

# COACHING PACKET SERIES

This Coaching Packet Series was designed to assist jurisdictions in the implementation of effective practices that will support successful offender outcomes.

# COACHING PACKET

## Continuous Quality Improvement

One in a series of Coaching Packets designed  
to assist jurisdictions in the implementation  
of effective practices that will support  
successful offender outcomes

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### ***Coaching Packet Series 1: Creating a Blueprint for an Effective Offender Reentry System***

- A Framework for Offender Reentry
- Establishing a Rational Planning Process
- Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### ***Coaching Packet Series 2: Delivering Evidence-Based Services***

- Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
- Effective Case Management
- Shaping Offender Behavior
- Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry
- Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring
- Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

### ***Coaching Packet Series 3: Ensuring Meaningful Outcomes***

- Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts
- Continuous Quality Improvement



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## Introduction to the Coaching Packet Series

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) and its partners, The Urban Institute and The Carey Group, were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to the Fiscal Year 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees (hereafter “PRI grantees”). The project team served in this capacity from April 2008 to June 2010.

The Center is a nonprofit criminal justice consulting organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since the early 1980s, the Center has provided training and technical assistance to the criminal justice field on a wide array of topics, including transition and reentry, and has administered a number of national projects of this kind. The Urban Institute was established as a private, nonprofit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1968 and is a leader in prisoner reentry research, focusing on making best practice information accessible to practitioners and policymakers. The Carey Group is a justice consulting firm with extensive practitioner experience in evidence-based practices, strategic planning, community and restorative justice and corrections.

As a part of its technical assistance delivery to the PRI grantees, the Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work. The final products of this work include eleven Coaching Packets in three series. These Coaching Packets offer practical value beyond the jurisdictions involved in this initiative and are available to criminal justice professionals and their partners interested in enhancing their strategies for reducing recidivism and improving offender outcomes.

Each Coaching Packet provides an overview of a specific topic as it relates to successful offender reentry, and offers tools and resources for those interested in exploring the topic in greater depth.

- *Series 1* provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system. This series provides a conceptual framework for addressing prisoner reentry at the policy level; outlines a strategic planning process to support implementation efforts; and explores the establishment of successful collaborative partnerships at the policy and case management levels.
- *Series 2* addresses key issues related to the delivery of evidence-based services to offenders. This series summarizes the key literature with regard to implementing evidence-based practices; explores advances in approaches to case management; addresses the important role of staff in changing offender behavior; and summarizes research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- *Series 3* provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes. This series describes methods to assess the effectiveness of reentry efforts and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

## FY 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Grantees

The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) – intended to support the development and implementation of institutional and community corrections-based reentry programs to help returning offenders find employment and provide other critical services – is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grants were awarded to state and local corrections agencies by DOJ to provide pre-release and transition services to offenders and were “matched” by DOL grants to faith- and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to provide post-release services, focusing on employment assistance and mentoring.

Thirty-five states received grants in three cycles of the Initiative during Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 23 FY 2007 PRI grantees received assistance under this project. FY 2007 grants were awarded in the fall of 2007 and implemented from 2008 to 2010; however, some grantees will not complete their activities until 2011. The FY 2007 grantees provided technical assistance under this project included:

- ✓ ALASKA, Native Justice Center
- ✓ ARIZONA, Criminal Justice Commission/ Yuma County Sheriff’s Office
- ✓ CALIFORNIA, Department of Community Services and Development
- ✓ COLORADO, Division of Criminal Justice Services/City of Denver
- ✓ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Government
- ✓ FLORIDA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ HAWAII, Department of Public Safety
- ✓ INDIANA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ IOWA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ KANSAS, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MAINE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MICHIGAN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MINNESOTA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEVADA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEW JERSEY, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NORTH CAROLINA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ OHIO, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- ✓ PENNSYLVANIA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ RHODE ISLAND, Department of Corrections
- ✓ TENNESSEE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ VIRGINIA, Department of Criminal Justice Services
- ✓ WISCONSIN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ WYOMING, Department of Corrections

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<sup>1</sup> The PRI program will end when the FY 2008 grantees complete their activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

Becki Ney, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program Project Director. Ms. Ney conceptualized and oversaw the development of the Coaching Packet series.

Madeline M. Carter, Principal, and Rachelle Giguere, Program Associate, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the key editors for the Coaching Packet series. Ms. Giguere also provided extensive research support to the development of the series.

# **Introduction to the Continuous Quality Improvement Coaching Packet**

## *The Contents of this Packet*

This Coaching Packet provides:

- A definition of continuous quality improvement (CQI) and its distinction from quality assurance (QA);
- An examination of the research supporting CQI processes;
- A six step process for establishing a CQI implementation plan;
- Key CQI targets for agencies working towards a risk reduction outcome with offenders;
- A summary of common CQI processes and tools;
- Examples of specific CQI tools;
- Common obstacles to successful CQI application and tips to overcome those obstacles;
- An aid to developing plans to address identified gap areas; and
- References to additional resources on this topic.

## *The Intended Audience for this Packet*

This Coaching Packet was originally developed to assist grant teams that were established to manage local PRI initiatives. The teams were composed of representatives from institutional and community corrections and faith-based or community organizations involved in the delivery of pre- and post-release services to offenders transitioning from prison to the community. The content of these Coaching Packets has much broader application, however; the information and tools contained within this Coaching Packet can also be used by teams of criminal justice professionals and their partners to assess the status of their efforts in implementing evidence-based practices and effective reentry services to offenders.

This Coaching Packet may also serve as a resource for professionals at all levels who are interested in learning more about this topic.

## *How to Use this Packet*

### **SECTION I: READ THE OVERVIEW ON CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT.**

This section of the Coaching Packet provides an overview of the techniques, processes, tools, and tips that, when implemented properly, lead to effective and continuous quality improvement. Review its content and, if the information it contains is applicable to your work and addresses an area in which you feel you need to focus your efforts, use the tool in Section II to assess your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps in your quality improvement efforts.

### **SECTION II: COMPLETE THE CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COACHING PACKET CHECKLIST.**

As a team, complete the Continuous Quality Improvement Coaching Packet Checklist. Based upon the information you read in Section I, consider who may need to be involved so that you are able to answer the questions thoroughly. Complete the checklist as a group and discuss your responses along the way.

- Rate each item listed in the checklist (yes, no, not clear).
- For items where your response is “not clear,” make note of the additional information the team needs to collect in order to be able to rate this item.
- Add additional items that may relate to your jurisdiction’s quality improvement efforts that are not already included on the checklist.
- Develop a consensus-based response for each item on the checklist.
- Once the checklist is completed, consider your jurisdictions’ strengths in the area of continuous quality improvement. Make note of these.
- Next, consider your most significant gaps. Make note of these as well.

### **SECTION III: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN.**

If, after completing the checklist in Section II, your team determines that further work on this topic is necessary or would be helpful, follow the steps below to identify your goals, objectives, and action items, and identify any additional assistance or expertise needed.

Working as a team, review your findings from the Continuous Quality Improvement Coaching Packet Checklist. Specifically:

1. Determine whether, based upon what you have read and discussed, you desire to advance your jurisdiction’s approach to quality improvement.
2. If you determine you have a desire to improve in this area, write a goal statement that reflects where you want to be with regard to improving your current efforts. Your goal might be to “Create a CQI master plan using the Six Step Process,” “Develop CQI processes for three key activities,” or another goal. Using the Action Planning Worksheet in Section III, note your goal in the area of continuous quality improvement.
3. Identify your three most significant strengths in this area and discuss how you might build on those to overcome some of your gaps.
4. Identify your three most significant gaps. For each gap, write an objective. Your objectives might be to “Engage staff in a process of considering key targets for CQI,” “Develop an Exit Survey and administration protocol,” or something else. Note your three objectives on the Action Planning Worksheet.
5. Add the following on the Action Planning Worksheet for each objective:
  - a. The specific sequential steps that must be taken to meet the objective.
  - b. The individual who will assume lead responsibility for this action item.
  - c. The completion date for this action item.
6. Discuss whether additional assistance or outside expertise is needed to successfully achieve any of your action items. For instance, explore whether additional literature, guidance from another practitioner over the telephone, examples of work products from other jurisdictions, or on-site technical assistance would be helpful options.
  - a. For each action item, identify those for which assistance/expertise is needed.
  - b. Identify the type of assistance/expertise needed.
  - c. Prioritize each of these need areas. If assistance/expertise will be limited, for which action items is assistance most needed?

- d. Begin exploring ways to secure the needed assistance/expertise.

### ***How to Seek Additional Information***

To download copies of the Coaching Packets, please visit the Center's website at <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>. To obtain further information on the use or content of this or any of the Coaching Packets, or on the 2007 PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program, please contact:

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## **Section I: Overview of Continuous Quality Improvement**

Research and practice have repeatedly demonstrated that implementation of effective tools and practices fall far short of their potential when sufficient quality assurance techniques are not put in place. An agency that provides adequate preparation of and training to staff, and successfully implements proper procedures on the improved practice, will often find over time that the intended practice is either performed inconsistently or not in accordance with the trained procedures. This unwelcome discovery can be mitigated through the establishment of intentional and structured quality checks designed to reinforce desired practices and expose and redirect practices that are out of alignment with the desired behavior.

### ***Definition of Continuous Quality Improvement***

Throughout this Coaching Packet the term “continuous quality improvement” or “CQI” will be used to describe a process that, when effectively implemented, can better ensure that a set of desired practices are delivered in the manner they were intended, continuously and over time.

For the purposes of this Coaching Packet,

**Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) is defined as:**

*A set of professional development opportunities that generate current, specific feedback for the purpose of ensuring that services and practices are delivered in the intended manner.*

**Quality Assurance (QA) is defined as:**

*An audit process that retrospectively examines practices for the purposes of identifying and correcting divergence from policy or protocol.*

CQI is not to be confused with another term often used to describe similar activities, quality assurance (or QA). For purposes of this document, QA is defined as an audit process that retrospectively examines practices for the purposes of identifying and correcting divergence from policy or protocol. QA is both necessary and invaluable; however, it can create the undesired effect of staff masking deficiencies and/or working toward gaining acceptable scores (i.e., compliance) rather than mastering important skills.

CQI is an approach that is built upon a partnership between the one engaged in the use of the professional skills (hereafter, “staff”) and the individual conducting the CQI process (hereafter, the “CQI coach” or “coach”). Each party is mutually seeking to learn and grow, and to this end, achieve incremental improvements toward the attainment of a more effective outcome. While this Coaching Packet will address some issues common to both QA and CQI, its primary focus is on building and administering effective CQI processes.

## *Why do CQI? What Does the Research Say?*

### **A. CQI: A COMMON PRACTICE IN OTHER INDUSTRIES**

Efforts to improve performance are not new to professional industries. In fact, it is ubiquitous. For example, WalMart and Old Navy use “secret shoppers,” employees or contracted individuals who are unknown to the local store’s staff who pose as customers. Secret shoppers engage in the routine shopping experience, all the while taking note of how they were greeted, the demeanor and helpfulness of staff, the condition of the store and merchandise displays, etc. They identify gradients of customer service, provide direct feedback to the corporate office on the scores, and recommend steps to improve operations. NASA conducts rocket launch and space travel simulations, mirroring conditions in an effort to perfect procedures before putting the operation to a live test. The auto industry performs hundreds of tests to ensure that auto parts are durable and meet safety standards. On behalf of their clients, marketing firms collect customer satisfaction feedback through various techniques including providing samples to potential customers, conducting taste tests, and convening focus groups. Doctors in residency perform hands-on duties and receive ongoing feedback from mentors on their skills and techniques. Major League Baseball’s coaches and proficiency experts examine pitches thrown and bats swung, scrutinize post-game footage, and carefully analyze player’s mechanics to detect even the slightest deviation from perfect form and technique.

Criminal justice should be no different. The correctional system and its allied partners perform a function that arguably has an impact of greater import than baseball players or WalMart store clerks. Indeed, the stakes are quite high in a system where individuals can lose their freedom, victims can lose the opportunity for input and a just outcome, innocent citizens can be victimized, and the potential for long-term risk reduction is lost when the justice system falters in the consistent delivery of research-based knowledge and techniques.

Despite the stakes involved, until recently, corrections and other justice system stakeholders have yet to fully embrace and consistently implement CQI processes. The good news is this is quickly changing in our evidence-based environment.

### **B. RESEARCH SUPPORT FOR CQI**

Research demonstrates that when agencies:

- ✓ Effectively train their staff in administering assessments, improved outcomes result;<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ Establish internal quality assurance processes, recidivism rates decrease;<sup>3</sup>

An effective CQI process can help the justice and corrections system achieve important outcomes such as the following:

- ✓ Increased staff skills
- ✓ Increased staff satisfaction
- ✓ Improved confidence in the services delivered
- ✓ Enhanced fiscal responsibility
- ✓ Better public safety outcomes

<sup>2</sup> A study by Bonta, Bogue, Crowley, & Motiuk (2001) addresses the effectiveness of staff in the administration of assessment tools and demonstrates that training and experience improve the effectiveness (i.e., predictive quality) of assessments.

<sup>3</sup> Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2002.

- ✓ Modify their approaches based on the results of their quality assurance processes, they realize substantially better outcomes, including improvements in cost-benefits and effect-size results that are four times greater than those of agencies who do not use quality assurance to improve their processes.<sup>4</sup>

Realizing outcomes as significant as these (i.e., reductions in recidivism and improvements in cost-benefit ratios) is not as simple, however, as implementing a new process or providing staff with a one-time introduction to a new skill set. Indeed, new skills and processes take time to fully integrate and may, at least at first, result in reluctance and discomfort among those who are affected by the change. Therefore, agencies interested in improving outcomes must commit to an implementation *process* that ensures that staff receives adequate initial training *as well as* ongoing encouragement, feedback, and coaching designed to improve knowledge, skills, confidence, and competency. In fact, research suggests that the amount of time devoted to the change process is an indicator of whether or not superior results will be derived.<sup>5</sup>

It stands to reason that creating a feedback loop for those delivering direct services will increase the probability that improvements will be made. Therefore, those agencies seeking to achieve incremental improvements in risk reduction should work to establish such processes so as to benefit from the improved results that will likely follow.

### C. THE GOALS OF THE CQI PROCESS

The primary goals of a CQI process are to:

- ✓ Create and nurture a work environment that is characterized by an ongoing desire to learn and improve;
- ✓ Identify those practices that are working well;
- ✓ Identify those practices in need of attention and determine the specific enhancements that are needed to support improvements in the quality of service delivery (e.g., staff recruitment; training; coaching; technological advancements; the use of incentives; etc.); and
- ✓ Improve outcomes.

Throughout this Coaching Packet we use the term ‘an agency’ to represent the entity interested in conducting CQI activities. These activities can, however, be conducted through a collaborative partnership among two or more entities, including a jurisdiction-wide policy team established to enhance offender reentry services.

CQI can help an agency to become a true learning organization, where continuous improvement is held in high regard by all. However, to be effective, the CQI process must be directly aligned with the agency’s core mission. Activities – and measures to ensure their effectiveness – that do not relate to the core mission will lead to confusion on the part of staff, likely reflect poor results, and not lend themselves to clear correction methods. For these reasons, *alignment of mission and activities is central to CQI*.

<sup>4</sup> Carey, Finigan, & Pukstas, 2008.

<sup>5</sup> Flores, Lowenkamp, Holsinger, & Latessa, 2004.

## **What Constitutes a CQI Plan?**

A CQI plan consolidates the objectives, activities, measures, structures, processes, and methods used to ensure that the resources and practices employed are achieving the desired outcome. It does not need to be complicated or long. In fact, shorter and simpler is usually better (see the section below entitled Tips on CQI). The complexity is in determining what exactly the focus of the CQI process should be. To ensure that attention is paid to the most critical objectives and activities, the following process for developing a CQI plan is recommended.

### **Developing a CQI Plan: A Six Step Process**

CQI should not be implemented without consideration of the other factors influencing an agency such as organizational history, culture, workload, pace of change, available resources, political pressures, leadership commitment, and so forth. For example, putting in place a CQI process when leadership's commitment is tenuous can lead to a multitude of problems. The first consideration, then, is whether the timing and conditions are right. Assuming they are, the following six steps will support the development of an effective CQI plan.

#### **STEP ONE: IDENTIFY YOUR BHAG (BIG, HAIRY, AUDACIOUS GOAL)**

The first step in developing a CQI process is to ensure (or develop) clarity around what it is the agency (or group of agencies) is attempting to do. In other words, a CQI process first requires clarity around the *core mission, or desired outcome*. Once the core mission is clear, it is possible to isolate the activities that are most fundamental to achieving the mission. These then will become the targets of the CQI process.<sup>6</sup>

James Collins and Jerry Porras described the need for agencies to identify their BHAG (Big, Hairy, Audacious Goal). As defined by Collins and Porras, a BHAG is a short, gripping statement of mission that provides clarity about why the agency exists.

A BHAG... "...engages people...It reaches out and grabs them in the gut. It is tangible, energizing, highly focused. People 'get it' right away; it takes little or no explanation."

*Source: Collins & Porras, 2002, pp. 113.*

For the purposes of this Coaching Packet, it is assumed that the agencies working with offenders have an interest in *reducing the risk* that an individual under community supervision will commit a new offense, both during and after supervision.

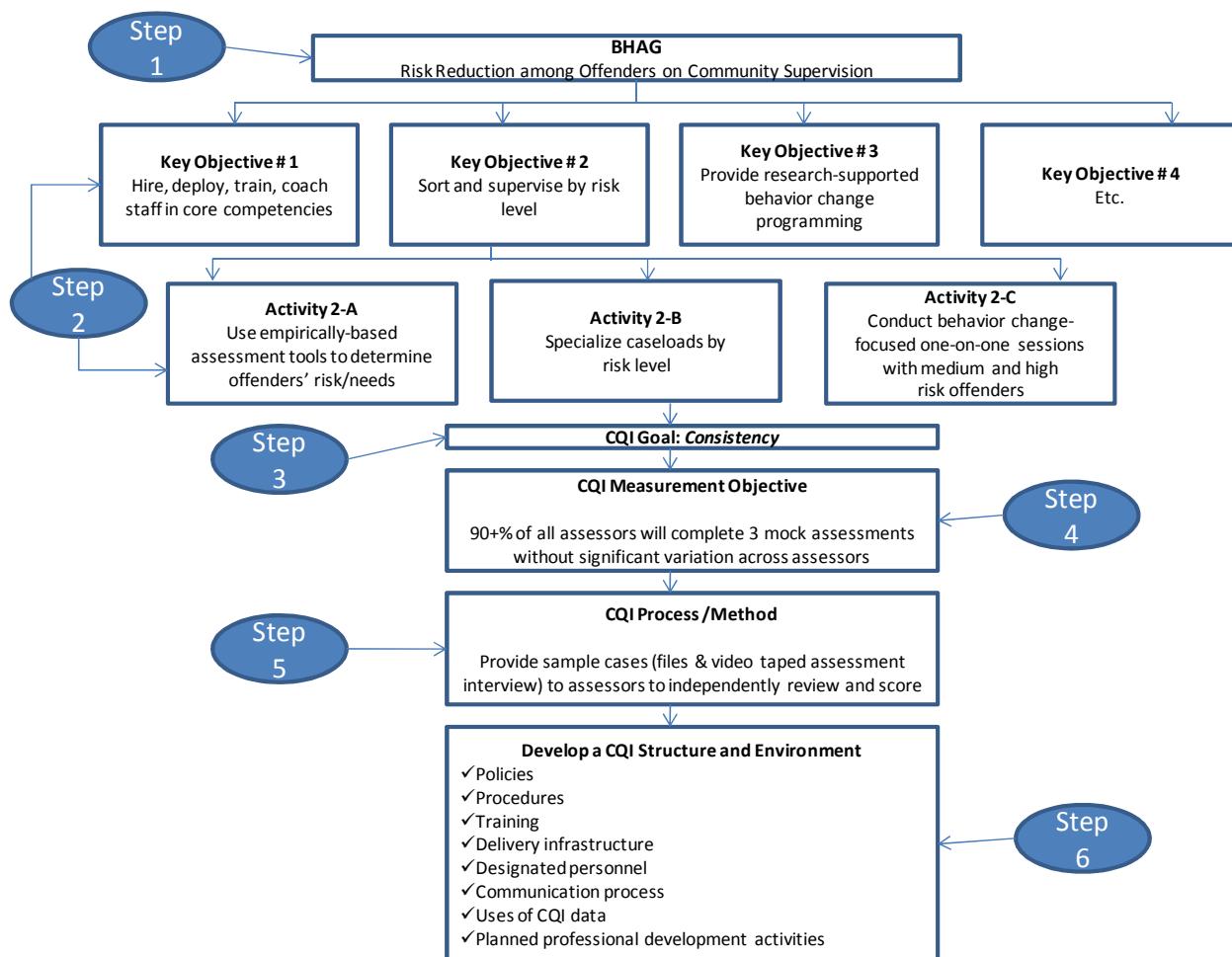
<sup>6</sup> The 6-step process described herein is compatible with the process of developing a logic model described in Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts. For those who have developed a logic model, use the approach described in this process to review the logic model and identify the critical activities that should be the focus of your CQI efforts.

## STEP TWO: IDENTIFY THE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES THAT MOST SIGNIFICANTLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MISSION

There are potentially dozens of functions in any agency that might be considered key to the achievement of its mission. That said, some objectives are decidedly more critical to the achievement of desired outcomes than others. These should be the focus of the CQI process, at least initially.

Michael Porter, Professor of Business at the Harvard Business School, stresses that an agency that seeks superior performance must develop strategic positioning.<sup>7</sup> This involves the identification of those activities that distinguish the agency as particularly results-producing. Some postulate that 80 percent of the intended BHAG outcomes are derived from 20 percent of an agency's activities. If this is true, performing CQI meaningfully on the 20 percent of the activities that most significantly contribute to the desired outcomes is likely to produce the best return on investment.

**Exhibit 1:**  
**Example of CQI Activity Analysis**



<sup>7</sup> Porter, 1996.

The second step in the CQI process, then, is to identify the objectives that are most critical to the achievement of the agency's BHAG, and identify the specific activities involved in the achievement of each objective. Exhibit 1, Example of a CQI Activity Analysis, provides an illustration of what some of these objectives and activities might be for an agency whose BHAG is risk reduction of offenders under community supervision. As this is only an illustration, the example is not fully developed but is provided as a means to illustrate the differences between objectives and activities, and the relationship of the various steps in this six-step process.

