financial are too low to cover any bills. I can't move out of parents house and be on my own.

23 Client has a lot of physical and mental health issues and there overwhelm her so that she can't follow through on things. Im feeling extremely overwhelmed with the whole things. My case keep getting screwed up. I feel stabbed in the back by them. They aren't helping me at all. I can't raise my kids on so little. Eligibility workers is even worse. They keep losing paper work.

25 Eligibility workers sucks! I have to call her very much. She never returns my calls. My case is being close right now. My worker is out of town for two weeks. They closed my medicaid due to her lack of follow through. My old one was great. My daughter got really really sick because I cant get her medicine.

26 I have had three workers and the last two were bad but this one is great. I think she needs a pay raise and recognition for all the hard work she parts in.

27 My employment counselor is really at working with me and helping me with my substance abuse issues.

29 I have had three employment counselor and my second counselor was awful. All she could talk about was how she was retiring in January. She would loose my paperwork. She wouldn't return my calls. She didn't tell me about other options like education. My time with her was a headache and a huge waste of time.

30 I turn in the paperwork they need, then the next thing I know my case is closed because they didn't get them. I call my eligibility and leave messages, I can never get a hold of her and she doesn't return my calls. It is frustrating. Right now my food stamps have been cut.

32 Some of the people that work at DWS (employment counselors) are very mean. My sister in law is also on cash assistance and her counselor doesn't help her at all. She will call to report things and her counselor always put her off. She complained and asked for a new counselor but was told you can't change. She also never seems to get her food stamps when is supposed to and she has to go 1-2 weeks to take care of things and still has problem.

36 There is one lady at the DWS office who treats me and everyone who comes in like beggars. She is very condescending, she doesn't care about peoples feeling or what is going on in their lives. She works at the front desk. DWS seems to have trouble keeping employees at the eligibility office. I have had five different eligibility workers. Every time they hire a new one they make mistakes and they close my case. This has all been since September of 2003. DWS never gives you any notice that your case is closing. (Less than a week) I wish they would give you at least 3-4 weeks notice so I can figure out what else I can do to get by.

37 I just think my EC is pretty cool. She goes above and beyond the call of duty. She does whatever I ask of her.

38 Sometimes I feel like they put too much pressure to get things done. It is not like they ask me a lot but my medical and mental issues (R is crying the whole time through this answer)

39 I believe two things they can do . They could take into consideration better single parents and if they have kids with special needs or diets and take into consideration providing more food stamps to make up the costs.

40 My current employment counselor, has been so helpful. Especially with dealing with my divorce issues. My kids needing counseling. She has gone above and beyond to help me. She really shows that she cares. My previous counselor didn't help at all. She didn't seem to care and was more concerned with getting the paperwork filled out.

42 They are changing my employment counselor and I am sad because he was really really helpful. The eligibility is another story. They have given me a hard time. They are not helpful. Not individual and not helpful. They have made it very difficult by losing paperwork.

