1. Voice A

Financial Empowerment

Based on a presentation by Sarah Richardson

2. Voice A

Hi! I’m Susan. Let’s talk about financial empowerment.

3. Voice B

What does financial empowerment mean?

4. Voice A

Financial empowerment is the process of moving from financial instability to a position of financial stability and independence through investment.

5. Voice B

Hmm, should I learn more about financial education?

6. Voice A

Yes! Financial education helps people achieve financial empowerment.

7. Voice A

Financial education empowers people to make accurate consumer decisions, follow appropriate financial practices and achieve economic wellbeing.

8. Voice A

However, changing financial behavior – not just increasing financial knowledge – is essential for a person to reach financial goals.

9. Voice A

So why financial empowerment?

10. Voice A

1 in 10 low and middle income Americans have been denied employment due to their credit scores.

11. Voice A

47% of employers conduct credit checks.

12. Voice A

18.4% of households that are headed by an individual with a disability do not use banking services. When looking at all households, only 7.2% are unbanked.

13. Voice A

In households headed by an individual with a disability, 28.1% are underbanked, meaning that they don’t take full advantage of mainstream financial services. For all households, only 20% are underbanked.

14. Voice A

32.8% of households headed by an individual with a disability use alternative financial services (such as check cashing businesses and payday loans), compared to 22.7% of all households. These services charge very high fees - much higher than fees that banks charge.

15. Voice A

When working with an individual on financial empowerment, there are six key things to keep in mind:

1. Make the individual comfortable
2. Language and terminology are important (call it “financial education” rather than “financial literacy”)
3. Share examples to illustrate the information you’re sharing
4. Admit your own financial blunders so the individual can identify more with you and not feel as embarrassed by his/her own mistakes
5. Respect the person’s cultural and religious beliefs
6. Always ask questions and expect the unexpected

16. Voice B

That’s a lot of information! How do I do all that?

17. Voice A

There are a ton of resources out there for people to use. One place to start is [www.explorevr.org/returntoworkssdi](http://www.explorevr.org/returntoworkssdi).

18. Voice A

You can learn what tools and services are in your area, and see personal stories of people who returned to work and got off benefits.