### **STEP THREE: DEFINE THE CQI GOAL FOR EACH CORE ACTIVITY.**

The list of key objectives and activities identified under Step Two provides clarity regarding the focus of CQI activities. Next, it is important to determine, for each activity, the goal of the CQI process as it relates to each activity. The measurement goal might be:

- ✓ **Effectiveness:** Ensure high service quality that produces the intended results,
- ✓ **Efficiency:** Maximize the use of resources, and/or
- ✓ **Consistency:** Ensure mastery of skills and reliability across staff.

**A CQI process** is the method used to determine quality (such as participant feedback or direct observation). It can be formal or informal; time intensive or brief; non-intrusive or intrusive; qualitative or quantitative.

**CQI tools** are the devices used to support and administer the processes. They are as diverse as the processes themselves (such as checklists, surveys, and audio taping).

Common CQI processes and tools are listed in Exhibit 2.

### **STEP FOUR: DETERMINE THE CQI MEASUREMENT OBJECTIVE.**

Once the activities and their measurement goals are clear, the next step is to determine the measurement objective. The illustration in Exhibit 1 reflects a determination that the measurement goal of "consistency" is important to the use of empirically-based risk/needs assessment tools. In this hypothetical, the agency might then determine that the CQI target is for 90% (or more) of the agency's assessors to complete a mock assessment without significant variation from each other (i.e., inter-rater reliability).

Each key activity should have an equally specific CQI goal and objective, with a clear target and statement that describes what the process is designed to measure.

### **STEP FIVE: DETERMINE THE CQI PROCESS/METHOD.**

The next step is to identify or develop the CQI process (or method) and tools that will best accomplish the measurement objective. There are many tools from which to choose including checklists, surveys, self-assessments, pre/post tests, audio tapes, video tapes, direct observation, and so forth. A variety of tools and approaches are presented in this Coaching Packet to stimulate ideas. Each process and tool has distinct advantages and disadvantages and therefore must be carefully considered. For example, surveys might be a good method to assess whether offenders feel as though the supervision (or treatment) agency environment is respectful, but may not provide an accurate assessment of the degree to which an offender's top criminogenic needs were effectively addressed. Similarly, reviewing an audio or video tape is less intrusive than having a person unknown to the offender sit in on a session, and it allows

for repeated observation of the same session for more precise review. On the other hand, it also introduces potential technological and logistical challenges around acquiring appropriate space, accessing equipment, repairing equipment when it fails, and addressing data privacy issues (such as in the instance of taping), in addition to the fact that the observer is less likely to pick up on non-verbal cues in the way they might if they were physically present during the session. For these reasons, key activities must be isolated and carefully considered and separate CQI measurement objectives and processes established for each.

Exhibit 2: Common CQI Processes and Tools			
CQI Process Examples		CQI Tool Examples	
Process	Purpose	Tool	Description
Auditing	To monitor whether policies and protocols are followed	Case audit	A paper or electronic review of a case to ensure that minimum performance expectations are met; usually checklist-driven
Participant feedback	To determine the degree to which the experience of the participant matches the goal of the activity from the participant's point of view	Survey	Written survey administered to participant (may also be administered to collateral parties, referral sources, or others)
		Focus group	Structured, facilitated, and guided discussion with a group of individuals to gain insight into their experience
		Self-administered pre/post testing	Written test given before and after a lesson or a period of instruction to determine whether the participant has gained knowledge, awareness, and/or skills
Direct observation of one-on-one or group session	To determine the effectiveness of a specific set of activities and enable the provision of first-hand feedback and coaching around the skill area	Checklist (used through direct observation or by viewing video/audio tapes)	An instrument with a predetermined set of questions, accompanied by a scoring scale, used to record the presence or absence of specific conditions or skills
		Video tape	A less intrusive method of observation; provides opportunity to visually observe interaction
		Audio tape	A less intrusive method of observation; only allows for observation of verbal communication
Training assessments	To ensure the reliability and validity of risk/need assessments	Inter-rater reliability booster session (can also use other methods such as case file review or observation)	Assessors are provided with the same case information (in writing or electronically, by video/audio tape) and complete an assessment; scoring is compared and disagreements are discussed and compared with training guide for clarification

## **STEP SIX: DEVELOP A STRUCTURE TO DELIVER THE CQI PROCESSES.**

CQI procedures need to be carried out with an organizational structure. This structure consists of policies, procedures, forms, training, and a delivery infrastructure. A delivery infrastructure involves the assignment of personnel to carry out CQI. Many agencies use peer coaching and CQI committees made up of direct service staff in order to promote the concept that learning and high standards for excellence is everyone's job and not just that of the supervisor/administrator. In addition, the delivery infrastructure should anticipate and address a variety of other issues including but not limited to the following: how CQI outcomes will be used; how CQI findings will be communicated; how deficiencies will be addressed; who will administer the tools and how often; how and if CQI will affect performance evaluations; how other organizational components will be informed and shaped by the CQI results, such as training, human resources (recruiting and hiring), and budgeting (resource allocation), etc.

Finally, it is critical to conduct CQI in an open environment, communicating clearly its purposes, targets, and methods; to provide rewards, incentives, and affirmations to staff throughout the CQI process; and to have in place the professional development activities that will be used to enhance competencies. Timely and specific feedback to those who are involved in conducting the key activities that are the focus of CQI, and the provision of supports to build skills and confidence through a strengths-based approach, are critical to establishing a culture of continuous improvement.

### ***Potential Targets for CQI in Corrections***

Since the purpose of this Coaching Packet is to help agencies develop CQI processes that address risk reduction, this section will illustrate some of the more common areas for which a CQI process might be put in place. While the potential areas are plentiful, restraint is recommended. Consideration should be given to limitations around resources and organizational capacity to establish, master, and maintain these processes.

**Exhibit 3:**  
**Example: Risk Reduction Activities and CQI Activities**

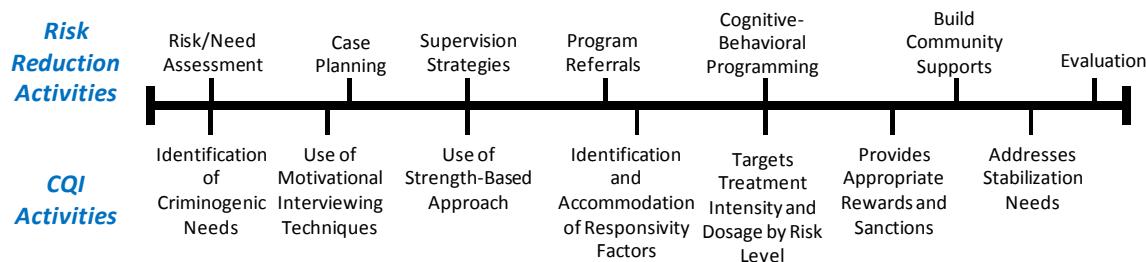


Exhibit 3 illustrates only some of the areas and techniques used to address risk reduction. Each could potentially be assessed by one or more CQI or QA processes. Ideally, each activity would have one (or more) accompanying CQI/QA activity(ies). But given the fact that resources are limited – and the fact that some activities contribute more to outcomes than others – it is recommended that an agency's approach to CQI begin by focusing only on the fundamental processes, with an eye toward expansion as comfort levels, needs, and resources permit. Some of the core risk reduction activities that require CQI processes include:

- ✓ ***Assessment:*** Ensure that empirically-based assessment instruments are properly administered; consistently applied across assessors; and used in the manner for which they are intended.
- ✓ ***Case management:*** Ensure that Case Plans are directly linked to assessment findings; match length, dosage, and intensity of intervention to risk level; address three or more of the most significant criminogenic needs; account for individual offenders' unique responsivity factors; build on offenders' strengths; identify and address triggers; and reflect ongoing review and modification based upon changes in risk/need and offenders' progress towards meeting stated goals and objectives.
- ✓ ***Cognitive behavioral programming:*** Ensure that programs use cognitive-behavioral techniques; are administered in accordance with the author's logic model; address offenders' individual risk factors; vary in intensity and duration according to risk level; and are staffed by skilled facilitators.
- ✓ ***Core correctional practices, relationship building, and Motivational Interviewing:*** Ensure that staff role model and reinforce prosocial behavior; interact with offenders in ways that increase motivation and encourage choices and problem solving; effectively address anti-social attitudes and behavior; teach concrete problem solving skills; use practice sessions; effectively use affirmations, incentives and sanctions; deflect power struggles; and advocate on offenders' behalf when appropriate.

Additional activities may be considered, however for the purposes of this Coaching Packet, our focus will be limited to these four key risk reduction areas.

Exhibit 4 illustrates a partial example of a CQI/QA plan focused on these four components of risk reduction. The processes and tools listed in the plan are discussed in greater detail later.

Exhibit 4: CQI/QA Plan: Sample of Selected Items				
Objective	Measuring	Activity	CQI/QA/Fidelity Measure	Process Selected
<b>Sort and supervise by risk level</b>	Consistency and Effectiveness	Assessors score the risk/need assessment accurately; staff apply the results appropriately	90% of assessments are completed with 100% accuracy	Supervisor randomly reviews ten cases per caseworker per quarter
			90% of assessors complete the assessment the same way	Inter-rater reliability training assessments conducted quarterly
<b>Resource management</b>	Efficiency	Assessors administer a brief screening tool to initially sort risk levels	95% of low risk cases do not receive a full assessment; 98% of medium/high risk cases (determined by the brief screening tool) receive a full assessment	Monthly case file review
<b>Long term offender behavior change</b>	Effectiveness	One-on-one and group sessions focus on behavioral practices that have been demonstrated to reduce reoffense rates	Offender's top three criminogenic needs are addressed prior to discharge in 75% of cases; drop in risk scores over time; increased GED attainment rates	Case audit
			Staff consistently use role modeling and behavioral practice sessions; staff devote the majority of their session time to criminogenic needs	Direct observation

## Common Obstacles and Potential Solutions

Continuous Quality Improvement processes take time and skill to administer. Day-to-day demands and disruptions challenge an agency's resolve to ensure that services are administered effectively and in the manner in which they were intended. Given the correlation between CQI and outcomes however, it is imperative that agencies find ways to overcome these challenges. The following section discusses some of the more common among these challenges. The section entitled Ask the Experts provides guidance on addressing some of the more vexing of these obstacles.

**Perception.** Natural resistance can be expected if the CQI process is perceived as designed to catch staff "doing wrong." Fear of failure can exhibit itself in many ways, including and especially overt resistance. The messages to staff about the CQI process must be carefully crafted and staff should be given many opportunities for discussion and involvement before implementation begins. Regardless of its specific content, the framing of the message should emphasize *learning*.

**Staff discomfort.** Individuals working in corrections agencies are not accustomed to “clinical oversight” in the way that other professionals are. In fact, in many agencies, corrections and supervision officers in particular often see themselves as independent operators with their own caseload, who are expected to exercise decisionmaking based solely on their experience and good judgment and the occasional interaction with a supervisor. Given the compelling research on effective staff-offender interactions, it is more important than ever that CQI become an integral part of all staff-offender interactions.<sup>8</sup> Instituting processes that will result in observation of what were once private interactions with individualized approaches will undoubtedly create discomfort until it becomes routine.

**Time.** CQI takes time. Community supervision staff often have large caseloads and even larger workloads. Implementing CQI necessitates that supervisors have reasonable staff-supervisor ratios (preferably no greater than 8:1) to enable them to provide feedback and coaching. Insufficient time is perhaps the most commonly reported obstacle to CQI. In some cases, it is a valid issue and workload should be addressed before CQI processes are implemented. In others, it is a mask for other concerns such as perception problems or staff discomfort. Understanding the root of the concern will be important before effective solutions can be devised.

**Monotony.** Any process that is repeated over and over can get stale, become perfunctory, and lose its perceived value. CQI processes need to stay fresh. This may require modifying the methods (e.g., changing CQI methods, tools, coaches). Monotony can also be addressed by decreasing CQI efforts with those persons who have mastered the necessary skills. In fact, these individuals are perhaps well suited to become mentors or coaches themselves.

**Lack of commitment to learning.** It is common for an agency to determine that CQI should be a priority, push hard for implementation, only to change focus to something else just as quickly. CQI will generate learning opportunities only if the agency is truly committed to seizing them. It is a means to an end (learning and improved services). Processes should be put in place to maximize learning such as discussing results in individual sessions, scheduling booster trainings, modifying training plans, and brainstorming ideas at staff meetings. Becoming a learning organization has more to do with embracing a philosophy than accomplishing a task.

**Data privacy.** Some CQI methods will raise data privacy concerns (particularly if the CQI processes cross agency boundaries). For example, offenders may object to audio/video taping or raise concerns about anonymity on survey instruments. These and other concerns should be explored and considered before implementation.

**Union concerns.** Labor unions may have concerns about how CQI processes affect their members. Will the results of CQI be used to admonish or penalize staff? What rights do the employees have regarding taping? For those jurisdictions with unions, open discussions are recommended before any action is taken. In areas without unions, it is recommended that

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<sup>8</sup> Bonta, Rugge, Scott, Bourgon, & Yessine, 2008.

leadership have these same conversations with staff, both to prevent problems but also to facilitate an environment of open exchange.

**Technology.** Some CQI methods and tools require technological support, whether audio/video recording equipment, automated software for offender self-testing, or equipment such as one-way observation mirrors. Before a decision is made on the CQI plan, technological questions and resources should be explored.

**Logistics.** In addition to technology, CQI can create logistical considerations such as the availability of quiet, private space (for taping), rooms large enough for a third person to unobtrusively observe one-on-one sessions, or determining how to conduct CQI when the contacts are predominantly held in the field. Staff should be engaged in the process of identifying and determining how best to address these challenges.

**Lack of in-house expertise.** Some CQI techniques require a specific type of expertise. For example, something as simple as a survey can offer complications: reliability and validity may depend upon question construction; sampling sizes, literacy concerns, administration methods (by mail, in person) and processes designed to ensure anonymity must all be considered. For these kinds of reasons, consideration must be given as to whether in-house expertise is available – or external expertise is needed – to ensure the effectiveness of the CQI plan.

**Under-skilled coaches.** In addition to the expertise noted above, CQI relies heavily on other kinds of expertise. Those coaches conducting direct observation, for example, must have the requisite knowledge and skills to adequately evaluate the effectiveness of another or to provide feedback and coaching. These are not naturally occurring knowledge bases or skill sets and the efficacy of the process will be jeopardized if designated coaches lack expertise themselves. In fact, a CQI process for coaches should be put in place as well, ensuring that periodically their competencies are evaluated and opportunities for skill advancement is provided.

**Link to performance evaluation.** CQI presumes that the primary goal is to become a learning organization and continually improve services. A common mistake made by well-intentioned agencies is to tie the CQI process to performance evaluations. While that may make sense from an organizational structure point of view, it may very well create another set of challenges. It may result in staff working hard to mask skill deficits or to seek to “look good and score well” rather than embrace opportunities to identify areas of improvement and gain further proficiency.

**Implementing too few or too many processes.** One of the greatest challenges is in knowing how far to go with CQI. Many failed efforts resulted in an agency seeking to implement too many processes and tools too quickly, only to be left with process-fatigue, poor CQI administration, and/or staff resistance. Others have implemented so few processes that the areas measured have turned out to be scarcely relevant, all the while creating a false perception that service delivery is well understood. The initial CQI plan should address a few of the major activities that are most directly related to achieving the BHAG; others can be incrementally included in due time.

## ***Ask the Experts***

Three national experts on CQI were interviewed to answer those gnarly questions that inevitably arise as correctional agencies seek to implement CQI processes. They were asked questions put forth by a group of correctional officers, supervisors, and managers that were in the beginning stages of planning for CQI.<sup>9</sup> One of the experts is a consultant on evidence-based practices, another is a director of a correctional agency that has employed CQI techniques for a number of years, and a third oversees the CQI processes in a large non-profit organization that works with correctional clients in both in-patient and out-patient settings. They are:

- ✓ Sally Kreamer, Director of the Department of Correctional Services, Iowa Fifth Judicial District
- ✓ Kim Sperber, Chief Research Officer and former CQI Manager at Talbert House, Ohio
- ✓ Bill Woodward, private consultant and Director of the Training and Technical Assistance, Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence University of Colorado

### **I. GIVING FEEDBACK**

#### ***Q1: Hearing what you may have not done so well can be difficult. What is the best way to give feedback to staff on quality?***

A: "We should give feedback to our staff in the same way we do with offenders: be specific, be factual, be behavior-oriented. Keep the judgment out. Avoid unnecessary confrontation. They need to know that you want them to be successful on the job."

A: "Simple. Focus on the positive and reinforce it."

A: "If you get resistance, find out why. Ask them, 'What scares you the most about this? What are the barriers? How can I best help you?'"

A: "Be a good listener. In fact, ask them. Ask them how they would like to receive feedback; how is it best delivered and received for them."

A: "You need to be comfortable coaching others or you will not be effective."

#### ***Q2: What would you be sure not to do when giving feedback?***

A: "Don't address individual problems in a group setting."

A: "Don't call the person into your office or you will put them on the defensive immediately. Instead, find a neutral setting and then set the tone for the conversation. If you are the type of person that tends to drop the hammer on people and not listen to what they say, you will put people on the defensive."

#### ***Q3: How can supervisors individualize their approach to staff given their individual differences, skills, and performance?***

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<sup>9</sup> Interviews were conducted by telephone and responses are provided in the summary below. For most of the responses, quotes are used; in other cases, summary statements are provided.

A: "Above all else, be respectful. Treat them like a professional. Find out their strengths and what motivates them. Encourage them in their strength areas and don't forget to recognize and reward them for the good work they do. Address issues they have immediately, and don't let them off the hook because you are too afraid to confront them or have allowed them to wear you out."

A: "You need to develop a good relationship with each employee so that there is mutual respect."

A: "Be open, thoughtful, and listen, listen, listen. Don't shut them down."

A: "There are a number of tools an agency can use to help know how to approach their staff most effectively such as the use of group assessment tools (e.g., colors, FIRO-B, etc.), 360 assessments, and contracting with others for assistance. All of these techniques build on strengths."

## **II. STAFF DISCOMFORT AROUND ROLE PLAYS**

***Q4: How can an agency set up expectations that staff will routinely conduct practice sessions (e.g., role plays) and to help supervisors conduct practice sessions with staff as teaching tools when staff often report high levels of discomfort with these techniques?***

A: "You can't get around the discomfort, nor should you expect to. It will always be there for some people. It is a natural part of life. The same is true with offenders. What you should do is to openly acknowledge that this may make them feel uncomfortable but that the more they do it, the easier it will get."

***Q5: What tips do you have for an agency that is trying to reduce this discomfort so that it is accomplished more routinely?***

A: "We can make it easier for everyone through our own demeanor, the tone in our voice, creating that inviting environment of trust, making others feel safe. It's kind of like the kid who doesn't want to play soccer because they are afraid. They don't know anyone; they don't know what to do. Once you make them do it, after awhile they love it. But don't expect it quickly. You need to be supportive, understanding, and flexible while they are getting used to the idea of doing something they don't think they like."

A: "You should train them on how to conduct role plays. You want to create a culture in your agency where role plays are commonly done. A Train-the-Trainers course could be conducted to create high levels of mastery; then make sure role plays are replicated in most training events."

A: "I would provide coaches for staff so that they receive ongoing feedback from their coach on how they are doing and how they can improve."

A: "It is important for the agency to reinforce practice sessions in lots of different settings. For example, I sprinkle role plays in our staff meetings. They are quick, short practice sessions of maybe three minutes in length. It does not need to be elaborate and can be spontaneous."

### **III. ROLE OF SUPERVISOR IN THE CQI PROCESS**

*Q6: How can a supervisor best help their staff make the most of their one-on-one sessions with offenders so that they are using the processes that result in reduced recidivism?*

A: "It starts at the top. If your supervisor is doing the things that are expected of staff then you will eventually turn most staff around. Everything is learning by example. If the people you report to are not modeling this behavior then you will think it is ok not for you to do it."

A: "We need to train supervisors first. They need to master the skills if they are going to be able to coach the staff they work with. If the supervisor does not know what to look for in order to guide staff, how can they perform this function well?"

A: "I believe EBP speaks to immediacy. As soon as you see a staff person conducting themselves inappropriately with an offender, then I would take them aside and do a role play. It's fresh, they can connect with what you are saying and at the same time understand they could have done things differently. Waiting until weeks later to role model can be lost on the individual. Again, you are role modeling for your staff and they will turn around and address the offender immediately and role play with them more effectively."

A: "I would use observational audit checklists, preferably around the items that matter the most such as Motivational Interviewing, reinforcing prosocial attitudes, use of incentives, etc. These are the anchors they should be looking for and the tools should reflect a few of these anchors."

*Q7: What are simple ways to do CQI where the agency does not overwhelm supervisors or make the process too unwieldy?*

A: "I would start small; maybe do one CQI per month per staff member. Then, I would stop assessing that staff person when they become proficient. At that point, just a spot check on occasion will be sufficient."

A: "In our agency, supervisors spend one full day per month doing case audits. The Director then audits the auditors. Once a person is proficient at one thing, then we raise the bar. Don't expect them to get it all at once. Don't ask them to do something they are not yet skilled at. Think of it in terms of incremental progress."

A: "We have created specialties. One person audits all the risk/need assessment tools because she excels at it. Another just does case file audits."

A: "Build on one or two measures per year but don't do more than you can handle. Go slow and build."

A: "The way to ensure supervisors are good at coaching is to make sure that you promote line staff who have mastered the skills you are asking them to coach others on. Coaching is a complex skill and you have to know the subject matter well."

A: "CQI should be integrated into the supervisor's job. You might need to take some other things away so they have time to do it. Furthermore, it does not all have to be done by supervisors. Direct service staff can do some of this if they have time."

#### **IV. CREATING A CQI CULTURE**

##### ***Q8: How can the agency create a culture of quality where all staff seek to steadily improve skills?***

A: "This is the hardest part of CQI. You want to create a learning organization where the culture promotes continuous improvement. You want to create curiosity. Don't separate learning from the work. Use staff meetings to promote learning, not just share agency information. It takes many layers of effort to create a culture and it can't just be a supervisor's duty."

A: "Creating a culture around CQI requires participation. When staff participate and help to build the process, they are more likely to want to do it and do it right."

A: "Consider establishing supports such as establishing a CQI Committee. In some cases you may want to use peer coaching. While this will help create more in-house expertise and shared responsibility while creating a fuller CQI culture, there are a few drawbacks to consider. First, staff usually have workload issues and this can't just get added to an existing full workload. Secondly, when supervisors provide CQI they are more likely to emphasize it and take ownership of the issues and challenges that arise. Lastly, if supervisors are not fully involved they could ignore or even sabotage efforts by staff."