- 43 I wish that my employment counselor would be more understanding of the physical pain I am and stop pushing me so hard.
- 44 I really like my employment counselor. The eligibility worker is not that nice so I have to work through my employment counselor.
- 45 Current employment counselor is really dialed into me and my needs. It is so great. The steps program is the best.
- 46 The worker at DWS have been wonderful in supporting and helping me.
- 47 I just want to say that overall my employment counselor has been very insensitive and push me to do things I am not capable of doing. But the last meeting I had with her she finally started to be more empathetic and changed my employment plan so that it is meeting my needs.
- 48 My employment counselor has been awful. She has been verbally abusive. She tells me I am a failure. She has told my child that I am a failure and that she should work to never be like me. She has lied and scheduled meeting that I am not told about so then it looks like I don't show up. She doesn't talk to me or ask me about my life. With doing the employment plan she tells me what I have to do and doesn't listen to what I can do. In the last few weeks I have gotten a call that she closed my case I feel that I have been treated unfairly and that he case was closed for untrue reasons.
- 49 My only complaint has been with my eligibility worker. It seems like she always loses my paperwork. I have to turn it in 2-3 times. At the beginning she lost my paperwork to ORS and ended up having to go in and fax the paperwork to ORS so that I could do my interview and start getting my benefits. She doesn't answer her phone and she never seems to return phone calls. I love my employment counselor though she is wonderful.
- 50 My employment counselor has been great. We have a great relationship.
- 51 At this point I feel it's useless. The cash assistance, I need but it's not enough to pay rent. Turning the forms in the from the doctor showing I can't work every month is pointless. My doctor could write a note explaining that my condition wont improve until I get th surgery. It's a big hassle to have to get the form filled out each month.
- 54 Nothing more really-they do a good job and are helping a lot.
- 55 I don't care for my counselor . I have requested repeatedly for a new counselor and they won't give me one. We have had conflicts from the beginning. She has tried to cut my money. It left a message for her on the first of the month and didn't call me back until the 8th and she called and talked to a family friend almost my case. They have now cut my money . EC called cops on her because child was crying when she was on the phone.
- 57 Took in dis note for high risk pregnancy and EC said she didn't want it. Said dis note didn't count and she had to do what they said first.
- 58 Client said her mom was the one who told her about the time limit not the worker. The worker wouldn't spend time helping her with what she needed. She said, I would care, leave messages and she would never return my calls. I would get in trouble. Even my WIA worker said this was really bad worker and she wasn't doing what she was suppose to be doing.
- 59 My experience with DWS and my employment counselor is that I constantly feel threatened and so much uncertainty. If you don't do your cash will be closed. If you don't return your paperwork your cash will be closed. In some ways I feel more overwhelmed than before and I don't need this having just left an abusive relationship.
- 60 A few years ago I was on cash assistance. The treatment, the services and especially my employment counselors are 100 times better than my last experience.

61 My main complaint is that I keep having my EC change it is very confusing and hard. I have had four in the 13 months I have been on cash assistance.

63 My employment counselor is very condescending to me (treats me like a child). She calls and cancels my interview and then writes down that I have cancelled. She made me do the resume and interviewing class even though I don't need them. I have complained and tried to get a different EC and it hasn't worked.

65 It was hard for me to go in when I was too overwhelmed. I just felt so awful every time I went in. She would get mad at me for not doing things. So I just stopped going in.

66 I just don't feel like the system was set up for people who really want to do better. You can never do better and move ahead. When you work you are penalized and it makes cash assistance look better. There is just not enough for single moms. They pigeon hole everyone into the same program. It sits people up to fail by not giving them enough to move forward. Make more responsibilities.

67 They have done good things for the people they serve.

68 My counselor is very kind and sensitive to our issues. She's taken her time to help us work through the system even though we are a different kind of case. She has made it work for us.

69 She is my very best friend in the whole world. I just love her. She is so sweet and has let me do things at the pace I then do it.

70 I wish that there was an easier way to make job contacts other than online. Walking to DWS is better but the job service online is not very user friendly. That could be better.

71 I think they could be more considerate of what people are going through and understand what they are doing in their daily life instead of giving them a time limit to do it.

73 They are trying their best to help me and it's basically up to me to do what I need to do to be successful.

74 I have had a good experience once I got with a worker that is willing to help me. The Spanish Fork office is really great. The people help me so much. The disability manager is huge help in letting me know what was available to me. The bus token help me so much because these seizures make it so I can't drive. My worker system is the very best person in the world! She keeps it professional but she stays on top of things all the time.

75 I think EC is the best, she's great and deserves a raise.

79 Mom-said we found it disheartening. There is some good to help hold my daughter accountable but some things they would hold it against her. Like being late to an appointment when we were sharing a car. I think it is a joke.

80 Right now I am pretty upset with them because they closed me.

81 I specifically have been working with them for over a year and I have been very impressed. The EC becomes more of a friend and I could tell them every dirty detail then they don't judge me.

83 Thanks for your help!

85 They're been very good to me and treated me very well. I want to thank them.

86 They should try to call you back faster when you leave messages.

87 I'm really grateful for all they've done.

88 My frustration lies in the fact that my doctor says I can't and DWS does not accept that as valid. If I could work. I'd get a real job.