A: "Change the way you do job interviews. Role plays should be a part of every job interview. It helps you see the actual skill level and sets the tone for the eventual hire. If they get the job they know that this is what the agency is all about."

A: "I would make sure that the agency puts into policy that practice sessions are the way it does business and that it will be expected of all employees to utilize these learning tools."

A: "I would not tie performance evaluation to quality assurance, at least not early on. Don't tie it to performance raises. You want to create opportunities for growth and openness. However, after staff have had time to master the skill, I would do it then. At that point, it is not optional. It is how we do our business."

A: "The agency needs to develop a structure to support the use of practice sessions. Is it showing up in the case notes? Is there a way to track the use of role plays?"

A: "I would caution against making the process too routine. If it is routine people get used to it and then they tend to stop learning."

#### **V. GETTING STARTED – FIRST STEPS**

##### ***Q9: What advice do you have for an agency that is just getting started with CQI?***

A: "Make sure coaches are trained on the things they are monitoring. If there is a CQI process on cognitive behavioral group facilitation, the coach needs to be well trained in this in order to know what to look for."

##### ***Q10: In what areas should an EBP agency ensure CQI processes are in place?***

A: The following represents a list of areas identified by the three experts:

- ✓ Cognitive behavioral training facilitation skills

- ✓ Program features in alignment with research
- ✓ Motivational Interviewing
- ✓ Case plans
- ✓ One-on-one interactions (i.e., core correctional practices such as role modeling, skill practice, affirming prosocial behavior/attitudes, redirecting antisocial behaviors/attitudes, homework assignments, relapse planning)
- ✓ Proper use of incentives
- ✓ Treatment dosage based on risk level
- ✓ Proper use of sanctions

***Q11: What processes would you use to monitor the quality of service delivery?***

A: All three experts indicated that a mix of processes should be put in place, noting that each serves a different purpose and has advantages and disadvantages. The following were identified as offering the most promise:

- ✓ Case audits
- ✓ Direct observation
- ✓ Video taping
- ✓ Audio taping
- ✓ Checklists
- ✓ Session surveys
- ✓ Exit surveys
- ✓ Pre/post testing

“Frankly, I think you can do quality improvement by just making sure that we keep our doors open and listen to each other. There are things you can put in place that increase the odds that you will hear and see the quality of the service being delivered....

...For example, supervisors could be in offices at the same location as the direct service staff, allowing them to listen to conversations, and provide positive affirmation when high quality skills are demonstrated. You want to observe these things naturally. It requires us to be alert and intentional....

*...It is CQI by ‘walking around’.*

***Q12. It is interesting that you said exit surveys. Don’t you think that asking an offender about the quality of their supervision experience will result in false information? Sometimes they need strictness and accountability, but they will not necessarily see it that way.***

A: “It is not so much that you are asking them if they liked their supervising officer but rather you want to know if they felt as though they were treated respectfully, had a good relationship, were listened to, and focused on the things that mattered. You will find patterns in the exit surveys that will tell you a lot about how well officers connect to individuals and whether they are fair and effective.”

A: “Exit surveys are a good way to find out whether the offenders are doing role plays. It should show up in the survey responses.”

## *Tips on CQI*

Many lessons have been learned by agencies implementing the CQI process. The following are some of the principles that should underlie a CQI process.

1. ***Simple to administer.*** To facilitate ease of use, the CQI process and tools should be focused, short, and easy for staff to use.
2. ***Integrated into existing processes and technologies.*** To the extent possible, the CQI process should be compatible with an agency's current practices. For instance, if the use of paper checklists is customary for staff, the CQI process should be similarly adapted. If, on the other hand, an automated system of CQI fits better into current processes, then newly developed CQI materials should be adapted accordingly. The goal is to make CQI as seamless as possible so as to avoid additional burdens on staff.
3. ***Focused on improving rather than auditing processes.*** The way in which agencies present CQI to staff is critically important. CQI is an opportunity to identify ways to improve agency outcomes and to support staff members' professional development; it is not a method to identify shortcomings and penalize staff for those shortcomings.
4. ***The responsibility of the entire organization.*** The responsibility for quality improvement does not rest with leadership or a person(s) tasked with this function. Instead, CQI is the responsibility of the *entire* organization (i.e., administrators, managers, individual staff members). Agencies should find ways to engage all staff in the CQI process, whether through committees, designation of coaches, mentors, informal peer-to-peer consultants, or through other means.
5. ***Supportive of an organizational culture dedicated to learning.*** Agencies engaged in evidence-based practice are those that are dedicated to improvement through increased information and knowledge development. CQI is a process that supports ongoing information collection in service of continually improving outcomes.
6. ***A process that results in ongoing skill development.*** "Continual" quality improvement explicitly emphasizes the fact that new processes and skills cannot be effectively implemented and maintained over time without ongoing support. Skills should be reinforced on an ongoing basis through a variety of means, including periodic "booster" training sessions that are designed to address issues identified through the CQI process. In addition, the CQI process should remain original and creative. When one process becomes mundane, the method/tool/process should be modified to maintain staff engagement.
7. ***A means to identify and celebrate success.*** Affirmation is a powerful influence in maintaining a desired course of action. Agencies should work hard to identify individuals through the CQI process who are meeting or exceeding expectations – as well as those who are working hard to meet them – and positively reinforce their actions and/or results.

## *Examples of CQI Tools and Processes*

A myriad of CQI tools are used throughout the country, with the type and content as varied as the number of jurisdictions working with offenders. CQI tools are typically developed in

consideration of the local agency's mission, needs, staff skill level, available resources, etc. As such, there is no such thing as "the right tool."

Many tools are highly specialized, examining a discrete skill area, such as those developed to assess skills in Motivational Interviewing. That said, there are many similarities among the available tools. This means that agencies do not need to start from scratch in developing their CQI tools.<sup>10</sup>

The tools included in this Coaching Packet are illustrative of the kinds of measures and processes that are commonly used and as such, can be considered prototypes; local adaption is invited and expected. For simplicity sake, the tools included here are fairly general; address qualitative measures around risk reduction techniques; are easy to administer; and use similar scoring devices. In each case, implementation of these or similar tools would require an accompanying manual that provides the user with specific guidelines on observed measures and the scoring of each item.

As all tools are not equal in their length, comprehensiveness, ease of use, empirical basis, etc., each agency will have to determine the extent to which they want to explore tools available on the open market (both public domain and proprietary) or develop their own in-house tools.

#### **AUDITING.**

Auditing is one method of assessing the extent to which staff members are consistently following agency policy and practice expectations; using the strategies and techniques that have been identified as most effective in meeting agency goals (e.g., evidence-based practices); and delivering services in the manner intended. Auditing is typically accomplished through the use of case file checklists.

File audits are inherently limited due to the fact that they can only evaluate the presence or absence of a measure as recorded in documentation (i.e., case file), and do not provide for a qualitative review of the activities recorded. For example, a CQI coach may determine through a case file review that a staff member addressed a priority criminogenic need area and engaged the client in a series of practice sessions in core skill areas. However, the CQI coach will not be able to determine the quality of these activities without observation. A related limitation pertains to the fact that only activities thoroughly documented can be measured; therefore, the comprehensiveness of staff members' documentation is critically important. Yet despite these limitations, case file audits do provide an important opportunity to efficiently determine whether staff is complying with expectations around a host of processes and techniques. Exhibit 5 is a sample Case File Audit Checklist designed to assess the implementation of risk reduction protocols. The frequency and number/percent of cases that should be audited is hypothetical; these should be determined through agency policy. A suggested guideline is to audit ten percent of a case worker's caseload twice per year.

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<sup>10</sup> A number of resources are available that contain logic model descriptions and examples of CQI and QA tools. See, for instance, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2005) and Howe & Joplin (2005).

**Exhibit 5:**  
**Case File Audit Checklist**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target: Percentage of Cases in Which Activity is Applied</b>	<b>5 = On Target</b> <b>4 = Largely on Target</b> <b>3 = Partially on Target</b> <b>2 = Largely Not on Target</b> <b>1 = Not on Target</b>				
		1	2	3	4	5
<b>Intake/Assessment</b>						
Risk/need assessment completed	90%	1	2	3	4	5
Responsivity factors identified	80% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Strengths identified	50% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Triggers identified	75% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Case Plan and Case Management</b>						
Case plan completed	90% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case plan contains top three criminogenic needs	90% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case plan included family participation where possible and appropriate	20% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case plan includes trigger(s) and relapse plan	75% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case plan goals meet the SMART guidelines	75% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case plan developed with offender input	90% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case plan includes offender signature	90% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Program intervention matches risk, need, and responsivity factors	75%	1	2	3	4	5
Program intervention sequenced properly with emphasis on the drivers and top criminogenic needs	65% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case plan reflects appropriate dosage/intensity of intervention	80% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case notes reflect staff are using a strength-based approach	50% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case plan is updated every 90 days	75% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Supervision Strategies</b>						
Frequency of offender contacts is in accordance to risk level	90%	1	2	3	4	5
Length of offender contacts is in accordance to risk level	90%	1	2	3	4	5
Type/frequency/duration of field visits conducted is in accordance with risk level	90%	1	2	3	4	5
Incentives and rewards are appropriately used	75%	1	2	3	4	5
Disincentives and sanctions are appropriately used	75%	1	2	3	4	5
Case notes indicate frequent use of behavioral techniques such as modeling, use of practice sessions, skill building, homework	75% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case notes indicate program learnings are reinforced in one-on-one sessions	50% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case notes indicate use of stages of change techniques to enhance motivation	65% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
Case notes reflect routine involvement of family in intervention strategies/case management plan as appropriate	35% M/H risk	1	2	3	4	5
<b>NARRATIVE COMMENTS</b>						
Summary of areas mastered:						
Summary of areas in need of improvement:						
Professional Development Plan:						

**DIRECT OBSERVATION.**

Direct observation is perhaps the most effective method of examining the quality of interactions between staff and clients. Direct observation can be conducted with the observer sitting in the same room as staff and clients who are interacting, in a separate room with a viewing window, by watching video taped sessions, or by listening to audio tapes. Although audio tapes may be the most practical way to conduct direct observation, they do not allow the coach to observe body language.

Exhibit 6, Core Correctional Practices Direct Observation Checklist, provides an example of a method to objectively measure the salient components of staff members' interactions with clients. The items on the checklist are based on research-supported indicators of successful interventions.

Exhibit 6: Core Correctional Practices Direct Observation Checklist				
Performance Measure	Notes	3 = Exceeds Expectations 2 = Meets Expectations 1 = Needs Improvement N/A = Not Applicable		
<b>Introduction/Session Preparation</b>				
Greeted client		1	2	3 N/A
Prepared for and organized the session well		1	2	3 N/A
Controlled the learning conditions		1	2	3 N/A
Reviewed what was discussed in previous session		1	2	3 N/A
<b>Relationship and Communication (Rapport and Eliciting Change)</b>				
Used good verbal communication skills (listened well, did not interrupt, reflected back, listened more than spoke)		1	2	3 N/A
Non-verbal skills conveyed interest and respect (posture, physical gestures, facial expressions)		1	2	3 N/A
Used motivational enhancement techniques (open-ended questions, affirmation, reflection, roll with resistance, avoid power struggles/argumentation, summarizing, increase ambivalence, elicit change talk)		1	2	3 N/A
Exhibited empathetic, warm, genuine approach; non-judgmental		1	2	3 N/A
When necessary, reduced tension		1	2	3 N/A
Appropriately used authority (firm but fair, set boundaries, made rules clear when needed, did not lecture or threaten but gave choices)		1	2	3 N/A
<b>Effective Case Management Techniques (Emphasis on Criminogenic Needs, Case Plan Goals, and Behavioral Techniques)</b>				
Focused on the most important issues (major criminogenic needs, especially the driver) and in proper sequence		1	2	3 N/A
Established realistic session goals (addressed a limited number of key issues, worked to drive learning deep but was compatible with learning capacity)		1	2	3 N/A

Increased skill building by demonstrating and teaching skills, role modeling, conducting practice session(s), giving feedback, and providing encouragement		1	2	3	N/A
Reinforced self-efficacy (demonstrated that offender has or can acquire tools to successfully change)		1	2	3	N/A
<b>Appropriate Use of Rewards and Sanctions</b>					
Rewarded prosocial attitudes/behaviors appropriately through affirmation and other means; 4:1 ratio		1	2	3	N/A
When appropriate, provided incentive(s)					
Expressed disapproval for anti-social attitudes/behaviors; corrected/redirected without shaming		1	2	3	N/A
When necessary, provided appropriate sanction(s)		1	2	3	N/A
<b>Closing</b>					
Achieved goal of meeting		1	2	3	N/A
Assigned homework appropriately		1	2	3	N/A
Closed session with review of action steps, case plan, and expectations		1	2	3	N/A
<b>NARRATIVE COMMENTS</b>					
Summary of areas mastered:					
Summary of areas in need of improvement:					
Professional Development Plan:					

Exhibit 7, Program Session Delivery Direct Observation Checklist, provides an example of a method to objectively measure the skills of a group facilitator and the conduct of a group session. To be clear, this tool is *not* designed to assess the effectiveness of program content; other program evaluation processes are available to determine if the content and other features of a program are appropriately designed and administered (e.g., whether the program targets the proper risk levels and criminogenic needs; contains sufficient dosage, length, and intensity; is sufficiently behavioral in its techniques; manualized; etc.).<sup>11</sup> Both types of assessments (program content and content delivery) are important; an effectively run group that is not using material designed to reduce risk to reoffend will not succeed any more than an effective risk reduction program administered poorly.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, the Correctional Program Assessment Inventory (CPAI) (Gendreau & Andrews, 2001).

<b>Exhibit 7:</b> <b>Program Session Delivery Direct Observation Checklist</b>					
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>3 = Exceeds Expectations</b> <b>2 = Meets Expectations</b> <b>1 = Needs Improvement</b> <b>N/A = Not Applicable</b>			
<b>Preparation, Set Up, and Introduction</b>					
Facilitator was well prepared and organized for session		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator greeted participants warmly		1	2	3	N/A
The environment was free from distractions (i.e., physical space was appropriate for learning)		1	2	3	N/A
The group was of appropriate size (i.e., 5-12)		1	2	3	N/A
The group was appropriately composed (e.g., same gender, same or similar risk levels)		1	2	3	N/A
Appropriate expectations were set with participants at the beginning of the session		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator reviewed previous lesson		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator exhibited good rapport with group members		1	2	3	N/A
<b>Control and Accountability</b>					
Facilitator maintained group control; enforced group rules; boundaries were followed or consequences imposed immediately when not followed		1	2	3	N/A
Tardiness, attendance, and failure to do homework were appropriately addressed		1	2	3	N/A
<b>Facilitator Group Skills</b>					
Facilitator used a manualized curriculum and followed the lesson plan while not being heavily dependent on it		1	2	3	N/A
Each participant was sufficiently involved throughout the session		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator displayed a non-judgmental approach		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator used repetition when presenting material		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator rewarded prosocial attitudes/behaviors appropriately through affirmation and other means, using a 4:1 ratio		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator demonstrated a strength-based approach		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator expressed disapproval for anti-social attitudes/behaviors; corrected/redirected without shaming		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator was flexible without significantly deviating from session goals		1	2	3	N/A
Session was adequately paced (slow enough for learning and questions but not so slow as to evoke boredom)		1	2	3	N/A
Handouts and exercises were useful, adding to the participant's understanding of the material/skills		1	2	3	N/A
<b>Session Activities</b>					
Homework was reviewed; issues that arose as a result of the homework assignment were discussed		1	2	3	N/A
Role plays and practice opportunities were conducted		1	2	3	N/A
Instructions for role plays and practice were clear		1	2	3	N/A

New skills were introduced and demonstrated in the “tell, show, do” format		1	2	3	N/A
Skills were broken down into small parts		1	2	3	N/A
Mastery was achieved through repetition before skill practice increased in difficulty		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator debriefed following skill practice session		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator provided sufficient positive affirmation		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator provided specific, constructive feedback on what the participant could do to improve the skill		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator demonstrated confidence and competency in the material		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator varied instructional techniques to address all learning styles		1	2	3	N/A
Participants appeared engaged and interested		1	2	3	N/A
Participants were appropriately trusting and open in disclosing their thoughts and emotions, and in their skill practice		1	2	3	N/A
Facilitator concluded session with a review of the lesson and homework assignment		1	2	3	N/A
<b>NARRATIVE COMMENTS</b>					
Summary of areas mastered:					
Summary of areas in need of improvement:					
Professional Development Plan:					

#### **PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK.**

Evaluations that seek to gather feedback from clients are an integral part of CQI. Research in the counseling profession has demonstrated that client feedback can effectively determine whether a specific intervention is succeeding. While the following research summaries reflect studies conducted with non-correctional clients and staff, they provide potentially important guidance to those working with correctional clients.<sup>12</sup> These studies show the following:

- a. The working relationship between staff and clients is correlated with intervention success. As the alliance between staff and clients increases, the likelihood of success improves. In fact, an individual client’s perception of that alliance is ultimately the best predictor of an interventions’ success. Clients’ ratings of alliance have a higher correlation to outcome than staff members’ ratings.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> These non-correctional studies provide a guide for corrections professionals in terms of understanding the importance of clients’ perceptions, discussing those impressions with clients, conducting assessments early in the therapeutic relationship, and creating assessment methods that are easily administered by staff. Their replication in a correctional setting is critical to obtaining absolute confidence in the transferability of these lessons to other settings.

<sup>13</sup> Bedi, Davis, & Arvay, 2005; Horvath & Bedi, 2002.

- b. Staff members are often unaware when clients are not progressing or are deteriorating in treatment.<sup>14</sup> In one study, the researcher compared staff members' predictions of client deterioration to actuarial prediction methods and found that staff rarely predicted deterioration accurately (in comparison to highly accurate predictions of deterioration when actuarial assessment methods were used).<sup>15</sup>
- c. Early change is correlated with intervention success; therefore, the timing of the staff-client relationship assessment is relevant and suggests that feedback from clients should be obtained early in the intervention process.<sup>16</sup>
- d. Staff who used objective measures and who shared the results of assessments with clients were more likely to reach clinically significant levels of change than those not using these methods.<sup>17</sup>
- e. Relative to the tools used to assess staff-client alliance, a research study found that the majority of staff members do not consider as practical to use any measure or combination of measures that take more than five minutes per session to complete, score, and interpret.<sup>18</sup>

#### **TOOLS TO GAUGE CLIENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS.**

There are three primary types of tools that are used to collect participant feedback.<sup>19</sup> They include written surveys, facilitated focus group sessions, and program assessments. Two participant feedback tools are included in this Coaching Packet, a Post Session Assessment and a Community Supervision Exit Survey.

Two forms of CQI assessments (pre/post assessment and post assessment) measure client perceptions of the effectiveness of interventions (i.e., the impact of the intervention content on skills or reduction of negative or debilitating symptoms).

- ✓ A *pre/post assessment* is administered just prior to and immediately following an intervention session, periodically after a session, or after an entire intervention has been completed. Its purpose is to identify the presence (or lack) of a programming effect.
- ✓ A *post assessment* measures clients' perceptions following the completion of an intervention. That is, unlike the pre/post assessment, no pre-test is administered.

Exhibit 8, Post Session Assessment, is an example of an assessment provided to clients to determine their perceptions of a group after a single session.

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<sup>14</sup> Lambert et al., 2003.

<sup>15</sup> Hannan et al., 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Miller & Duncan, 2000.

<sup>17</sup> Anker, Duncan, & Sparks, 2009; Brown, Dreis, & Nace, 1999; Miller, Duncan, Sorrell, & Brown, 2004.

<sup>18</sup> Brown, Dreis, & Nace, 1999; Miller, Duncan, Sorrell, & Brown, 2004.

<sup>19</sup> These same methods can be used to collect feedback from stakeholder groups.

**Exhibit 8:**  
**Post Session Assessment**

	<b>5=Strongly Agree</b> <b>4=Agree</b> <b>3=Neutral</b> <b>2=Disagree</b> <b>1=Strongly Disagree</b>				
Today I learned a lot.	1	2	3	4	5
When I talked, I felt listened to.	1	2	3	4	5
What we talked about today was really important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
The staff were good role models for me.	1	2	3	4	5
I liked what we did today.	1	2	3	4	5
The staff cared about whether I succeeded in learning the skills we worked on today.	1	2	3	4	5
I tried hard to learn the material today.	1	2	3	4	5
I did not feel nervous in the group.	1	2	3	4	5
I thought the homework assignment was useful.	1	2	3	4	5
I was satisfied with the way the staff ran the group.	1	2	3	4	5
The activities today held my attention.	1	2	3	4	5
I received the right kind of practice and information to succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
The length of the session was about right.	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, I was pleased with how the session went today.	1	2	3	4	5
On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best rating, how would you rate today's session?					
The session would have been better if:					
What I would not want to change about the session is:					
Other comments:					

**EXIT SURVEY.**

The purpose of an exit survey is to gather information about clients' perceptions of an intervention. These surveys can be conducted in a number of ways including by telephone, through one-on-one in-person interviews, or in writing. They may be administered by the agency providing the service, by the individual providing the service, or by an independent third party.

Exhibit 9, Community Supervision Exit Survey, is an example of such a survey. In addition to considering the content of such a survey, the pros and cons of the timing and method of administration must be considered. For example, if the exit survey is administered to offenders upon completion of supervision, only responses from those who successfully terminate will be

included. For this reason, such a survey might be administered at an earlier interval, when the perceptions of a cross-section of all supervisees is more likely obtained. On the other hand, it is possible that more candid responses will be gathered post-supervision, when individuals feel freer to be candid. Other administration questions must be considered as well. For example, while anonymous written surveys may be easiest to administer, they may pose difficulties for those with literacy challenges.

These are among the many questions agency staff will need to consider in the development of their CQI plans.