89 I was really shocked at how good they were to work with me and understanding of the situation I was in. They showed me a lot of resources I didn't know about. Really I have been thrilled with the help they have given me.

- 90 She lets me tell her but doesn't listen to what I need. They make me feel like I need to be finding a job but physically unable to work right now-I still feel pressured. EC stated R and husband have to start paying co-payments to keep cash open. The cash they get doesn't even cover rent, we have to scrap by every month. They need a program to help teach people to drive or provide transportation. When give me bus tokens they make me feel bad. They wont pay for my school because I have a disability they say we wont help you with anything else if you have disabilities. EC told them no more help with emergency funds for medical bills. Some of the workers are good ,some not but I just wish they could help more. It seems their hands are tied.
- 91 Nothing really, they need know more- but how many months cant receive cash in Utah- my counselor 36- I've never heard that before.
- 93 They should help and support me being a full time student rather than working a low wage crummy job somewhere. Work study is a good opportunity that builds your resume. They don't count work study.
- 96 They just want me to work for \$7/ hour and take car of my kids without any help for child care, medicaid, food stamps, or cash assistance. They've taken away all my benefits, even though I've exceeded the requirements of the program.
- 97 They should be a little more helpful for single moms to go to school. It's impossible to go to school, work, and take care of kids. They should help you go to school because that will help you be self-sufficient in the long run.
- 98 I hope that I don't have to apply again for assistance, but they helped me a lot.
- 99 I had to ask a lot of people at DWS before they would put schooling on my employment plan.

Additional Interviewer Comments:

R = Respondent

- 1 First one to call - scared she was in trouble. Didn't know why she didn't get cash on her card today.
- 2 R was much unsure of much relating to her E. plan. And did not volunteer much information. R knows she should do 34 hours a week, but was unsure of the activities listed
- 4 R stated she has sclerosis and needs to find a job where she works out of the home. So she has had two jobs offers recently, which both feel through so she is worried it may continue to happen.
- 6 R stated she has applied for disability and must wait until 3/15/06 to hear if she will get it. R stated she has no plan right now she just hat to inform them as soon as she hears anything.
- 8 At first R was confused and did not know what I was talking about when I asked about her employment plan, but then I asked her what she had to do to get assistance and she understood.. R has a degree in finance and just got a job. She is very grateful for DWS.
- 9 R is currently studying for ACT so she can go to college. She is also receiving medical treatment as part of her employment plan, in addition to working
- 10 R just found a job before that she was at a work site and doing job search.
- 11 R reported that she recently found a job. Has not started mental health counseling or GED that are on her employment plan.
- 12 R has completed a certificate program and is now doing an internship for the certificate.
- 13 Client was very appreciative of her EC who held to her case even when the caseloads were switched because the case is so complicated. It would have been very hard to explain it all to a new worker again.

15 “This past experience has the best by far. My EC this time really could help me figure out what I needed. She actually had good suggestions for me this time.” Client really thought things were better in the agency than they have ever been before.

21 Client said she was in one track. Employment plan says she is in another. The activities she listed were not on employment plan

23 Client went on a long time many problems with DWS workers in almost all aspects of the system. EC and eligibility-medicaid problems with no dental coverage.

25 She had lots to say about problems with eligibility. I gave her constituent services phone numbers as she was desperate to get medicaid open for sick daughter. She had tried the worker and the workers supervisor many times.

29 R was very quick and thoughtful with her responses. She also stated 3 or 4 times that her goals is to get off cash assistance, get on her own and that she is working hard to do it.

30 Interview was difficult to do. R would go into details about every question or not understand the question and still go into details. R also is very dissatisfied with the rules and policies of DWS. She repeatedly referred to how things are done in Idaho (they are less strict and don't cut you off without notice).

33 Customer completed to interview while on her lunch break at work.

37 R willing to share, one interruption while on the phone but didn't last more than 10 minutes.

38 R started crying about halfway through interview. Was emotional to the end. Only met with her new counselor once do had difficulty answering some to the questions.

39 R was quiet gave short answers. Hesitant to share more information when probes were given.

40 Respondents native language is Spanish but she's very proud that she's learned th speak English. She preferred to do the interview in English unless she couldn't understand anything. Also, several times she put her young daughter on the phone because her daughter kept interrupting wanting to say hi.