**Exhibit 9:**  
**Community Supervision Exit Survey**

	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Neutral	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
1. I was treated with respect by my supervising officer.	5	4	3	2	1
2. The rules of my supervision were clearly explained to me.	5	4	3	2	1
3. If I had a complaint about my supervision officer I knew with whom I needed to talk.	5	4	3	2	1
4. I understood what I needed to do in order to successfully complete my supervision.	5	4	3	2	1
5. The length of my supervision was about right.	5	4	3	2	1
6. My supervising officer listened to me.	5	4	3	2	1
7. My supervising officer cared about whether I succeeded.	5	4	3	2	1
8. I was given the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge I needed to succeed.	5	4	3	2	1
9. I had input into my case plan.	5	4	3	2	1
10. My family/significant other was as involved in my case plan as I wanted them to be.	5	4	3	2	1
11. Overall I was pleased with how my supervision went.	5	4	3	2	1

## Section II: Continuous Quality Improvement Coaching Packet Checklist

Case Management	YES	NO	NOT CLEAR	NOTES
1. Is a CQI plan in place that includes:				
a. A clear identification of a BHAG (i.e., core mission)?				
b. Identification of the specific activities that will best support the mission?				
c. Measures that will determine whether intended outcomes are reached through these specific activities?				
d. The processes (e.g., participant feedback, observation, auditing, and training assessments) and tools (e.g., surveys, taping, checklists, audits) that will result in qualitative feedback?				
2. Has an organizational structure been established to support the CQI effort (e.g., policies, forms, training, assignment of personnel dedicated to CQI, committees, and feedback process)?				
3. Have staff members been sufficiently involved in the establishment of CQI processes so as to ensure their understanding and buy-in into its purposes and methods?				
4. Has an organizational culture of quality in which staff feel a sense of professional responsibility for learning and growing been established?				
5. Is a CQI process in place to ensure inter-rater reliability of risk/needs assessment instruments?				
6. Is a CQI process in place to ensure effective case planning (e.g., matching goals to criminogenic needs and taking into account responsiveness, strengths, triggers, and relapse)?				
7. Is a CQI process in place to ensure the efficacy of cognitive behavioral treatment and other programming?				
8. Is a CQI process in place to ensure that supervision agents are skilled in core correctional practices (i.e., role modeling, reinforcing prosocial behavioral, teaching concrete skills, skill practice, discouraging antisocial behavior, use of rewards/sanctions, and engagement in Motivational Interviewing/professional alliance)?				
9. Is a process in place to ensure that CQI coaches are also provided CQI coaching?				
10. Have potential obstacles to the success of the CQI process been identified and addressed (e.g., insufficient staff time, staff discomfort, data privacy, union concerns, technology, and logistics)?				
11. Is the CQI process both sufficiently limited to guard against overwhelming staff and CQI coaches and at the same time extensive enough to ensure that key activities are assessed and advanced?				
12. Is a plan in place to ensure that CQI progress is acknowledged and celebrated?				

## Section III: Action Planning Worksheet

<b>GOAL:</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 2:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 3:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

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# COACHING PACKET

## Shaping Offender Behavior

Revised, January 2010

One in a series of Coaching Packets designed  
to assist jurisdictions in the implementation  
of effective practices that will support  
successful offender outcomes

Author: Mark Carey, The Carey Group

Editor: Madeline M. Carter, Center for Effective Public Policy

2009



### ***Coaching Packet Series 1: Creating a Blueprint for an Effective Offender Reentry System***

- A Framework for Offender Reentry
- Establishing a Rational Planning Process
- Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### ***Coaching Packet Series 2: Delivering Evidence-Based Services***

- Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
- Effective Case Management
- Shaping Offender Behavior
- Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry
- Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring
- Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

### ***Coaching Packet Series 3: Ensuring Meaningful Outcomes***

- Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts
- Continuous Quality Improvement



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## Introduction to the Coaching Packet Series

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) and its partners, The Urban Institute and The Carey Group, were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to the Fiscal Year 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees (hereafter “PRI grantees”). The project team served in this capacity from April 2008 to June 2010.

The Center is a nonprofit criminal justice consulting organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since the early 1980s, the Center has provided training and technical assistance to the criminal justice field on a wide array of topics, including transition and reentry, and has administered a number of national projects of this kind. The Urban Institute was established as a private, nonprofit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1968 and is a leader in prisoner reentry research, focusing on making best practice information accessible to practitioners and policymakers. The Carey Group is a justice consulting firm with extensive practitioner experience in evidence-based practices, strategic planning, community and restorative justice and corrections.

As a part of its technical assistance delivery to the PRI grantees, the Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work. The final products of this work include eleven Coaching Packets in three series. These Coaching Packets offer practical value beyond the jurisdictions involved in this initiative and are available to criminal justice professionals and their partners interested in enhancing their strategies for reducing recidivism and improving offender outcomes.

Each Coaching Packet provides an overview of a specific topic as it relates to successful offender reentry, and offers tools and resources for those interested in exploring the topic in greater depth.

- *Series 1* provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system. This series provides a conceptual framework for addressing prisoner reentry at the policy level; outlines a strategic planning process to support implementation efforts; and explores the establishment of successful collaborative partnerships at the policy and case management levels.
- *Series 2* addresses key issues related to the delivery of evidence-based services to offenders. This series summarizes the key literature with regard to implementing evidence-based practices; explores advances in approaches to case management; addresses the important role of staff in changing offender behavior; and summarizes research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- *Series 3* provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes. This series describes methods to assess the effectiveness of reentry efforts and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

## FY 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Grantees

The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) – intended to support the development and implementation of institutional and community corrections-based reentry programs to help returning offenders find employment and provide other critical services – is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grants were awarded to state and local corrections agencies by DOJ to provide pre-release and transition services to offenders and were “matched” by DOL grants to faith- and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to provide post-release services, focusing on employment assistance and mentoring.

Thirty-five states received grants in three cycles of the Initiative during Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 23 FY 2007 PRI grantees received assistance under this project. FY 2007 grants were awarded in the fall of 2007 and implemented from 2008 to 2010; however, some grantees will not complete their activities until 2011. The FY 2007 grantees provided technical assistance under this project included:

- ✓ ALASKA, Native Justice Center
- ✓ ARIZONA, Criminal Justice Commission/ Yuma County Sheriff’s Office
- ✓ CALIFORNIA, Department of Community Services and Development
- ✓ COLORADO, Division of Criminal Justice Services/City of Denver
- ✓ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Government
- ✓ FLORIDA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ HAWAII, Department of Public Safety
- ✓ INDIANA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ IOWA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ KANSAS, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MAINE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MICHIGAN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MINNESOTA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEVADA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEW JERSEY, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NORTH CAROLINA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ OHIO, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- ✓ PENNSYLVANIA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ RHODE ISLAND, Department of Corrections
- ✓ TENNESSEE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ VIRGINIA, Department of Criminal Justice Services
- ✓ WISCONSIN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ WYOMING, Department of Corrections

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<sup>1</sup> The PRI program will end when the FY 2008 grantees complete their activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

Becki Ney, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program Project Director. Ms. Ney conceptualized and oversaw the development of the Coaching Packet series.

Madeline M. Carter, Principal, and Rachelle Giguere, Program Associate, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the key editors for the Coaching Packet series. Ms. Giguere also provided extensive research support to the development of the series.

# **Introduction to the Shaping Offender Behavior Coaching Packet**

## *The Contents of this Packet*

This Coaching Packet provides:

- Support for the assertion that every interaction with an offender is an opportunity to positively shape behavior;
- A review of some of the key literature regarding shaping offender behavior;
- A discussion about the skills staff should possess to maximize their influence over offenders;
- Brief case studies regarding efforts underway in two jurisdictions to put these ideas into practice;
- A tool to determine your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps in the area of shaping offender behavior;
- An aide to developing plans to address identified gap areas; and
- References to additional resources on this topic.

## *The Intended Audience for this Packet*

This Coaching Packet was originally developed to assist grant teams that were established to manage local PRI initiatives. The teams were composed of representatives from institutional and community corrections and faith-based or community organizations involved in the delivery of pre- and post-release services to offenders transitioning from prison to the community. The content of these Coaching Packets has much broader application, however; the information and tools contained within this Coaching Packet can also be used by teams of criminal justice professionals and their partners to assess the status of their efforts in implementing evidence-based practices and effective reentry services to offenders.

This Coaching Packet may also serve as a resource for professionals at all levels who are interested in learning more about this topic.

## *How to Use this Packet*

### **SECTION I: READ THE OVERVIEW ON SHAPING OFFENDER BEHAVIOR.**

This section of the Coaching Packet provides an overview on shaping offender behavior. Review its content and, if the information it contains is applicable to your work and addresses an area in which you feel you need to focus your efforts, use the tool in Section II to assess your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps with regard to building staff skills to positively influence offender behavior.

### **SECTION II: COMPLETE THE SHAPING OFFENDER BEHAVIOR COACHING PACKET CHECKLIST.**

As a team, complete the Shaping Offender Behavior Coaching Packet Checklist. (Based upon the information you read in Section I, consider who may need to be involved so that you are

able to answer the questions thoroughly.) Complete the checklist as a group and discuss your responses along the way.

- Begin by identifying at least five categories of staff whose skills you will assess using this checklist. Note each group of staff at the top of each column (for example, Staff Group A may be Correctional Officers, Staff Group B may be First Lieutenants, Staff Group C may be Institutional Case Managers or Reentry Specialists, Staff Group D may be Correctional Counselors, Staff Group E may be Parole Officers, Staff Group F may be faith-based community organization staff, or some other groupings as appropriate for your jurisdiction).
- Develop a consensus-based response for each item on the checklist (use the key in the upper left hand corner of the checklist to record your responses). Add additional items that may relate to your offender behavior management efforts that are not already included on the checklist.
- Make note of issues that require further inquiry.
- Once the checklist is completed, consider your jurisdictions' strengths in the area of shaping offender behavior. Make note of these.
- Next, consider your most significant gaps. Make note of these as well.

### **SECTION III: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN.**

If, after completing the checklist in Section II, your team determines that further work on this topic is necessary or would be helpful, follow the steps below to identify your goals, objectives, and action items, and identify any additional assistance or expertise needed.

Working as a team, review your findings from the Shaping Offender Behavior Coaching Packet Checklist. Specifically:

1. Determine whether, based upon what you have read and discussed, you desire to improve your jurisdiction's approach to the management of offender behavior.
2. If you determine you have a need to improve in the area of managing offender behavior, write a goal statement that reflects where you want to be with regard to shaping offender behavior. Your goal might be to "Develop a formalized system of offender rewards and incentives," "Provide skill-based training to first line supervisors to support the professional development of line level staff," or another goal. Using the Action Planning Worksheet in Section III, note your goal in the area of shaping offender behavior.
3. Identify your three most significant strengths in this area and discuss how you might build on those to overcome some of your gaps.
4. Identify your three most significant gaps. For each gap, write an objective. Your objectives might be, "To establish a sub-committee to develop a list of agency-sanctioned incentives for offenders," or "To develop a method to monitor the frequency with which offenders' positive attitudes and behaviors are formally acknowledged and reinforced by staff," or "To convene a subcommittee of institutional and community staff providing pre- and post-incarceration services to offenders to ensure a consistent approach to shaping offender behavior," or "To convene the Training Academy curriculum development committee to

develop a first line supervisor training curriculum," or something else. Note your three objectives on the Action Planning Worksheet.

5. Add the following on the Action Planning Worksheet for each objective:
  - a. The specific sequential steps that must be taken to meet the objective.
  - b. The individual who will assume lead responsibility for this action item.
  - c. The completion date for this action item.
6. Discuss whether additional assistance or outside expertise is needed to successfully achieve any of your action items. For instance, explore whether additional literature, guidance from another practitioner over the telephone, examples of work products from other jurisdictions, or on-site technical assistance would be helpful options.
  - a. For each action item, identify those for which assistance/expertise is needed.
  - b. Identify the type of assistance/expertise needed.
  - c. Prioritize each of these need areas. If assistance/expertise will be limited, for which action items is assistance most needed?
  - d. Begin exploring ways to secure the needed assistance/expertise.

### ***How to Seek Additional Information***

To download copies of the Coaching Packets, please visit the Center's website at <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>. To obtain further information on the use or content of this or any of the Coaching Packets, or on the 2007 PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program, please contact:

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## **Section I: The Importance of Corrections Professionals' Approach to Shaping Offender Behavior**

Successful offender reentry relies upon the effective implementation of evidence-based principles and practices (i.e., assessment, treatment, supervision, etc.). Although these approaches are necessary, alone they are insufficient. The best possible programs and most effective tools will be rendered useless if the professional does not have the knowledge, attitude, and skills to use them effectively. Furthermore, where resources or other constraints limit the extent to which offenders can participate in risk-reducing programs and services, there is still opportunity for corrections professionals to influence offender behavior. To be sure, each and every interaction staff have with offenders – whether correctional officers in housing units, shop foremen in industry programs, parole officers in the field, or receptionists in the probation office – is an opportunity to shape offenders' behavior.

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An auto mechanic can have the best possible tools and parts but if s/he fails to diagnose the problem correctly or installs a part improperly the quality of the tools and product are rendered meaningless. A surgeon can have absolute command of the science and the best equipment available but if s/he has poor a bedside manner or cannot effectively communicate with his/her patient, cooperation will be jeopardized, putting the medical intervention at risk.

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There are three important strategies agencies can employ to positively shape offender behavior. They are:

- ✓ Focusing on the right issues with the right offenders;
- ✓ Using behavioral interventions to coach and redirect offenders; and
- ✓ Ensuring practitioners' skills are in alignment with the research.

### ***Focusing on the Right Issues with the Right Offenders***

Agencies interested in reducing the likelihood that offenders will commit future crime must be mindful of the research on the principles of correctional interventions. Most notable among these are risk to reoffend (the risk principle) and matching interventions to individual offenders (the need principle).<sup>2</sup>

The risk principle suggests that:

- ✓ Medium and high risk offenders are the most likely to positively respond to correctional interventions.
- ✓ In their aggregate, low risk offenders do not respond favorably to correctional interventions. Not only are they unlikely to benefit from interventions aimed at risk

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<sup>2</sup> See Andrews, 2007; Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Andrews et al., 1990.

reduction, in some instances these offenders can become more crime prone as a result of their involvement in correctional programming.

- ✓ Extremely high risk offenders might respond favorably to appropriate correctional interventions, but only when the intensity and dosage of these interventions is sufficiently high.<sup>3</sup>

Just as important as targeting the “who” (i.e., medium and high risk) is the targeting of the “what.” That is, offenders have criminogenic (crime influencing) traits which make them more likely to commit crime than those who do not possess these traits. These traits are dynamic, meaning they can be changed when the appropriate programs, services and conditions are applied. Targeting criminogenic needs is extremely important in our efforts to reduce recidivism; it is the greatest promise in reducing future crime. Interventions that effectively target criminogenic needs have been demonstrated to reduce recidivism whereas interventions that address non-criminogenic needs do not have positive recidivism outcomes.

Not all criminogenic needs are of equal importance. Some are more influential than others. The research on criminogenic needs identifies eight dynamic traits<sup>4</sup> that are associated with criminal behavior. All eight are linked to criminal behavior but the top four are more influential and therefore should generally be prioritized and addressed sooner than the next four needs. Furthermore, research helps us to understand the appropriate tools (i.e., programs, services, and techniques) to apply to these conditions in an effort to reduce offenders’ risk levels.

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<sup>3</sup> Most jurisdictions do not have the necessary interventions to adequately address the treatment needs of the extremely high risk offender.

<sup>4</sup> While different studies and researchers identify slightly different criminogenic needs and characterize these traits slightly differently, there is more similarity than difference among them. For the purposes of this document, one approach to describing these crime producing traits is described (see Andrews, 2007; Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2006).

Exhibit 1: Criminogenic Needs <sup>5</sup>			
Top Four Criminogenic Needs		Next Four Criminogenic Needs	
Need	Response	Need	Response
History of anti-social behavior	Build non-criminal alternative behavior in risky situations	Family and/or marital stressors	Reduce conflict, build positive relationships and communications
Anti-social personality or temperament	Build problem solving and self management skills, develop anger management and coping skills	Lack of employment/education	Provide job readiness, pre-employment and job retention skills; Enhance academic performance
Anti-social cognition, attitudes	Reduce anti-social cognition, recognize high risk thinking patterns and feelings, adopt alternative identity	Lack of pro-social leisure or recreation	Enhance involvement and level of satisfaction with pro-social activities
Anti-social companions	Reduce association with anti-social peers, enhance contact with pro-social individuals	Substance abuse	Reduce use and the supports for substance abusing behavior, enhance alternatives to substance abuse

### *Using Behavioral Interventions to Redirect Offenders*

The most effective interventions are behavioral (as opposed to other therapeutic approaches such as talk therapy). These other didactic, insight oriented approaches do not produce the long lasting changes in criminal behavior that behavioral approaches are so successful in achieving. Behavioral treatment has as its root social learning theory. Social learning theory asserts that people learn and adopt new behaviors through positive and negative reinforcement, observation, and skill practice.

#### **POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT.**

Rewards and sanctions shape human behavior. Although historically sanctions have been used as the primary method to respond to or control offenders' behavior, research indicates that positive reinforcement should be applied more frequently than negative reinforcement when trying to change behavior. A ratio of four positive reinforcements for every negative reinforcement should be the general approach.<sup>6</sup> Part of the reason for this is that many offenders – particularly those at higher risk – have long histories of negative reinforcements and as such they have learned to adapt to and dismiss the “pain” that accompanies these

<sup>5</sup> Andrews, 2007; Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2006, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> See Gendreau & Goggin, 1996; Gendreau, Little, & Goggin, 1996; Andrews & Bonta, 2006.

responses. In contrast, research has shown that anti-social individuals (just like the general population) are more likely to repeat behaviors and adopt attitudes that are recognized, acknowledged, and affirmed.

Positive reinforcements do not have to be costly or difficult to administer. Often, just a word of praise or encouragement can provoke a sense of pride and goodwill; these experiences then increase the likelihood that the pro-social behavior is repeated. Only a lack of creativity limits our ability to reward and affirm. Depending upon the circumstances and the extent to which the offenders' positive behaviors are new or repeated over time, these might include:

- ✓ Words of praise;
- ✓ The assignment of a task that demonstrates confidence in the individual's abilities and level of responsibility;
- ✓ A token of appreciation (e.g., a written note of acknowledgement or a certificate);
- ✓ Acknowledgement of accomplishment in front of others (e.g., praise in public, acknowledgement by a person in an authority position);
- ✓ A more desirable housing or work assignment;
- ✓ A "pass" on a scheduled office visit;
- ✓ A bus voucher;
- ✓ A gift certificate (donated by a local merchant);
- ✓ Reduced drug testing; or
- ✓ Early discharge from supervision.

For purposes of this discussion, positive reinforcements are defined as rewards that reinforce positive behavior; negative reinforcements are responses or sanctions that express disapproval for anti-social attitudes and behaviors.

Positive reinforcement should be provided at a rate of four reinforcers for every expression of dissatisfaction (or sanction). Research demonstrates that this formula enhances offenders' motivation to continue exhibiting pro-social behaviors. Because pro-social behavior is key to reduced criminal activity, this is an important ingredient in our efforts to prevent future crime.

Just as rewards play an important role in shaping offender behavior, so too do sanctions. The failure to express disapproval when anti-social behaviors or attitudes are exhibited conveys a neutral – or worse – implicit approval of these behaviors/attitudes.

There are several important elements to success in the use of sanctions that have implications for how and when corrections professionals – whether correctional officers in housing units or probation/parole officers in the community – respond to offenders' non-compliant behavior:<sup>7</sup>

- ✓ Offenders should know what behaviors are desired and not desired;
- ✓ The consequences of negative behaviors should be clear;

<sup>7</sup> These are derived from the procedural justice literature and have traditionally been used to craft responses to probation/parole violations. See Exhibit 2, Research Summary on Responding to the Violation Behavior of Offenders Under Community Supervision.

- ✓ Responses should be as timely as possible in order to directly link the behavior to the response;
- ✓ Responses should not be harsh or more punitive than necessary;
- ✓ Responses should be fair and equitable; and
- ✓ Where possible, sanctions should be linked to the behavior.

Exhibit 2: <sup>8</sup> Research Summary on Responding to the Violation Behavior of Offenders Under Community Supervision			
Principle	Rationale	Research	Therefore,...
Celerity	Reduce time delay between behavior and response = reduced violations	Rhine, 1993	<i>...respond to violations as quickly as possible</i>
Certainty	Increased certainty of response = reductions in future deviance	Grasmick & Bryjak, 1980; Nichols & Ross, 1990; Paternoster, 1989	<i>...respond (in some way) to every violation</i>
Consistency	Similar decisions in similar circumstances = increased compliance	Paternoster, Brame, Bachman, & Sherman, 1997	<i>...use decisionmaking instruments that produce consistent results</i>
Neutrality	Processes are impartial, logical and fair = increased adherence to rules	Tyler, 1990	<i>...inform offenders how responses are determined</i>
Parsimony	Punishment should not be more intrusive or restrictive than necessary	Tonry, 1996	<i>...use severity of the violation as a factor in determining the appropriate level of response</i>
Proportionality	Level of punishment should be commensurate with the severity of the behavior	Von Hirsch, 1993	<i>...match sanction severity to the severity of the violation</i>
Risk and Need Principle	The higher the risk to reoffend, the more intensive the intervention; tailor responses to criminogenic needs	Andrews & Bonta, 1998	<i>...use risk to reoffend as a key factor in determining the appropriate level of response; ...tailor responses to address the individual's unique criminogenic needs</i>

<sup>8</sup> Source: Taxman, 1999 with adaptations by Madeline Carter.

Exhibit 3: Considerations in Applying Rewards and Sanctions			
Rewards		Sanctions	
<i>Do...</i>	<i>Don't...</i>	<i>Do...</i>	<i>Don't...</i>
...ensure that conditions allow offenders to exhibit the desired behaviors	...promise incentives that can't be administered due to cost or policy	...make clear what behaviors are expected	...“keep offenders guessing” in an attempt to control their behavior
...provide more reinforcers than negative responses (the ratio should be 4:1 or higher)	...be silent or use negative feedback more frequently than positive	...let offenders know what the consequences of non-compliance are	...threaten consequences that are not enforceable
...tailor rewards to the individual to ensure that the reinforcements are meaningful	...apply a “one size fits all” approach to rewarding behavior	...understand that relapse is a normal part of the change process	...overreact to relapses
...“stack” rewards so that offender receive consistent positive feedback	...withhold praise to establish authority	...respond quickly and with certainty	...react harshly; the severity of the sanction is less important than the immediacy and certainty of the sanction
...apply reinforcers frequently for optimal learning	... stop reinforcing positive behavior (but recognize that over time, reinforcers can be delivered sporadically)	...be realistic about how much change offenders can make in a certain amount of time	...overload offenders with expectations (or sanctions) that they can't possibly meet successfully

#### **ROLE MODELING.**

One way humans learn is through observation of the behaviors of others. The power of these observations – that is, the influence they have over our own behavior – is related to the extent to which we respect and admire those we are observing. Role modeling is therefore a very important tool in shaping offenders’ behavior. Offenders are constantly observing and assessing others, including corrections professionals. Professionals therefore are afforded virtually unlimited opportunity to role model for offenders the attitudes and behaviors we want them to emulate. Because people are most likely to relate to those who possess similar qualities to their own, cultural and gender differences are important factors. That is, agencies should seek to employ a staff that is as diverse as the offender population, and provide opportunities for those with similar cultural and gender characteristics to exercise this important role modeling function.

### **SKILL PRACTICE.**

Insight alone is not enough to change behavior. If that were the case, most people would not have difficulty losing weight or quitting smoking. Changing behavior is more complicated than wanting to change or even knowing that change is important.

We learn new ways to behave through skill practice. It is also the way we learn new ways to think. As we practice new ways of responding to situations, we also integrate new ways of thinking about, or processing, those events. Skill practice involves specific steps of observing others, practicing new behavior, receiving feedback on the practiced behavior, and continual improvement. What separates chefs from those of us who are good in the kitchen, or athletes from amateurs, is that they spend hundreds if not thousands of hours over many years practicing their skill. They develop constructive and helpful ways of thinking about their skill and perfect, through repeated practice, the techniques essential to performing it well.

Many offenders, particularly those in the higher risk categories, are woefully under skilled in common pro-social skills such as conflict resolution, anger management, problem solving, and emotional regulation. Attending a class and listening to a counselor talk about anger management, for example, is unlikely to help an offender build new skills in managing their responses to difficult situations any more than listening to music will help a person become a musician. But listening to a counselor describe anger management techniques, observing them in others and practicing and perfecting them over time will help offenders develop more productive response to volatile situations. Research tells us that the amount of skill practice offenders need depends upon their level of risk.<sup>9</sup> The higher the risk of the offender to reoffend, the higher the need for intervention. As a general rule, approximately 100 hours of programming time for medium risk offenders and 200-300 hours of programming time for high risk offenders should be targeted for maximum effect.<sup>10</sup>

Dr. James Bonta notes, “There are virtually no serious competitors for the following when it comes to changing criminal behavior:”<sup>11</sup>

- ✓ Modeling: Demonstrating those behaviors we want to see in others;
- ✓ Reinforcement: Rewarding those behaviors we want to see repeated;
- ✓ Role-Playing: Creating opportunities for practice and providing corrective feedback;
- ✓ Graduated Practice: Unbundling complex behavior sets into their smaller components and practicing these smaller steps individually, building towards the complex behavior set; and
- ✓ Extinction: Assuring that antisocial styles of thinking, feeling, and acting are not inadvertently rewarded.

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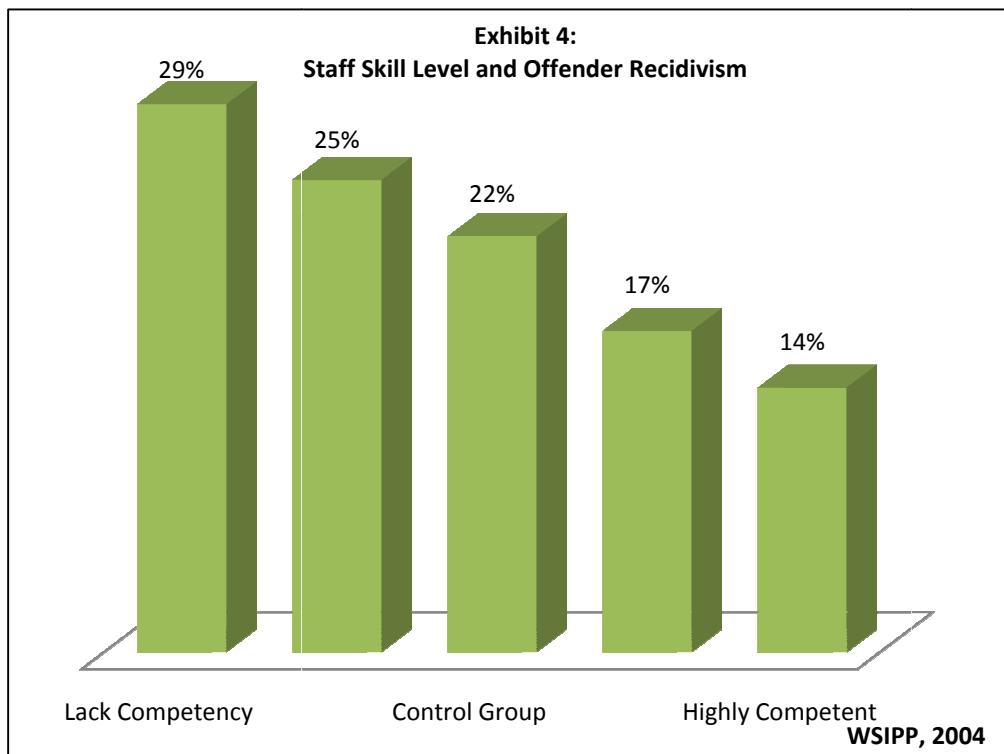
<sup>9</sup> Andrews & Bonta, 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Bourgon & Armstrong, 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Andrews & Bonta, 1998.

## ***Ensuring Practitioners' Skills are in Alignment with the Research***

Research conducted over the last decade provides important information about the influence staff can have over offender recidivism rates. Trotter<sup>12</sup> analyzed records of officers trained in a pro-social form of intervention that focused on modeling and reinforcing behaviors and teaching problem solving skills. His research showed that the offenders on the caseloads of these officers had lower recidivism rates than did the offenders on the caseloads of officers who did not possess or use these skills. Other studies support this finding. For example, in 2004, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy<sup>13</sup> completed an outcome evaluation of Washington State's research based programs for juvenile offenders and found that the competency level of the staff working with the youth had a direct impact on the likelihood of recidivism regardless of the intervention program in which the youth participated. These studies and others with similar findings underscore the very important role that all staff can play in shaping—and changing—offender behavior. The good news is we do not have to rely solely on limited therapeutic opportunities to influence offenders; as has been noted already, *every interaction is an opportunity to positively influence behavior.*



<sup>12</sup> Trotter, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> WSIPP, 2004.

## **REQUISITE TRAITS AND SKILLS.**

A meta-analytic study conducted by Dowden and Andrews<sup>14</sup> resulted in the identification of specific skills among corrections professionals that positively shape offenders' behavior. Exhibit 5 reflects the key traits and skill areas that have been correlated to improved outcomes among offenders.

<b>Exhibit 5:<sup>15</sup> Five Dimensions of Effective Correctional Treatment</b>	
<b><i>Effective use of authority</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Firm but fair approach</li><li>• Make rules clear, visible, understandable</li><li>• Compliance through positive reinforcement</li><li>• Keep focus of message on behavior, not person</li><li>• Use of normal voice</li><li>• Give choices with consequences</li><li>• Guide offender toward compliance</li></ul>
<b><i>Modeling and reinforcing pro-social attitudes</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive/negative reinforcement</li><li>• Model and rehearse pro-social behavior in concrete and vivid way</li><li>• Immediate feedback on why behavior is approved/disapproved</li><li>• Offender encouraged to think about why certain behavior is desirable</li><li>• Role playing with increasingly difficult scenarios</li></ul>
<b><i>Teaching concrete problem solving skills</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engage offender in activities that increase satisfaction and rewards for non-criminal pursuits</li><li>• Help offender develop a plan, clarify goals, generate options/alternatives, evaluate options</li></ul>
<b><i>Advocacy/Brokerage of community resource</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arrange the most appropriate correctional service</li><li>• Speak on behalf of client at home, school, work or other</li></ul>
<b><i>Relationship factors</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open, warm, genuine, and enthusiastic communication</li><li>• Self-confident</li><li>• Empathetic</li><li>• Flexible</li><li>• Mutual respect and liking</li><li>• Directive, solution focused, structured, non-blaming</li></ul>

## **SKILLS IN BUILDING RAPPORT.**

In order for offenders to receive and integrate both positive and negative reinforcement – and to learn from pro-social role modeling – offenders must view those they are learning from as trustworthy. Trust between staff and offenders is built upon staffs' genuine interest in their success, staffs' sincerity in communication and action, and staffs' willingness to engage in meaningful change-producing professional relationships. This meaningful professional relationship in and of itself is insufficient to promote long lasting change, but is fundamental to the strategies that do promote long lasting change.

<sup>14</sup> Dowden & Andrews, 2004.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

## **SKILLS IN COMMUNICATION.**

At least until recently, few correctional staff began their careers with the technical communications skills that have proven effective in working with recalcitrant clients. Yet, rarely do a few minutes pass when staff have an opportunity to use these skills. Whether interviewing an offender for a pre-sentence investigation, conducting a classification interview, or discussing an institutional work assignment, staff are continually collecting information from offenders. Likewise, staff routinely have opportunities to observe and correct offenders' behavior, whether responding to an institutional rule infraction, a violation of supervision conditions, or poor behavior in the probation office waiting room. All of these encounters offer an opportunity to reframe and redirect offenders' thinking and actions. In recognition of this, increasing numbers of agencies are providing some form of skill training to their staff. This training follows the same skill building regime described previously: direct instruction, demonstration, role play, positive reinforcement, feedback, and skill practice. Because all staff are in a position to influence offenders' behavior, these training opportunities are being made available to all staff. These skill advancements, along with Motivational Interviewing techniques, result in more thorough and accurate interviews (which form the basis of many correctional decisions such as classification assignments, program placements, etc.), offenders who are more engaged in their plans for change, reduced defensiveness, higher rates of institutional and community compliance, and, ultimately, higher rates of success among offenders.

### ***Case Study: Grant County, Indiana: Staff Skills***

The Grant County Correctional Services Department has trained its degreed probation officer and case managers, along with management staff, on effective staff-offender interactions. Called EPICS (Effective Practices in Correctional Settings), the curriculum was developed by the University of Cincinnati in response to the need for skill building around the core correctional practices aimed at reducing recidivism. Staff received a four day intensive training that included multiple role plays, video role plays, and critique/feedback. The purpose of the training was to practice the behavioral techniques that lead to crime reduction and to gain comfort with these skills. The training was followed by clinical supervision to ensure that the skills were applied with fidelity.

Agencies that have received training in EPICS have agreed to participate in a research study conducted by Christopher Lowenkamp, Ph.D., to determine its effectiveness and to identify improvements in the training program.

## **BUILDING AGENCY CAPACITY.**

In addition to providing initial training to staff in these skill areas, agencies should take the following additional steps in their efforts to maximize the influence of staff on shaping offender behavior:

- ✓ Develop written policies that reflect the agency's commitment to maximizing the influence staff interactions have on shaping offender behavior and describing the actions the agency and staff will take to fulfill this commitment;
- ✓ Provide "booster" training to staff to continue to reinforce and improve their skills in communication, problem solving, conflict resolution, etc.;
- ✓ Equip first line supervisors with the specific skills needed to mentor and coach staff in these areas, particularly with regard to providing constructive feedback;
- ✓ Develop written policies reflecting the agency's commitment to quality control and describing the actions the agency and staff will take to fulfill this commitment;
- ✓ Revise the agency's recruitment processes to assure that future hiring practices take into consideration the attitudes and skills staff need to possess to be most effective in their work with offenders;
- ✓ Revise the agency's performance appraisal process to reflect the agency's commitment to monitoring, building and strengthening the workforce's skills in these areas; and
- ✓ Revise the agency's promotional system to reflect the agency's commitment to reinforcing the importance of these skills to the effectiveness of the agency.

### ***Case Study: Maricopa County, Arizona: Workforce Competencies***

In 2008-09, the Adult Probation Department in Maricopa County underwent an extensive review of the core competencies required of staff working with higher risk offenders. These competencies are considered to be the most important skills needed by the workforce in order to reduce recidivism. This plan was put forth in an effort to align agency efforts toward risk reduction. Once identified, these competencies will be used to recruit potential new employees, guide staff development plans and promotions, and inform the revision of performance measures. The process took approximately one year and included the assistance of a Workforce Development firm. This firm provided the thirty most common competencies for a human service-oriented job and helped the agency narrow the list down to the core 10-12. The core competencies are used to develop behavioral questions and scenarios for the purposes of recruitment and hiring, staff development and promotion, and agency succession planning.

## Section II: Shaping Offender Behavior Coaching Packet Checklist

<b>Key:</b> <b>1 = Yes</b> <b>2 = In process; no additional support needed</b> <b>3 = In process; additional support needed</b> <b>4 = No; support needed</b> <i>or</i> <b>N/A</b>	Entire Agency	Staff Group A:	Staff Group B:	Staff Group C:	Staff Group D:	Staff Group E:
1. Does the agency have written policies and procedures that explicitly describe how staff should interact with offenders (e.g., every interaction is an opportunity to shape behavior; expectation to build meaningful professional relationship; use of positive reinforcement (4:1 ratio))?		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2. Have staff been provided introductory skill-based communication skills training (such as Motivational Interviewing)?						
3. Have staff been provided skill-based communication skills booster training?						
4. Have staff been provided guidance on those positive reinforcements sanctioned for use by the agency?						
5. Have staff been provided coaching on the effective use of authority?						
6. Have staff been provided explicit guidance on the use of negative reinforcements (e.g., how to use deliberate, measured responses to shape offender behavior)?						
7. Have staff received skill-based training on modeling and reinforcing pro-social attitudes?						
8. Have staff received skill-based training on teaching concrete problem solving skills?						
9. Have staff received coaching on brokering appropriate resources (as applicable to their role in the agency)?						
10. Have staff received coaching on building meaningful professional relationships?						
11. Have supervisors received training on how to coach staff in these skill areas?						
12. Does the agency have policy to explicitly guide quality assurance in these areas (e.g., expectations of line supervisors to coach staff; ongoing training and coaching opportunities for staff; hiring, performance evaluation, and promotional activities that are aligned with these staff skill expectations)?						
13. Do supervisors deliberately monitor staff's use of these skills and techniques, and provide structured feedback and coaching?						
14. Does staff diversity (i.e., culture, gender, language) resemble the diversity of the offender population?						

## Section III: Action Planning Worksheet

<b>GOAL:</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 2:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 3:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

## Section IV: References and Additional Resources

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# COACHING PACKET

## Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry

One in a series of Coaching Packets designed  
to assist jurisdictions in the implementation  
of effective practices that will support  
successful offender outcomes

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2010



### ***Coaching Packet Series 1: Creating a Blueprint for an Effective Offender Reentry System***

- A Framework for Offender Reentry
- Establishing a Rational Planning Process
- Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### ***Coaching Packet Series 2: Delivering Evidence-Based Services***

- Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
- Effective Case Management
- Shaping Offender Behavior
- Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry
- Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring
- Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

### ***Coaching Packet Series 3: Ensuring Meaningful Outcomes***

- Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts
- Continuous Quality Improvement



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## Introduction to the Coaching Packet Series

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) and its partners, The Urban Institute and The Carey Group, were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to the Fiscal Year 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees (hereafter “PRI grantees”). The project team served in this capacity from April 2008 to June 2010.

The Center is a nonprofit criminal justice consulting organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since the early 1980s, the Center has provided training and technical assistance to the criminal justice field on a wide array of topics, including transition and reentry, and has administered a number of national projects of this kind. The Urban Institute was established as a private, nonprofit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1968 and is a leader in prisoner reentry research, focusing on making best practice information accessible to practitioners and policymakers. The Carey Group is a justice consulting firm with extensive practitioner experience in evidence-based practices, strategic planning, community and restorative justice and corrections.

As a part of its technical assistance delivery to the PRI grantees, the Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work. The final products of this work include eleven Coaching Packets in three series. These Coaching Packets offer practical value beyond the jurisdictions involved in this initiative and are available to criminal justice professionals and their partners interested in enhancing their strategies for reducing recidivism and improving offender outcomes.

Each Coaching Packet provides an overview of a specific topic as it relates to successful offender reentry, and offers tools and resources for those interested in exploring the topic in greater depth.

- *Series 1* provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system. This series provides a conceptual framework for addressing prisoner reentry at the policy level; outlines a strategic planning process to support implementation efforts; and explores the establishment of successful collaborative partnerships at the policy and case management levels.
- *Series 2* addresses key issues related to the delivery of evidence-based services to offenders. This series summarizes the key literature with regard to implementing evidence-based practices; explores advances in approaches to case management; addresses the important role of staff in changing offender behavior; and summarizes research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- *Series 3* provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes. This series describes methods to assess the effectiveness of reentry efforts and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

## FY 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Grantees

The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) – intended to support the development and implementation of institutional and community corrections-based reentry programs to help returning offenders find employment and provide other critical services – is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grants were awarded to state and local corrections agencies by DOJ to provide pre-release and transition services to offenders and were “matched” by DOL grants to faith- and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to provide post-release services, focusing on employment assistance and mentoring.

Thirty-five states received grants in three cycles of the Initiative during Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 23 FY 2007 PRI grantees received assistance under this project. FY 2007 grants were awarded in the fall of 2007 and implemented from 2008 to 2010; however, some grantees will not complete their activities until 2011. The FY 2007 grantees provided technical assistance under this project included:

- ✓ ALASKA, Native Justice Center
- ✓ ARIZONA, Criminal Justice Commission/ Yuma County Sheriff’s Office
- ✓ CALIFORNIA, Department of Community Services and Development
- ✓ COLORADO, Division of Criminal Justice Services/City of Denver
- ✓ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Government
- ✓ FLORIDA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ HAWAII, Department of Public Safety
- ✓ INDIANA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ IOWA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ KANSAS, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MAINE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MICHIGAN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MINNESOTA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEVADA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEW JERSEY, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NORTH CAROLINA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ OHIO, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- ✓ PENNSYLVANIA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ RHODE ISLAND, Department of Corrections
- ✓ TENNESSEE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ VIRGINIA, Department of Criminal Justice Services
- ✓ WISCONSIN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ WYOMING, Department of Corrections

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<sup>1</sup> The PRI program will end when the FY 2008 grantees complete their activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

Becki Ney, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program Project Director. Ms. Ney conceptualized and oversaw the development of the Coaching Packet series.

Madeline M. Carter, Principal, and Rachelle Giguere, Program Associate, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the key editors for the Coaching Packet series. Ms. Giguere also provided extensive research support to the development of the series.

# **Introduction to the Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry Coaching Packet**

## *The Contents of this Packet*

This Coaching Packet provides:

- An introduction to a strength-based, family-focused approach to offender management;
- A review of key literature on the families of offenders, and their experiences and roles in the reentry process;
- Some brief examples drawn from agencies implementing strength-based, family-focused practices;
- A tool to determine your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps in implementing strength-based, family-focused practices;
- An aid to developing plans to address identified gap areas; and
- References to additional resources on this topic.

## *The Intended Audience for this Packet*

This Coaching Packet was originally developed to assist grant teams that were established to manage local PRI initiatives. The teams were composed of representatives from institutional and community corrections and faith-based or community organizations involved in the delivery of pre- and post-release services to offenders transitioning from prison to the community. The content of these Coaching Packets has much broader application, however; the information and tools contained within this Coaching Packet can also be used by teams of criminal justice professionals and their partners to assess the status of their efforts in implementing evidence-based practices and effective reentry services to offenders.

This Coaching Packet may also serve as a resource for professionals at all levels who are interested in learning more about this topic.

## *How to Use this Packet*

### **SECTION I: READ THE OVERVIEW ON ENGAGING OFFENDERS' FAMILIES IN REENTRY.**

This section of the Coaching Packet provides an overview of using a strength-based, family-focused approach to offender management and transition. Review its content and, if the information it contains is applicable to your grant work and addresses an area in which you feel you need to focus your efforts, use the tool in Section II to assess your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps with regard to implementing a strength-based, family-focused approach.

### **SECTION II: COMPLETE THE ENGAGING OFFENDERS' FAMILIES IN REENTRY COACHING PACKET CHECKLIST.**

As a team, complete the Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry Coaching Packet Checklist. (Based upon the information you read in Section I, consider who may need to be involved so

that you are able to answer the questions thoroughly.) Complete the checklist as a group and discuss your responses along the way.

- Rate each item listed in the checklist (yes, no, not clear).
- For items where your response is “not clear,” make note of the additional information the team needs to collect in order to be able to rate this item.
- Add additional items that may relate to your jurisdiction’s implementation of a strength-based, family-focused approach to offender management and transition that are not already included on the checklist.
- Develop a consensus-based response for each item on the checklist.
- Once the checklist is completed, consider your jurisdictions’ strengths in implementing such an approach. Make note of these.
- Next, consider your most significant gaps. Make note of these as well.

### **SECTION III: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN.**

If, after completing the checklist in Section II, your team determines that further work on this topic is necessary or would be helpful, follow the steps below to identify your goals, objectives, and action items, and identify any additional assistance or expertise needed.

Working as a team, review your findings from the Engaging Offenders’ Families in Reentry Coaching Packet Checklist. Specifically:

1. Determine whether, based upon what you have read and discussed, you desire to advance your jurisdiction’s work with regard to engaging offenders’ families in reentry.
2. If you determine you have a desire to improve in this area, write a goal statement that reflects where you want to be with regard to improving your current efforts. Your goal might be to “Establish or revise policies to support and encourage family visiting for offenders who are in institutional or residential facilities,” “Refine our current intake process to include an assessment of offenders’ family relationships,” “Develop a new training curriculum to ensure that parole officers are equipped to work closely with families as part of the supervision process,” or another goal. Using the Action Planning Worksheet in Section III, note your goal in the area of engaging families in reentry.
3. Identify your three most significant strengths in this area and discuss how you might build on those to overcome some of your gaps.
4. Identify your three most significant gaps. For each gap, write an objective. Your objectives might be, “To conduct a survey of incarcerated persons’ family members to determine ways to improve their experiences while visiting the facility,” or “To create an informational leaflet for families of incarcerated persons on the visitation process,” or something else. Note your three objectives on the Action Planning Worksheet.
5. Add the following on the Action Planning Worksheet for each objective:
  - a. The specific sequential steps that must be taken to meet the objective.
  - b. The individual who will assume lead responsibility for this action item.
  - c. The completion date for this action item.

6. Discuss whether additional assistance or outside expertise is needed to successfully achieve any of your action items. For instance, explore whether additional literature, guidance from another practitioner over the telephone, examples of work products from other jurisdictions, or on-site technical assistance would be helpful options.
  - a. For each action item, identify those for which assistance/expertise is needed.
  - b. Identify the type of assistance/expertise needed.
  - c. Prioritize each of these need areas. If assistance/expertise will be limited, for which action items is assistance most needed?
  - d. Begin exploring ways to secure the needed assistance/expertise.