46 When talking about her current activities on her employment, R could not tell me what was on the plan specifically. She could speak in a past tense as to what has been on the plan. R also stated she is getting ready to move so she hasn't been doing anything to get a job. R also stated she has a felony and a DUI. These things have been major barriers to getting employment.

47 R was thoughtful and quick with responses. She was overall not happy with her employment counselor but acknowledge good/positive things she has done. R stated she struggles greatly with some mental health issues and has come to the point where she feels she cannot work.

48 R was very unhappy with DWS especially her employment counselor. At one point she started crying and said she couldn't finish the interview. R's case was just close and she is very stressed out about how she will get by financially.

51 R had a lot to say. She is obese with diabetes. She is waiting to get gastric by pass surgery approved by medicaid. She is also waiting for her appeal to go through with social security. She is unhappy living with others. She and her daughters rent a room in a home and she is waiting to get housing assistance.

52 R said she vaguely remembers being told she was in the assessment track.

53 R was very quiet. I woke her up and she wanted to do the interview but her responses were short and she was soft spoken.

54 Client was open to answers- wasn't met with her new EC yet only got a letter from her about the change and scheduled future appointment. But stated she is very satisfied with all the EC's she has worked with in the past.

55 R was willing to share. She is not getting along with current EC. She has talked to supervisor
and others about getting a new EC but they wont. She is very frustrated- her money got cut
this month because EC didn't call her back for a work. I referred her to constituent services.

58 Client was very frustrated and commented that it was just easier to get a dead end job than to
keep chasing her EC around all the time trying to get her to pay attention to her case.

05 R stated she knows she is supposed to get a job, but hasn't paid attention to he plan or done
anything because she has been depressed. She just knows she should get a job, not the steps
necessary to do it. Rehab was a part of her plan before and she felt like that was the activity
that helped her a lot. Now she is fast track and hasn't done much with it.

65 Client made it clear she had stopped engaging with DWS as she was just overwhelmed with
all she had to do. There were 15 or 50 activities on he plan and she felt that while each one
was little all together it was too much given every they use.

67 She sees her situation as not fitting in like most because her husband's accident was what
brought them in . She is back working full time now that she has had a baby.

74 Client went on and on about how wonderful her current worker is and how much better this is
than the last one. A good worker makes all the difference.

79 Just closed.. R had no comments at the end, but her mom got on the phone to tell me
everything. What the mom said is at the bottom of the comments.

80 R's FEP was closed today so she is mad because she stated she thought she was doing
everything she was supposed to do.

82 R was very cooperative and said she is mostly supposed to go to school and seminars to gain
skills.

84 Lots of noise in background of kids. She had a hard time hearing me.

85 Done in Spanish. She hasn't met her employment counselor yet. They are meeting tomorrow.

86 R reported having back problems so he can't do construction work anymore. Also recently
had seizures. Works with voc rehab as well.

87 R stated that substance abuse treatment was crap. Was chasing child around the grocery store
while we did the interview.

88 Really frustrated that DWS does not accept that her doctor says she can't work. She say's it's
not her employment counselor making her do the 34 hours a week. It's DWS, the agency.

89 When asked what kind of track she was on and giving R the examples. She stated she was on
the slow track maybe R was wiling to share and very positive about the services she has
received from DWS.

90 R had a lot to say-talked for a long time about her sisters situation and comparing her own
experience with EC and her sister's . Talked a lot-asked if she could call later and add to her
statement. I gave her number and referred her.

91 R seemed distracted and in a hurry- on cell phone and walking someplace while I talked. R
was surprised to know there was a 3 year time limit to cash.

94 Lots of interruptions- difficult for R to think and had to repeat questions frequently. Two
small boys running around, spraying squirt guns, shining flashlights in our eyes. Fighting,
crying and teasing. R ignored them but I had to speak especially loud so she could hear me.

96 She had a movie playing in the back ground. Made it very difficult to hear. She has not been
happy with DWS.

97 R is employed and reported not receiving assistance anymore.