### ***How to Seek Additional Information***

To download copies of the Coaching Packets, please visit the Center's website at <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>. To obtain further information on the use or content of this or any of the Coaching Packets, or on the 2007 PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program, please contact:

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## Section I: Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry

New research is emerging that demonstrates that strategies targeting stronger relationships between offenders and their families correlate with better offender outcomes. For this reason, corrections agencies and their partners are becoming increasingly interested in the role families can play in promoting successful reentry. This Coaching Packet addresses a key area in the formula for offender success: identifying and building upon offenders' pro-social supports from families and other social networks.

In the traditional sense, **family** is defined as "a blood or legal relative, someone with whom an offender parents a child, or a partner or guardian an offender lived with prior to incarceration, or with whom an offender plans to live with following release."

(Adapted from: Visher, La Vigne, & Travis, 2004, p. 107)

The term **family** can also be defined broadly to include a more expansive set of pro-social supports. For the purposes of this Coaching Packet, family is defined as immediate and extended family members, as well as neighbors, pastors, and other people within an offender's social network.

### *The Effects of Incarceration on Families*

Incarceration and involvement with the juvenile and criminal justice systems have become an all too common experience for an increasing number of families in the United States. Nationwide, more than 2.3 million people are in prison or jail<sup>2</sup> and about 5.1 million people are on probation or parole.<sup>3</sup> Every year, over 735,000 people are released from U.S. prisons,<sup>4</sup> and more than 12 million are released from jails.<sup>5</sup>

These numbers, however, do not capture the full impact of incarceration on families and neighborhoods. Families experience significant losses during a family member's incarceration, such as the loss of wage-earning household members, parenting partners, sources of emotional support, etc. These losses extend beyond the period of incarceration; for example, an ex-offender returning to a neighborhood from prison may be stigmatized due to their criminal justice involvement, and regarded as someone community members distrust or fear, impacting the offender's family standing in the community, leading to exclusion from neighborhood associations or economic activity. This type of stigma and ostracism can be imposed on a family by the neighborhood, and on an entire neighborhood or community by the larger society. As

<sup>2</sup> Sabol, West, & Cooper, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Glaze & Bonczar, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Sabol, West, & Cooper, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Beck, 2006.

the rate of incarceration increases in a community, businesses (i.e., potential employers) may choose to move somewhere else – as might families who feel that their neighborhood is no longer safe for their children.<sup>6</sup> These have obvious impacts on the fabric of neighborhoods and communities.

### **IMPACTS ON CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS**

The impact on children of parental involvement in the criminal justice system is also of great concern. More than 1.7 million American children have at least one incarcerated parent,<sup>7</sup> and it is estimated that more than 5 million children have a parent on probation or parole.<sup>8</sup> Children of offenders often grow up in difficult environments (e.g., poverty, drug abuse, family violence); having a parent in prison is yet one more challenge to overcome.<sup>9</sup> Mothers and fathers who are confined are greatly impaired and limited in their ability to effectively fill their roles as caregivers, providers, teachers, supporters, and role models.

Research on child development and the few studies that examine the effects of parental incarceration on children demonstrate that these children may suffer from trauma, anxiety, guilt, shame, sadness, and fear among other conditions.<sup>10</sup> However, these conditions may manifest themselves in different ways depending on the child's age. While younger children might withdraw emotionally or exhibit hostility toward their caregivers, school-aged children and adolescents may have difficulties in school or problems with peer relationships, or may act out in other negative ways (e.g., sexual misconduct, truancy, or substance abuse).<sup>11</sup>

### **DIFFICULTIES STAYING IN TOUCH WITH INCARCERATED FAMILY MEMBERS**

Supportive family relationships may be strained by the challenges of staying in touch with offenders during incarceration.<sup>12</sup> For example, in some jurisdictions, family members must travel significant distances, perhaps during work or school hours, to visit incarcerated offenders. Oftentimes security requirements are confusing and burdensome to families, especially those with small children. Additionally, visits take place in crowded areas and in conditions not conducive to positive parent-child interactions (e.g., no privacy, no physical touch allowed). Personal searches, waiting times, restricted visiting hours, and other aspects of visitation may serve as barriers to ongoing connections between offenders and their families. Another significant barrier is the expense of phone calls; family members accepting collect calls must accept higher-than-market rates per minute, even when their incarcerated family member is dialing locally, rather than long distance.<sup>13</sup> The impact of these challenges can be significant: studies have shown that 54% of mothers and 57% of fathers in state prisons were never visited by their children.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Clear, Rose & Ryder, 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Glaze & Maruschak, 2008; The Sentencing Project, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> Mumola, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Hairston, 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004; Hairston, 2007; Travis, McBride, & Solomon, 2003.

<sup>11</sup> Hairston, 2007; Travis, McBride & Solomon, 2003, pg. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Naser & Visher, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> For example, until 2007 family members of New York State prisoners had to pay 630% above the average consumer for a collect call (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Mumola, 2000.

## **IMPACTS ON THE FAMILY DURING REENTRY**

As difficult as the period of incarceration is on families, an offender's return home presents new challenges. Many families engaged in the transition process experience a sense of strain that results from the following conditions:

- ✓ Financial hardships from supporting an additional family member who may not be able to contribute to the household income.
- ✓ Relationship problems or interpersonal conflicts due to the offender's return to the household, such as dealing with the emotional concerns of a family member who may have been previously victimized by the offender, or strained relationships between the offender and children who may not understand why their parent was absent.
- ✓ Changes in the family dynamic upon the offender's return, such as new patterns of authority, or changes in the family composition since the offender went to prison.
- ✓ Feelings of anxiety, anger, frustration, disappointment, or resentment if the offender begins or returns to using drugs or alcohol, or to criminal behavior while living in the community.
- ✓ Taking on new responsibilities as a result of the offender's criminal justice status; for instance, family members may be expected to talk with parole officers, assist in monitoring whether the offender is following parole conditions, or install a home phone line for an electronic monitoring device.<sup>15</sup>

"In making the transition back into the community, former inmates turn to their spouses, parents, siblings, grandparents, and other family members for assistance. These family members become the 'front line' of reentry, providing former inmates with critical material and emotional support including shelter, food, clothing, leads for jobs, and guidance in staying sober or avoiding criminal behavior."

*Source: Hawaii House of Representative Bill 1 (2007).*

## ***Families as a Natural Resource for Enhancing Reentry Efforts***

Families of offenders can serve as critical partners to corrections and supervision agencies in a number of ways. Family members have an intimate knowledge and understanding of each other, and are frequently available to provide support or intervention at any hour, day or night. Family support does not cost money to access, unlike most programs and services. Also, family members usually share regional, ethnic, and family culture, which is not necessarily true of the agency or organizational staff that provide services or supervision.

## **INITIAL REENTRY OUTCOMES**

The literature demonstrates that families and social networks provide significant support to incarcerated and reentering offenders. Studies indicate the following:

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<sup>15</sup> Adapted from Naser & Visher, 2006.

- ✓ Families are the major provider of housing for offenders upon release, which is the most critical and immediate concern of offenders leaving prison.<sup>16</sup>
- ✓ Aside from employment, families are the most common source of financial support for offenders after release.<sup>17</sup>
- ✓ Many offenders use family members, relatives, or friends in order to secure a job following release.<sup>18</sup>
- ✓ Offenders rely heavily on family members for their transportation needs once they are living in the community.<sup>19</sup>
- ✓ In the vast majority of cases, family members – such as the non-incarcerated parent, grandparents, or other relatives – take over responsibilities for child rearing in the absence of the incarcerated parent.<sup>20</sup>
- ✓ Family members provide emotional support to offenders during a stressful transition in their lives.<sup>21</sup>
- ✓ Surveys of offenders in prison and in the community cite family support as important to keeping them from recidivating.<sup>22</sup>

**Adopting a “family-focused” approach is about changing policy and practice in ways that acknowledge that family members are key variables in the success or failure of offenders transitioning to the community from prison. To minimize the role offenders’ families play in reentry is a missed opportunity for increased public safety.**

## ***Research on Families and Family Support in Reentry Efforts***

While the research examining the impact of family relationships on reentry outcomes is still in its infancy, studies indicate that families are indeed important to offenders successfully achieving their goals, including reduced recidivism.

### **INTERMEDIATE REENTRY OUTCOMES**

Research demonstrates that family support can positively impact intermediate reentry outcomes, such as avoiding drug and alcohol abuse or finding employment.

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<sup>16</sup> La Vigne, Visher, and Castro (2004) found that on the first night in the community after leaving prison, 62% of offenders stay at a relative’s home. Other research studies similarly report that families often provide offenders with housing at some point following their release from prison: Nelson, Deess, & Allen, 1999; Sullivan et al., 2002; Naser & Visher, 2006.

<sup>17</sup> Visher, La Vigne, & Travis, 2004.

<sup>18</sup> More than 60% of respondents indicated that they talked to family members, relatives, and friends to find employment after release from prison (La Vigne, Visher, & Castro, 2004).

<sup>19</sup> Naser & Visher, 2006.

<sup>20</sup> 94% of children of incarcerated parents live with the other parent, a grandparent, or other relative; less than 3% live with a friend of the family, and 3% are cared for by foster parents or a government agency during their parent’s incarceration (Glaze & Maruschak, 2008).

<sup>21</sup> Naser & Visher, 2006.

<sup>22</sup> 58% of incarcerated respondents reported that family support was important in helping them avoid returning to prison, while 71% of respondents in the community noted family support as critical to recidivism (La Vigne, Visher, & Castro, 2004).

- ✓ Substance-addicted offenders and ex-offenders have better outcomes when their families are involved in helping them overcome their addiction; however, these families need to be provided with a range of support services to increase their capacity to address the needs of their addicted family member. After 6 months, a significantly greater percentage of adult participants in a program using these techniques stopped using drugs (36%), as compared to non-participants (5%).<sup>23</sup>
- ✓ In a survey of 400 males released from prison to communities in Chicago, Illinois, ex-offenders involved with an intimate partner (i.e., spouse or girlfriend) exhibited better post-incarceration employment outcomes: they were employed for more weeks on average than prisoners without a partner.<sup>24</sup>
- ✓ The simple perception of support can be a powerful motivator. The literature shows that offenders who *perceive* that they have close family relationships or family support – that their family will assist them with housing or financial support, or that their family accepts them – exhibit better employment and substance abuse outcomes.<sup>25</sup>

#### **LONG-TERM REENTRY OUTCOMES**

In addition to correlating with successful intermediate reentry outcomes, family relationships also play a role in keeping offenders from returning to crime. Research indicates that family support can positively influence young people under juvenile justice supervision as well as adults reentering their communities from prison.

- ✓ Perhaps the most consistent finding in the literature is that the more contact adult offenders have with their families while they are incarcerated (i.e., visitation, phone calls), the less likely they are to recidivate.<sup>26</sup>
- ✓ A study of a multiple-family group-intervention (MFGI) program for first-time juvenile offenders found that juveniles who completed the program were 9.3 times less likely to reoffend as compared to juveniles placed on traditional probation.<sup>27</sup>
- ✓ In a sample of returning prisoners to Chicago, positive family support (i.e., whether prisoners felt loved by, close to, and supported by family members) was associated with lower reconviction rates, while respondents who reported having negative family relationships were more likely to be reconvicted.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Services included family case management, crisis intervention, employment search assistance, and support groups among others (Sullivan et al., 2002).

<sup>24</sup> La Vigne, Visher, & Castro, 2004.

<sup>25</sup> See La Vigne, Visher, & Castro, 2004; Nelson, Deess, & Allen, 1999; Visher, Kachnowski, La Vigne & Travis, 2004.

<sup>26</sup> For reviews of this research, see Hairston, 2002; Naser & Visher, 2006.

<sup>27</sup> MFGI includes working with multiple families in a group context on dimensions such as communication, parental monitoring, and family cohesion in order for families to share and address their problems (Quinn & Van Dyke, 2004).

<sup>28</sup> Negative family relationships were defined as an ex-offender having a family member who had threatened or abused them prior to their incarceration (La Vigne, Visher, & Castro, 2004).

## **RESEARCH LIMITATIONS**

While these studies provide evidence that families and pro-social supports matter to offenders' successful transition, the full picture of exactly *how* families facilitate the reentry process is not yet known. The current research is limited in a number of ways. First, the studies conducted to date do not isolate the effects of families from other interventions provided to offenders. Since offenders often receive multiple transition services (e.g., case management, employment/vocational services, etc.) simultaneously, the precise role families and pro-social supports play in recidivism reduction and other reentry outcomes remains somewhat unclear. Secondly, much of the existing research draws on self-reported data (i.e., collected from surveys and/or interviews with offenders and family members) and therefore may not include fully accurate measures of experiences and behaviors.<sup>29</sup> Finally, most research on offender recidivism focuses on how ties with the family *during incarceration* affect future recidivism, while little is known about the experiences of offenders and their families during and following the transition to the community.<sup>30</sup> Additional research is needed to determine what specific aspects of family involvement during the reentry phase – particularly once offenders return home – produce better recidivism outcomes.

## ***Engaging Families as Part of an Evidence-Based Approach to Offender Reentry***

In 2004, the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), the Crime and Justice Institute, and others identified eight principles of evidence-based practice. Principle 6 explicitly addresses the engagement of families (as pro-social supports in offenders' "natural communities"). This principle supports the notion that positive outcomes – like reductions in violations and new crime behavior – are more likely to be achieved when offenders' significant others are engaged and when offenders have meaningful connections to the pro-social community. *Therefore, corrections professionals who develop skills in brokering the support of families are best equipped to support offenders' long-term behavioral change.*

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<sup>29</sup> That is, the data collected from self-report surveys may provide new or contradictory information to official data (e.g., a respondent can self-report committing a crime he or she was not arrested for) and it is possible that respondents (intentionally or unintentionally) over or underreport the amount of crime and substance abuse in which they were engaged (for more information, see La Vigne, Visher, & Castro, 2004, p. 2).

<sup>30</sup> See Naser & Visher, 2006.

### The Eight Principles of Evidence-Based Practice

1. Assess actuarial risk/needs.
2. Enhance intrinsic motivation.
3. Target Interventions.
  - a. *Risk Principle*: Prioritize supervision and treatment resources for higher risk offenders.
  - b. *Need Principle*: Target interventions to criminogenic needs.
  - c. *Responsivity Principle*: Be responsive to temperament, learning style, motivation, culture, and gender when assigning offenders to programs.
  - d. *Dosage*: Structure 40-70% of high-risk offenders' time for 3-9 months.
  - e. *Treatment*: Integrate treatment into sentence/sanction requirements.
4. Skill train with directed practice (use cognitive behavioral treatment methods).
5. Increase positive reinforcement.
- 6. Engage ongoing support in natural communities.**
7. Measure relevant processes/practices.
8. Provide measurement feedback.

Source: Bogue et al., 2004.

### The 6<sup>th</sup> Principle of Evidence-Based Practice: Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities

Pro-social, community-based networks (including family members) provide opportunities for offenders to strengthen their own pro-social skills by engaging with others who possess the attitudes and behaviors—and participate in the activities—that offenders will hopefully emulate.

Furthermore, family members and significant others (including employers, teachers, mentors, spiritual leaders, etc.) can best support offenders when they are aware of the work offenders are undertaking and the skills they are developing, and can support offenders as they practice these new skills in their natural environments.

Source: Implementing Evidence-Based Practices Coaching Packet

### Implementing a Strength-Based, Family-Focused Approach

As part of a strategy to engage family members in an overall evidence-based approach to reentry, a number of specific strength-based, family-focused policies and practices can be integrated into the offender management process by corrections and community supervision agencies and their partners.

## INCARCERATION PHASE

### *Offender and Family Assessment*

When offenders enter an institution, the assessment process should not only provide an opportunity for the agency to collect information on offenders' risk and criminogenic needs, but more comprehensive information about their families as well:

- ✓ Include assessment domains about family, pro-social supports, and offender strengths to develop an understanding of offenders' family lives (i.e., extent of likely parental support, identification of pro-social companions, etc.).
- ✓ Engage offenders through open-ended questioning techniques to gather more detailed information about their family life.

### *Offender Case Planning and Management*

Once an assessment is complete, it is critical that information about offenders' families support feeds into the development of case plans:

- ✓ Ensure that offenders' risk level guides the level and type of supervision and programming, as well as the extent of efforts to engage pro-social family members (i.e., target efforts at engaging families for those offenders identified as medium to high risk so that valuable time and resources are used where they have the greatest impact on recidivism).
- ✓ Consider information about offenders' family strengths in the development of a case plan and determine how family support/strengths can address offenders' criminogenic needs (e.g., anti-social associations, family conflict, anti-social values).

The Family Justice Program at Vera Institute of Justice teaches facility and community supervision staff to use its **Relational Inquiry Tool**, which can serve as a supplement to standard risk and needs assessment tools used with people who are involved in the criminal justice system.

Developed and piloted in Oklahoma, as well as three other state corrections departments, the Relational Inquiry Tool consists of carefully-crafted questions designed to gather information for case management purposes and build rapport between staff and individuals involved in the criminal justice system. The tool helps to identify the strengths in offenders' social networks and family relationships, particularly as they prepare to return home from prison or jail.

*For more information on this tool and how to use it, please visit:  
<http://www.vera.org/centers/family-justice-program>.*

Throughout their incarceration, facility staff can support increased family ties:

- ✓ Reinforce offenders' positive relationships with family members and other pro-social supports.
- ✓ Encourage offenders to call and/or write to family members and other members of their social network.
- ✓ Utilize letter-writing to family members as an exercise in literacy or other in-prison programming.

- ✓ Provide offenders with means to call their family members at rates that do not put an unnecessary financial burden on their families.

For offenders who are parents, case management staff might:

- ✓ Discuss with inmates their concerns regarding their children while they are incarcerated (e.g., how they might best deal with the separation from their children, how to make decisions regarding children's care and placement, how to maintain contact with them during incarceration).
- ✓ Provide offenders with legal services regarding child custody and/or the termination of parental rights proceedings (if applicable).<sup>31</sup>
- ✓ Inform inmates whose children are in foster care of the child welfare system's requirements (i.e., what must the parent do to cooperate with the system) and coordinate services for them (e.g., set up meetings between the incarcerated parent and child welfare professionals, arrange visits from their children).<sup>32</sup>

The **genogram** and the **ecomap** are tools that can also be helpful in the assessment and case planning processes.

- A **genogram** is a tool that goes beyond the typical family tree, recording strengths and challenges such as education, employment, criminal justice involvement, substance abuse, mental health issues, and chronic illness. It can be used to facilitate engagement with the offender and to record the history and current status of a given family.
- An **ecomap** illustrates the relationships between family members and the key people and institutions in their lives, which may include schools, houses of worship, employers, child welfare, etc. It depicts the nature of the relationships and can be particularly helpful as case managers are identifying sources of support for reentering offenders.

*For more information about these tools and how to use them, please visit:  
<http://www.vera.org/centers/family-justice-program>.*

### *Family Visitation in Prison*

Allowing family visitation in prison is critical to maintaining family ties while offenders are incarcerated. Correctional facilities staff might assist offenders in maintaining contact with their families in the following ways:

Develop agency policy that recognizes and supports a family-focused approach:

- ✓ Build visitation into the incarcerated individual's regular routine.
- ✓ Refrain from using contact with families as leverage or consequences for misconduct.

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<sup>31</sup> In some states parental rights can be terminated if the parent is incarcerated or fails to keep in regular contact with their children (see Travis, McBride, & Solomon, 2003).

<sup>32</sup> See Hairston & Hess, no date.

- ✓ Employ staff in the reception and visitation areas based on their skills in interacting with families.
- ✓ Offer visitation hours outside of regular working hours to facilitate family schedules.
- ✓ Allow and encourage inmates who are parents to visit with their children as frequently as possible (e.g., weekly or bi-weekly visits).<sup>33</sup>
- ✓ Create a visiting environment that is welcoming to children and families (e.g., provide games and activities for children of different ages, allow inmates to have physical contact with children, when appropriate).<sup>34</sup>

Keep family members informed of policies and events:

- ✓ Send information to families with the most up-to-date visitation policies and procedures.
- ✓ Maintain a staffed hotline or call center for families who have questions about the visitation process or family events.
- ✓ Assign case managers to be present to meet families during visitation and answer their questions.

Provide incentives for families to stay engaged in offenders' lives:

- ✓ Host formal and informal events to encourage families to visit the facility (e.g., graduations, holiday parties).
- ✓ Provide or help to assure that transportation is available for families.
- ✓ Offer the use of video-teleconferencing for long-distance visitation and parent-teacher conferences.

**Exhibit 1:  
Challenges to Staying in Contact with Inmates**

The following are reported by family members as challenges they faced in staying in contact with a family member who was serving time in prison (N=247):

Facility was too far away	75%
Cost of making or receiving phone calls	52%
Cost of visiting	38%
Prison environment is unpleasant	36%
No transportation	34%
Could not miss work	32%
Visitation schedule	26%

*Source: Naser & Visher, 2006.*

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

## **TRANSITION PHASE**

As part of a sound case management process, prison and community supervision staff and their partners should share important information about offenders before they are released into the community. To assist with the transition process while offenders are still incarcerated:

- ✓ Develop partnerships to ensure that strategies for continuity-of-care are in place before offenders are released (e.g., ensure that all necessary partners receive timely and pertinent information about offenders and their families).
- ✓ Notify family members of the expected release date to allow them sufficient time to prepare.
- ✓ Meet with incarcerated individuals pre-release to conduct additional assessments that capture current family strengths and social supports.
- ✓ Begin release planning early in this phase, incorporating offenders' families into the planning process by inviting them to participate in case conferences or in creating offenders' parole release or transition plans.
- ✓ Offer classes or resources for the families of offenders (including the non-incarcerated caregiver to any children) to help prepare them for the changes that will occur when the offender returns to the community.
- ✓ Prepare offenders who are parents for reunifying with their children and taking over parental responsibilities once again (e.g., provide parenting classes to inmates prior to release, offer information on how to deal with court ordered child support payments when they return to the community).

### **Exhibit 2: Reported Needs of Families of Offenders**

When surveyed about what services could help the family once an offender returns home from prison, family members report that simply providing more services to the offenders themselves is the best way to support the family.

Finding employment or job training	43%
Financial assistance	16%
Counseling for the offender and the family	11%
Finding appropriate housing	10%
Treatment for drugs or alcohol	9%
Healthcare services	9%

*Source: Naser & Visher, 2006.*

## **COMMUNITY PHASE**

Once offenders are released to community supervision, staff can:

- ✓ Ensure that offenders' risk level guides the level and type of supervision and programming in the community, as well as the level of effort to engage pro-social family members (i.e., target efforts at engaging families for medium to high risk offenders).
- ✓ Review offender case plans and assessment domains about current family strengths and social supports (or conduct a reassessment if not current) to determine how family support/strengths might assist in addressing offenders' criminogenic needs (e.g., anti-social associations, family conflict, anti-social values).
- ✓ Use open-ended interviewing techniques with offenders and their families to gather more detailed information about their current family life.
- ✓ Identify sources of support (e.g., using mapping tools such as genograms and ecomaps) to strengthen offenders' case plans.
- ✓ Conduct orientation sessions for offenders and their families emphasizing the importance of family support to successful reentry, answer questions, and address any concerns (e.g., explain what it means for their family member to be under community supervision).
- ✓ Create strength-based goals with offenders and their family members noting how offenders – with their family's help – will achieve their goals.
- ✓ Reinforce offenders' positive relationships with family members and other pro-social supports.
- ✓ Encourage offenders to include supportive family members in meetings with parole officers, including during home visits.
- ✓ Offer to conduct reporting meetings at offenders' homes or in neutral public places (e.g., community center, park, café) to encourage family participation.
- ✓ Familiarize themselves with offenders' families' strengths and challenges in order to address conflicts and/or duplication of services, and to make appropriate referrals for offenders' family members to other human service agencies.

## **ADDITIONAL AGENCY-LEVEL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

In addition to the recommendations specific to the three phases of reentry, correctional facilities, community supervision agencies, and their partners might consider implementing other policy changes to further their efforts in engaging families in the reentry process:

- ✓ Collaborate with community-based organizations and other agencies who offer services that might be of benefit to both offenders and their families (e.g., increase communication between corrections and child-support agencies to better support offender-child reunification).
- ✓ Design parole offices – and prison visitation rooms – to create the most family-friendly environment possible.
- ✓ Develop an informational pamphlet for families that explains how they are a partner in the reentry process.

- ✓ Codify in policy the desire for staff to interact with offenders in positive ways and encourage family relationships.<sup>35</sup>
- ✓ Assure that training academy curricula and in-service training include skills training on how to implement a strength-based, family-focused approach (e.g., provide training on the assessment tools to be used).
- ✓ Assure that hiring decisions, promotions, and performance evaluations incorporate the skills needed for a strength-based, family-focused approach.
- ✓ Ensure that supervisors model positive behavior regarding family interactions.
- ✓ Track progress in implementing a family-focused approach by collecting data and measuring 1) family involvement over time (e.g., offenders receiving family visits during incarceration, extent of family involvement in home visits with offenders), and 2) implementation progress (e.g., staff use of family mapping tools, staff incorporation of social supports in case plans).

While changing policy and practice to a more family-focused approach might be challenging, incorporating families as part of an offender reentry strategy is one more step towards achieving family success and increased public safety.

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<sup>35</sup> For more information on effective interactions with offenders, see the Coaching Packet on Shaping Offender Behavior.

### **Examples of Efforts to Engage Families in Reentry**

In **Connecticut**, Families in Crisis offers families of incarcerated individuals a number of services including visitation assistance, counseling for families, and fatherhood classes and support services. The Family Ties program offers a range of services to children, their non-incarcerated caregivers and incarcerated parent including counseling, parent education, and case management services. Children are specifically engaged through weekly peer support groups focused on their emotional and social health, ongoing educational support, and organized recreational activities.

*Sources: Correspondence with Susan Quinlan, Families in Crisis Executive Director, January 6, 2010, and <http://www.familiesincrisis.org/fic-services>.*

At Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility, located outside of Grand Rapids, **Michigan**, staff conduct family reunification sessions before men leave prison. As part of these sessions, staff from both the correctional facility and community organizations talk with the offender and his family about the transition process. If the family is interested, these conversations can continue in the community with a partnering organization's staff person.

*Source: Vera Institute of Justice. For more, see MPRI Action Brief available at: <http://www.michpri.com/uploads/Housing/HousingAction.pdf>.*

In 2000, The **New York City** Administration for Children's Services (ACS) collaborated with The New York City Department of Correction to offer the ACS/Children of Incarcerated Parents Program (CHIPP). CHIPP was created to provide services and resources to children, families, and professionals in both the child welfare and criminal justice systems. One of the main objectives of CHIPP is to maintain and nurture the parent-child bond during the parent's incarceration. This is done by facilitating family visits and case conferences. One specific aspect of the program is the Rikers Island Visiting Program, which facilitates bi-weekly visits between mothers and fathers and their children to assist them in maintaining contact and planning for permanent custody.

*Source: Correspondence with Paula Y. Fendall, CHIPP Director, January 6, 2010.*

The **Ohio** Department of Rehabilitation and Correction instituted a program to support incarcerated fathers and children at three prisons. The fathers, parenting partners, and children are offered programming that includes educational and experiential activities, and allows families to spend time together. Transportation to the institution is provided at least twice a month to facilitate participation. During the pre-release program, community organizations assist families in identifying and accessing resources, and offer ongoing family-focused programming following release.

*Source: Vera Institute of Justice.*

## Section II: Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry Coaching Packet Checklist

Engaging Families	YES	NO	NOT CLEAR	NOTES
1. During the assessment process, are offenders' family strengths and other pro-social supports identified?				
2. Are efforts at engaging families targeted to offenders identified as medium to high risk?				
3. During case planning, are the ways in which family support/strengths might assist in addressing offenders' criminogenic needs considered?				
4. Are offenders' efforts to build or sustain relationships with family members – including their children if applicable – and other pro-social supports positively reinforced?				
5. Does agency policy on prison visitation recognize and support a family-focused approach?				
6. Are family members regularly informed of relevant agency policies and family events?				
7. Are incentives provided to families to encourage participation in offenders' lives while incarcerated?				
8. Do institutional and community supervision staff discuss with offenders who are parents their concerns about their children – and provide them with information where necessary?				
9. Do prison and community supervision staff share information about offenders and their families prior to release?				
10. Do prison and community supervision staff involve other human service agencies and community organizations in planning for release?				
11. Are the necessary family members involved in the creation of offenders' transition plans?				
12. Do community supervision staff see family members as partners in the reentry process (e.g., keep in regular touch with them, engage them in meetings with offenders)?				
13. Are community supervision staff knowledgeable about the families of offenders on their caseloads, particularly how their strengths might assist in addressing offenders' criminogenic needs?				
14. Are community supervision staff knowledgeable about the other social services that families are (or should be) receiving?				
15. Is policy designed to allow staff adequate time to interact with offenders in ways that encourage building staff-family rapport?				
16. Do academy and in-service trainings focus on the importance of families and pro-social supports to successful reentry?				
17. Do hiring decisions, promotions, and performance evaluations reflect the skills necessary to engage in a family-focused approach?				
18. Are data collected to determine the extent of family engagement (e.g., family visits, phone calls)?				
19. Are these outcome measures tracked to see if family engagement is increasing over time?				

## Section III: Action Planning Worksheet

<b>GOAL:</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 2:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 3:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

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# COACHING PACKET

## Implementing Evidence-Based Practices

Revised, January 2010

One in a series of Coaching Packets designed  
to assist jurisdictions in the implementation  
of effective practices that will support  
successful offender outcomes

Authors: Frank Domurad, The Carey Group  
*and* Mark Carey, The Carey Group

Editor: Madeline M. Carter, Center for Effective Public Policy

2009



### ***Coaching Packet Series 1: Creating a Blueprint for an Effective Offender Reentry System***

- A Framework for Offender Reentry
- Establishing a Rational Planning Process
- Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### ***Coaching Packet Series 2: Delivering Evidence-Based Services***

- Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
- Effective Case Management
- Shaping Offender Behavior
- Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry
- Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring
- Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

### ***Coaching Packet Series 3: Ensuring Meaningful Outcomes***

- Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts
- Continuous Quality Improvement



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## Introduction to the Coaching Packet Series

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) and its partners, The Urban Institute and The Carey Group, were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to the Fiscal Year 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees (hereafter “PRI grantees”). The project team served in this capacity from April 2008 to June 2010.

The Center is a nonprofit criminal justice consulting organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since the early 1980s, the Center has provided training and technical assistance to the criminal justice field on a wide array of topics, including transition and reentry, and has administered a number of national projects of this kind. The Urban Institute was established as a private, nonprofit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1968 and is a leader in prisoner reentry research, focusing on making best practice information accessible to practitioners and policymakers. The Carey Group is a justice consulting firm with extensive practitioner experience in evidence-based practices, strategic planning, community and restorative justice and corrections.

As a part of its technical assistance delivery to the PRI grantees, the Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work. The final products of this work include eleven Coaching Packets in three series. These Coaching Packets offer practical value beyond the jurisdictions involved in this initiative and are available to criminal justice professionals and their partners interested in enhancing their strategies for reducing recidivism and improving offender outcomes.

Each Coaching Packet provides an overview of a specific topic as it relates to successful offender reentry, and offers tools and resources for those interested in exploring the topic in greater depth.

- *Series 1* provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system. This series provides a conceptual framework for addressing prisoner reentry at the policy level; outlines a strategic planning process to support implementation efforts; and explores the establishment of successful collaborative partnerships at the policy and case management levels.
- *Series 2* addresses key issues related to the delivery of evidence-based services to offenders. This series summarizes the key literature with regard to implementing evidence-based practices; explores advances in approaches to case management; addresses the important role of staff in changing offender behavior; and summarizes research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- *Series 3* provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes. This series describes methods to assess the effectiveness of reentry efforts and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

## FY 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Grantees

The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) – intended to support the development and implementation of institutional and community corrections-based reentry programs to help returning offenders find employment and provide other critical services – is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grants were awarded to state and local corrections agencies by DOJ to provide pre-release and transition services to offenders and were “matched” by DOL grants to faith- and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to provide post-release services, focusing on employment assistance and mentoring.

Thirty-five states received grants in three cycles of the Initiative during Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 23 FY 2007 PRI grantees received assistance under this project. FY 2007 grants were awarded in the fall of 2007 and implemented from 2008 to 2010; however, some grantees will not complete their activities until 2011. The FY 2007 grantees provided technical assistance under this project included:

- ✓ ALASKA, Native Justice Center
- ✓ ARIZONA, Criminal Justice Commission/ Yuma County Sheriff's Office
- ✓ CALIFORNIA, Department of Community Services and Development
- ✓ COLORADO, Division of Criminal Justice Services/City of Denver
- ✓ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Government
- ✓ FLORIDA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ HAWAII, Department of Public Safety
- ✓ INDIANA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ IOWA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ KANSAS, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MAINE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MICHIGAN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MINNESOTA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEVADA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEW JERSEY, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NORTH CAROLINA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ OHIO, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- ✓ PENNSYLVANIA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ RHODE ISLAND, Department of Corrections
- ✓ TENNESSEE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ VIRGINIA, Department of Criminal Justice Services
- ✓ WISCONSIN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ WYOMING, Department of Corrections

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<sup>1</sup> The PRI program will end when the FY 2008 grantees complete their activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

Becki Ney, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program Project Director. Ms. Ney conceptualized and oversaw the development of the Coaching Packet series.

Madeline M. Carter, Principal, and Rachelle Giguere, Program Associate, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the key editors for the Coaching Packet series. Ms. Giguere also provided extensive research support to the development of the series.

# **Introduction to the Implementing Evidence-Based Practices Coaching Packet**

## ***The Contents of this Packet***

This Coaching Packet provides:

- A review of some of the key literature regarding evidence-based practices in corrections;
- Examples of the application of this research to every day correctional practice;
- A tool to determine your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps in the area of implementing evidence-based practice;
- An aid to developing plans to address identified gap areas; and
- References to additional resources on this topic.

## ***The Intended Audience for this Packet***

This Coaching Packet was originally developed to assist grant teams that were established to manage local PRI initiatives. The teams were composed of representatives from institutional and community corrections and faith-based or community organizations involved in the delivery of pre- and post-release services to offenders transitioning from prison to the community. The content of these Coaching Packets has much broader application, however; the information and tools contained within this Coaching Packet can also be used by teams of criminal justice professionals and their partners to assess the status of their efforts in implementing evidence-based practices and effective reentry services to offenders.

This Coaching Packet may also serve as a resource for professionals at all levels who are interested in learning more about this topic.

## ***How to Use this Packet***

### **SECTION I: READ THE OVERVIEW ON IMPLEMENTING EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES.**

This section of the Coaching Packet provides an overview on the implementation of evidence-based practices (EBP). Review its content and, if the information it contains is applicable to your work and addresses an area in which you feel you need to focus your efforts, use the tool in Section II to assess your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps with regard to the effective implementation of EBP.

### **SECTION II: COMPLETE THE IMPLEMENTING EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES COACHING PACKET CHECKLIST.**

As a team, complete the Implementing Evidence-Based Practices Coaching Packet Checklist. (Based upon the information you read in Section I, consider who may need to be involved so that you are able to answer the questions thoroughly.) Complete the checklist as a group and discuss your responses along the way.

- Rate each item listed in the checklist (yes, no, unclear).

- For items where your response is “unclear,” make note of the additional information the team needs to collect in order to be able to rate this item.
- Add additional items that may relate to your jurisdiction’s implementation of evidence-based practices that are not already included on the checklist.
- Develop a consensus-based response for each item on the checklist.
- Once the checklist is completed, consider your jurisdictions’ strengths in the area of implementing evidence-based practices. Make note of these.
- Next, consider your most significant gaps. Make note of these as well.

### **SECTION III: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN.**

If, after completing the checklist in Section II, your team determines that further work on this topic is necessary or would be helpful, follow the steps below to identify your goals, objectives, and action items, and identify any addition assistance or expertise needed.

Working as a team, review your findings from the Implementing Evidence-Based Practices Coaching Packet Checklist. Specifically:

1. Determine whether, based upon what you have read and discussed, you desire to improve your jurisdiction’s approach to the implementation of evidence-based practices.
2. If you determine you have a need to improve in the area of implementing evidence-based practices, write a goal statement that reflects where you want to be with regard to adopting or advancing evidence-based practices. Your goal might be to “Implement an empirically-supported assessment instrument,” “Assess correctional programs to determine the extent to which they align with evidence-based practices,” or another goal. Using the Action Planning Worksheet in Section III, note your goal in the area of implementing evidence-based practices.
3. Identify your three most significant strengths in this area and discuss how you might build on those to overcome some of your gaps.
4. Identify your three most significant gaps. For each gap, write an objective. Your objectives might be, “To establish a cross-jurisdictional team to ensure that consistent assessment instruments are used and uniformly applied to case management activities,” or “To develop policy and accompanying procedures to ensure that the top 3-4 criminogenic needs are addressed in programming and supervision services,” or “To establish a quality assurance program to ensure the integrity of the assessment and case management planning processes,” or something else. Note your three objectives on the Action Planning Worksheet.
5. Add the following on the Action Planning Worksheet for each objective:
  - a. The specific sequential steps that must be taken to meet the objective.
  - b. The individual who will assume lead responsibility for this action item.
  - c. The completion date for this action item.
6. Discuss whether additional assistance or outside expertise is needed to successfully achieve any of your action items. For instance, explore whether additional literature, guidance from

another practitioner over the telephone, examples of work products from other jurisdictions, or on-site technical assistance would be helpful options.

- a. For each action item, identify those for which assistance/expertise is needed.
- b. Identify the type of assistance/expertise needed.
- c. Prioritize each of these need areas. If assistance/expertise will be limited, for which action items is assistance most needed?
- d. Begin exploring ways to secure the needed assistance/expertise.

### ***How to Seek Additional Information***

To download copies of the Coaching Packets, please visit the Center's website at <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>. To obtain further information on the use or content of this or any of the Coaching Packets, or on the 2007 PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program, please contact:

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## Section I: An Overview of Evidence-Based Practices

Governments around the world are moving to align their programs and services with what is known as Evidence-Based Policy and Practices (EBP). Starting in the medical profession two decades ago, EBP asserts that public policy and practice must be based on the best available scientific evidence in order to be effective in the achievement of its goals and to be efficient in the use of taxpayers' dollars. Failure to match services to rigorous evidentiary standards not only wastes precious public resources but can even lead to an exacerbation rather than improvement of the problems and issues that government is attempting to address.

### *The Rationale for Adopting Evidence-Based Approaches in Correctional Practice*

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 67% of individuals released from prison are rearrested within three years of discharge. An estimated 30% of probationers supervised in the community are reconvicted for a new crime. Despite changes in laws, sentencing practices, and intervention approaches, these recidivism rates have remained relatively stable for decades.<sup>2</sup>

However, research over the past two decades demonstrates that a 30% reduction in recidivism is possible<sup>3</sup> if current knowledge – “evidence-based practices” – is applied with fidelity. No longer is the challenge understanding *what we need to do* to positively influence offender behavior; instead, the challenge is *doing it*. Practically speaking, adopting an evidence-based practices approach means restructuring the way in which we do business – in our jails and prisons, in probation and parole, and among judges, prosecutors, and others – so that organizational structures and cultures enable rather than hinder the implementation of programs and services that are known to work in reducing criminal behavior.

#### Defining Key Terms

**Evidence-Based Knowledge:** Conclusions drawn from rigorous research studies that have been replicated numerous times with defined, measurable outcomes about the effectiveness of an intervention or process.

**Evidence-Based Practices:** The application of empirical research to professional practice.

**Evidence-Based Principles:** The eight “principles” of evidence-based practices that have been derived from the research on risk reduction.

#### SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH.

The evidence from the research over the last two decades is clear and compelling regarding recidivism reduction. While there are hundreds of studies relevant to effective offender reentry, the research conclusions listed in Exhibit 1, *Core EBP Findings*, are perhaps among the most clear and fundamental to the work performed by corrections professionals and their partners aimed at reducing the likelihood that offenders released from prison will reoffend in the future.

<sup>2</sup> Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Hughes & Wilson, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> See Andrews & Bonta, 1998.

**Exhibit 1: CORE EBP FINDINGS**

<b>Finding</b>	<b>Examples of Implications for Reentry</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Services should be targeted to those offenders who are assessed at medium or high risk to reoffend. Offenders who are at low risk to reoffend are unlikely to benefit from a correctional intervention designed to change their behavior. (Andrews, 2007; Andrews &amp; Bonta, 2007; Andrews, Bonta, &amp; Wormith, 2006; Andrews &amp; Dowden, 2007; Andrews, Dowden, &amp; Gendreau, 1999; Bonta, 2007; Dowden, 1998; Gendreau, Goggin, &amp; Little, 1996; Lipsey &amp; Cullen, 2007)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Assess the risk level of offenders to determine who (i.e., medium and high risk) should get services and the length and intensity of those services.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Low risk offenders tend to recidivate at higher rates when services/interventions are over-delivered. (Andrews &amp; Bonta, 2007; Cullen &amp; Gendreau, 2000; Gendreau, Goggin, Cullen, &amp; Andrews, 2001; Lowenkamp &amp; Latessa, 2004; Lowenkamp, Latessa, &amp; Holsinger, 2006)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Give the low risk offender stabilization services (e.g., housing, medical, transportation) rather than those that target behavioral change.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Offenders who are at extremely high risk might be able to benefit from an intervention; however, the length of time and intensity of the intervention will likely exceed the resource capacity of most agencies. (Skeem, 2008; Skeem, Polascheck, &amp; Manchak, 2009; Stewart &amp; Smith, 2007; Wojciechowski, 2002)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Target interventions to medium and high (rather than low and extremely high) risk offenders.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Empirically-based assessment tools provide a more accurate statistical probability of reoffense than professional judgment alone. (Andrews &amp; Bonta, 1998; Andrews et al., 1990; Gendreau et al., 1996; Grove et al., 2000; Grove &amp; Meehl, 1996)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Administer an empirically-based risk assessment tool.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Risk of recidivism is greatly reduced when attention is paid to criminogenic needs (dynamic risk factors) such as antisocial attitudes, beliefs and values, antisocial peers, and certain personality and temperamental factors. There is a clear association between the number of criminogenic needs targeted and reduced recidivism; the higher the number of needs targeted, the lower the rate of recidivism. (Andrews, 2007; Andrews et al., 1990)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Use assessment instruments to identify criminogenic needs.</li> <li>➤ Train staff to understand criminogenic needs and how to effectively address these in case management planning.</li> <li>➤ Have available programs and services to address the full range of criminogenic needs.</li> <li>➤ Direct, through policy, that staff address the top three (or more) criminogenic needs in case management planning.</li> <li>➤ Match offenders' programming and services to their assessed criminogenic needs.</li> </ul>

**Exhibit 1: CORE EBP FINDINGS**

<b>Finding</b>	<b>Examples of Implications for Reentry</b>
➤ The most impactful programs aimed at changing criminal behavior and reducing recidivism are cognitive-behavioral and behavioral interventions. (Andrews, 2007; Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006; Landenberger & Lipsey, 2005; Lipsey & Landenberger, 2006; Lipsey, Landenberger, & Wilson, 2007)	➤ Have available cognitive behavioral programs for the medium and high risk offenders.
➤ The use of incentives can be a powerful tool to enhance individual motivation in meeting case plan goals and for promoting positive behavioral change. (Andrews and Bonta, 2006; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; Drake & Barnoski, 2008; Latessa, Cullen, & Gendreau, 2002; National Research Council, 2007; Petersilia, 2007; Petersilia, 2004; Taxman, Soule, & Gelb, 1999)	➤ Develop policies around rewards that staff can use to encourage pro-social behavior (such as letters of affirmation, reduced reporting requirements, bus passes, and early termination).
➤ Graduated sanctions (i.e., sanctions that increase in severity based on the nature or number of violations) decrease recidivism. (Andrews & Janes, 2006; Burke, 2004; Harrell et al., 2003; Hay, 2001; Taxman, Soule, & Gelb, 1999; Taylor & Martin, 2006)	➤ Develop a violation decision-making guideline that takes into account the risk of the offender and the severity of the violation behavior.
➤ The quality of the interpersonal relationship between staff and the offender, along with the skills of staff, may be as or more important to risk reduction than the specific programs in which offenders participate. (Andrews, 2007; Andrews, 1980; Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Andrews & Carvell, 1998; Dowden & Andrews, 2004)	➤ Train staff in core correctional practices that include relationship building and skill practice with offenders.
➤ Risk of recidivism is highest in the initial weeks and months following release from prison; recidivism rates stabilize in years two and three. (National Resource Council, 2007)	➤ Front load supervision and support services for reentering offenders, providing more intensive services initially, and then diminishing the intensity over time as offenders' behavior dictates.

## **Key Research Findings: The Principles of Evidence-Based Practice**

In 2003, the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), in collaboration with the Crime and Justice Institute, assembled leading scholars and practitioners from the fields of criminal justice and corrections to define the core elements of EBP based upon the “what works” research.<sup>4</sup> They identified eight evidence-based principles for effectively intervening with offenders. These eight principles serve as the foundation for agencies interested in grounding policy and practice in the principles of effective intervention in order to reduce recidivism among the offender population.

### **Eight Evidence-Based Principles for Effective Interventions**

1. Assess actuarial risk/needs.
2. Enhance intrinsic motivation.
3. Target Interventions.
  - a. *Risk Principle*: Prioritize supervision and treatment resources for higher risk offenders.
  - b. *Need Principle*: Target interventions to criminogenic needs.
  - c. *Responsivity Principle*: Be responsive to temperament, learning style, motivation, culture, and gender when assigning offenders to programs.
  - d. *Dosage*: Structure 40-70% of high-risk offenders’ time for 3-9 months.
  - e. *Treatment*: Integrate treatment into sentence/sanction requirements.
4. Skill train with directed practice (use cognitive behavioral treatment methods).
5. Increase positive reinforcement.
6. Engage ongoing support in natural communities.
7. Measure relevant processes/practices.
8. Provide measurement feedback.

#### **1. ASSESS ACTUARIAL RISK/NEEDS.**

Research demonstrates that aligning level of intervention with the level of risk produces the best outcomes (as defined by the greatest risk reduction). Empirically-based, actuarial instruments enable professionals to assess the level of risk an individual offender is likely to pose. While these instruments cannot determine any one individual’s risk level with absolute certainty, they can – like the actuarial tools used to determine that a 17 year old boy is more likely to get into a traffic accident than a 40 year old woman – identify the outcome of large groups of individuals with similar characteristics. Actuarial instruments assess both static (unchangeable, historical) risk factors and dynamic (changeable) risk factors. Because these instruments measure factors that change over time, they should be re-administered on a periodic basis (e.g., every six months).

<sup>4</sup> See Bogue et al., 2004.

#### **Common Historical Risk Factors (Static Risk Factors)**

- Age at first arrest
- Current age
- Gender
- Criminal history

#### **Common Criminogenic Needs (Dynamic Risk Factors)**

- Anti-social attitudes, cognitions
- Anti-social associates, peers
- Anti-social behavior
- Family, marital stressors
- Substance abuse
- Lack of employment stability, achievement
- Lack of educational achievement
- Lack of pro-social leisure activities

## **2. ENHANCE INTRINSIC MOTIVATION.**

Motivation can be externally or internally driven. Many offenders become motivated to take action in order to avoid the penalties the justice system might impose. Or, their illegal acts may be causing other negative consequences such as marital conflict or financial loss, which provide at least momentary motivation to change. In addition, the coercive power of the court and the threat of loss of liberty can be very effective initial incentives for offender cooperation. However, for the offender to stay motivated and to truly embrace behavior change over time, something more powerful than external motivators is necessary.

Research demonstrates that motivation can be influenced by corrections professionals' interactions with offenders.<sup>5</sup> Effective interactions are supported by genuine traits such as warmth and effective use of authority; and techniques such as rolling with resistance, developing discrepancy, and supporting self-efficacy. Staff trained in these relationship skills and interviewing techniques are more likely to glean more information from offenders and assist offenders in marshaling the internal motivation that is at the core of long-lasting change.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Castonguay & Beutler, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> See Ginsberg et al., 2002; Harper & Hardy, 2000; Miller & Mount, 2001; Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000.

**Level of Service Inventory-Revised:  
Percent Chance of Recidivism within One Year**

LSI Total Score (Raw Score)	Percent Chance of Recidivism
0 to 5	9%
6 to 10	20%
11 to 15	25%
16 to 20	30%
21 to 25	40%
26 to 30	43%
31 to 35	50%
36 to 40	53%
41 to 45	58%
46 to 50	69%
50 to 54	<70%

Source: Andrews, D.A. & Bonta, J.L. (2003). *The Level of Service Inventory-Revised. U.S. Norms Manual Supplement*. Toronto: Multi-Health Systems.

This table illustrates the predictive strength of an empirically-based risk assessment instrument, the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R). This instrument is one example of many that are available to assess risk for recidivism.

### 3. TARGET INTERVENTIONS.

The following considerations should influence the determination of the proper intervention for an individual offender, whether while incarcerated, at the point of transition and reentry, or following release.

**A. Risk.** Target supervision and case management services based upon risk level. Reserve high intensity programs, services, supervision and surveillance techniques for those assessed as high risk. These interventions might include frequent urinalysis, frequent field and office visits, electronic monitoring, GPS, and/or curfew. Lower risk offenders are more likely to succeed with less intensive supervision. However, while they may need less intensive intervention and less frequent contact, they are likely to need assistance with stabilization services such as housing, medication, and transportation.

**B. Need.** Target behavioral-change strategies based on assessed criminogenic needs. Higher risk offenders are likely to have multiple risk factors; they are also likely to have elevated scores on the most influential risk factors (i.e., anti-social thinking, emotional regulation/anti-social personality, anti-social peers, and family conflict). Interventions should be individualized by basing program and other intervention choices on the results of the risk/needs assessment.

#### **Common Risk/Needs Assessment Instruments**

- Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R)
- Violence Risk Appraisal Guide (VRAG)
- Wisconsin Risk and Needs
- Historical, Clinical, and Risk Management Factors (HCR-20)
- Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS)

**C. Responsivity.** Match interventions to the characteristics of individual offenders. Offenders have a wide variety of individual traits (mental health condition, gender, cultural background, level of motivation, learning style, intelligence level) that must be considered when selecting the intervention that is most likely to achieve their intended outcomes. Program interventions that fail to address these traits can hinder successful programming.<sup>7</sup> In addition, research demonstrates that the style of the professional and the match between offender and practitioner influences outcome.

**D. Dosage.** As a general rule, medium risk offenders should receive a total of 100 hours of intervention over the course of a 3-9 month period of time, while higher risk offenders need 200-300 hours over 6-12 months.<sup>8</sup> Intervention hours are typically accumulated through participation in structured treatment programs; however, time spent between offenders and other professionals (e.g., supervision officers, reentry managers, etc.) that is focused on criminogenic needs also contribute to fulfilling dosage requirements. In addition, higher risk offenders require significantly more structure than lower risk offenders, at least until the higher risk offenders begin to internalize motivation and pro-social behaviors. For higher risk offenders, structure 40 to 70% of offenders' free time in the community over a three to a nine month period. This structure can consist of a cluster of activities that both limit the offender's ability to engage in unlawful acts and maximize exposure to pro-social influences. For example, these activities might include structured recreation, parole

<sup>7</sup> Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000.

<sup>8</sup> Bourgon & Armstrong, 2005.

supervision, meeting with a mentor, participating in treatment, attending AA, going to work, or participating in tutoring services.

**E. Treatment.** Provide appropriate services based on risk, need, and responsibility considerations. Given the diversity of criminogenic needs, many forms of interventions need to be available (e.g., employment assistance, substance abuse programming, mentoring services). However, the most effective form of programming for most medium and high risk offenders is cognitive-behavioral. Cognitive-behavioral programs address anti-social thinking patterns, build problem solving skills, and apply behavioral techniques that equip the offender with new thinking and skills through repetition and increasingly difficult practice sessions. Case management plans should indicate the criminogenic needs being addressed, and the interventions and services selected to specifically address them. Lower risk offenders can also benefit from services, but these should be delivered at lower doses and may focus more heavily on stabilization factors than criminogenic needs.

#### **4. SKILL TRAIN WITH DIRECTED PRACTICE.**

Ensure that the staff delivering programming and those providing supervision are trained in the skills that can influence behavior change. All staff should understand social learning theory<sup>9</sup> and have skills in effective communication techniques. Offenders who participate in treatment need other professionals (corrections officers, probation/parole officers, mentors) to support and encourage the development of their new skills. And for those offenders unable to participate in programs due to capacity limits, geographic concerns or financial constraints, the ability of the professionals with whom those offenders interact is even more important. Even in the absence of cognitive-behavioral programs, these professionals can teach offenders concrete skills through practice sessions (e.g., how to effectively problem solve, how to ask for help, how to regulate emotions).

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If an unskilled laborer was provided with a blueprint, would they be expected to produce a well-constructed building?

Even effective program designs, if delivered by staff that lack the requisite skills, are unlikely to produce positive results.

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#### **5. INCREASE POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT.**

Research demonstrates that a ratio of four positive affirmations for every expression of disapproval/confrontation has a positive effect on behavioral change.<sup>10</sup> Most correctional agencies have approaches geared toward confronting and sanctioning unwanted behavior; few have structured policies and practices in place to systematically reward positive behavior. Yet research shows that the use of incentives and rewards is a much more

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<sup>9</sup> Social learning theory asserts that people learn and adopt new behaviors through positive and negative reinforcement, observation, and skill practice (see Bandura, 1977; 1969).

<sup>10</sup> Andrews & Bonta, 2006; Gendreau, 1996; Gendreau & Goggin, 1996; Gendreau, Little, & Goggin, 1996; Gendreau & Paparozzi, 1995.

powerful tool in our efforts to motivate and encourage offenders along the path of pro-social change. Focusing on positive reinforcement does not negate the need to sanction or otherwise express disapproval when negative behavior does occur. For sanctions to be effective, they should be swift, certain, proportional and, most importantly, outweighed by expressions of approval.



## **6. ENGAGE ONGOING SUPPORT IN NATURAL COMMUNITIES.**

Research indicates that positive outcomes (i.e., reductions in violations and new crime behavior) are more likely to be achieved when offenders' significant others are engaged in their case plans and when offenders have meaningful connections to the pro-social community.<sup>11</sup> Pro-social, community-based networks (both people and activities) provide opportunities for offenders to strengthen their own pro-social skills by engaging with others who possess the attitudes and behaviors – and participate in the activities – that offenders will hopefully emulate. Furthermore, family members and significant others (including employers, teachers, mentors, spiritual leaders, etc.) can best support offenders when they are aware of the work offenders are undertaking, the skills they are developing, and can support offenders as they practice these new skills in their natural environments. Corrections professionals who develop skills in brokering support between offenders and those in their natural communities are best equipped to support long-term behavioral change.

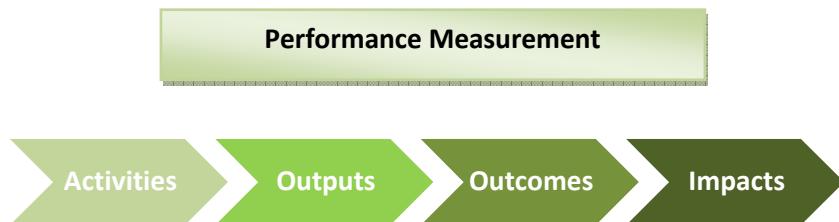
## **7. MEASURE RELEVANT PROCESSES/PRACTICES.**

It is not enough to adopt practices that have been proven to work elsewhere. Every agency and jurisdiction needs to establish methods and processes to determine if their own policies and practices are producing the desired results. For this reason, the ongoing collection and analysis of data and information is of paramount importance.

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<sup>11</sup> Bonta et al., 2002; Clear & Sumter, 2002; Elgelko et al., 1998; Emrick et al., 1993; Galanter, 1993; Higgins & Silverman, 1999; Meyers & Smith, 1997; Meyers et al., 2002; O'Connor & Perryclear, 2003; Shapiro & Schwartz, 2001.

Because a variety of factors can diminish the effectiveness of practices (e.g., applying an intervention designed for one population of offenders to another; errors in implementation; improperly trained staff), fidelity measures should be carefully constructed and put into place, with quality assurance oversight as a separate but related function. Measures should include activities (e.g., line staff trained on principles and use of risk assessment instruments), outputs (e.g., number and percentage of staff trained), intermediate outcomes (e.g., match between services delivered and criminogenic needs), and impact (e.g., decreases in technical violations, improvements in recidivism rates).



#### **8. MEASUREMENT FEEDBACK.**

The value in measurement is not in the doing, but in the *knowing*. Therefore, once performance measurement data are collected and analyzed, findings should be shared with a variety of people. This information is useful at the individual offender level, staff level, program/agency level, and jurisdiction-wide.<sup>12</sup>

- ✓ Feedback to offenders reinforces accountability (for both offenders and for staff). It can also increase motivation to change, particularly when offenders observe connections among the positive actions (i.e., keeping scheduled appointments, attending work as scheduled, positive recreational time with their families, etc.), positive rewards (i.e., promotions and wage increases, improved interpersonal relationships, educational achievement, etc.), and a reduction in disapprovals/sanctions (fewer technical violations, decreased alcohol/drug relapses, fewer incidents of marital conflict).
- ✓ Feedback to staff (at all levels, in all positions) supports individual and unit improvement and reinforces the importance of EBP activities.
- ✓ Feedback to programs/agencies supports evaluation of the degree to which goals are being met.
- ✓ Feedback to jurisdictions enables a broad array of stakeholders to assess the extent to which the system as a whole is meeting its stated purposes and operating efficiently and effectively.

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<sup>12</sup> See the Coaching Packet on Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts for a more complete discussion of these issues.

## *The Application of the Principles of Evidence-Based Practices: The Key to Risk Reduction*

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF FOCUSING ON THE THREE KEY PRINCIPLES.**

Research is clear about the extent to which these principles – particularly the risk, need and responsivity principles – influence recidivism reduction. But putting research into practice is certainly more difficult than it sounds, and a gradual approach may be called for.

Jurisdictions should be careful not to assume that following some of the principles is nearly as effective as following all of them. It is not uncommon, for example, for a jurisdiction to use an actuarial assessment tool to determine level of risk and criminogenic needs. But if the agency falls short in integrating this information into its intervention strategies (by ensuring that offenders receive the appropriate type and dose of treatment), effectiveness will be diminished.

Other jurisdictions may effectively implement two principles – typically risk and need – but may not have the capacity to address the responsivity principle. In these cases, the risk level is identified and the criminogenic needs are used to develop case plans, but the jurisdiction may lack sufficient depth in its treatment services (e.g., lack of gender-responsive programming, specialized services for low functioning clients, or groups facilitated by staff who are culturally responsive), and therefore have to place offenders in “generic” programs. This condition will also diminish outcomes.

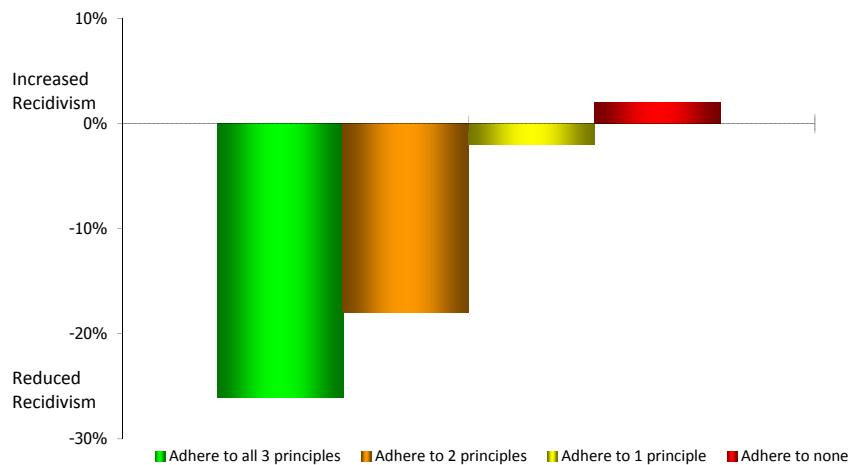
The research is clear, however, that the most profound results occur when all three principles are implemented with fidelity. Exhibit 2, *Impact of Adhering to the Core Principles of Effective Intervention: Risk, Needs, and Responsivity*, demonstrates this point clearly.<sup>13</sup> As this exhibit demonstrates, adherence to all three principles has a significant impact on recidivism reduction (nearly 30%); adherence to just two of the principles results in less effective outcomes (approximately 20%); while adherence to one principle or no principles results in negligible impact on recidivism.

### ***Important Questions about the Use of Risk/Need Assessment Tools***

- Do staff understand the research behind the tool?
- Is staff reliant on the information such that they insist on having it?
- *Or, is the tool completed “because headquarters requires it,” filed, and ignored?*

<sup>13</sup> Andrews, Dowden, & Gendreau, 1999.

## Exhibit 2: Impact of Adhering to the Core Principles of Effective Intervention: Risk, Needs, and Responsivity



### THE IMPORTANCE OF FOCUSING ON MULTIPLE CRIMINOGENIC NEEDS.

In addition to focusing consistently on the three key EBP principles, another important factor has significant influence on recidivism reduction: the number and type of criminogenic needs addressed.

**Type of Needs.** Not all criminogenic needs have equal influence in the recidivism equation. Generally speaking, there are eight criminogenic needs.<sup>14</sup> Of these eight, the top four (history of anti-social behavior, anti-social personality factors, anti-social cognitions/attitudes, anti-social peers) have the most significant impact on future recidivism and should be considered the primary intervention targets. The next four needs (family and/or marital stressors, lack of employment stability/achievement and/or lack of educational achievement, lack of pro-social leisure activities, substance abuse) are also important; but they should generally be considered the secondary targets for intervention *unless* one or more of these risk factors are assessed as central to the criminal behavior (e.g., substance abuse). The specific intervention strategy for an individual offender will of course depend upon the combination of needs present, the degree to which each is problematic, and the offender's unique individual circumstances.

<sup>14</sup> See Andrews, 2007; Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2006.

### **What Are the Criminogenic Needs and their Implications for Intervention?<sup>15</sup>**

While the literature has slightly different ways of expressing criminogenic needs, generally they fall into the eight areas noted below.

#### **Top Four Criminogenic Needs**

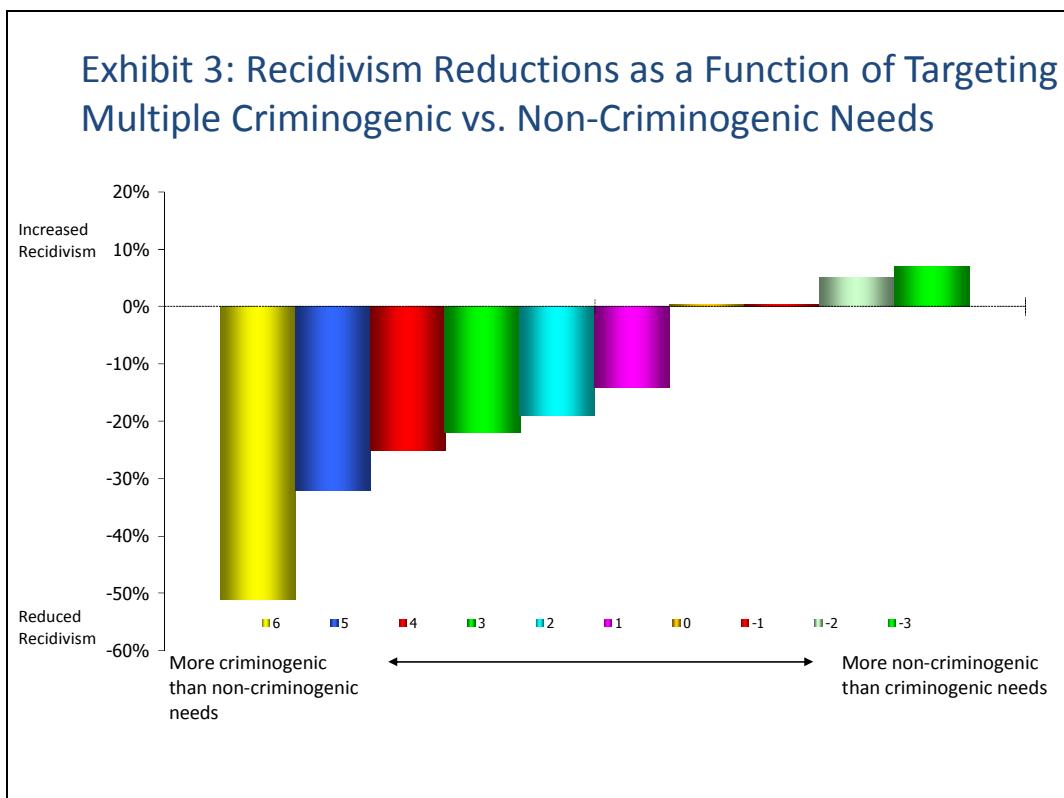
<b>Criminogenic Need</b>	<b>Response</b>
History of anti-social behavior	Build non-criminal alternative behavior in risky situations
Anti-social personality pattern	Build problem solving, self-management, anger management, and coping skills
Anti-social attitudes, cognition	Reduce anti-social thinking; recognize risky thinking and feelings; adopt alternative identity/thinking patterns
Anti-social associates, peers	Reduce association with anti-social others; enhance contact with pro-social others

#### **Next Four Criminogenic Needs**

<b>Criminogenic Need</b>	<b>Response</b>
Family and/or marital stressors	Reduce conflict; build positive relationships and communication
Lack of employment stability, achievement/educational achievement	Increase vocational skills; seek employment stability; increase educational achievement
Lack of pro-social leisure activities	Increase involvement in and level of satisfaction with pro-social activities
Substance abuse	Reduce use; reduce the supports for substance abusing lifestyle; increase alternative coping strategies and leisure activities

<sup>15</sup> Andrews, 2007; Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2006, p. 11.

**Number of Needs.** Higher risk offenders don't just have one risk factor – they possess a cluster – and many of these risk factors influence one another. For example, substance abuse behavior typically puts an offender in contact with other people who are anti-social in their orientation (i.e., drug dealers and other drug users). An offender with an anti-social personality who has temperament issues such as anger, poor self-regulation, and impulse control will often also have family conflict. It stands to reason, therefore, that the greater the number of needs addressed, the more likely it is that offenders' risk levels will decline. This point has been demonstrated well through research. Exhibit 3, *Recidivism Reductions as a Function of Targeting Multiple Criminogenic vs. Non-Criminogenic Needs*, clearly illustrates that addressing six criminogenic needs has a very significant impact on recidivism (approximately a 50% reduction), while addressing one criminogenic need has significantly less (10+%), and importantly, focusing exclusively on non-criminogenic needs results in *increased* recidivism.<sup>16</sup>



#### **REPLACING COMMON MYTHS WITH EVIDENCE.**

Some “conventional wisdom” regarding the effective management of offenders has been disproved by recent research. These common myths are presented in Exhibit 4 alongside approaches that are based on evidence.

<sup>16</sup> Andrews, Dowden, & Gendreau, 1999; Dowden, 1998.

**Exhibit 4:**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Common Myths in Offender Management</b>	<b>Evidence-Based Approach</b>
Assessment	Rely on one's experience to predict the likelihood that an offender will commit another offense.	Clinical judgment has consistently underpredicted rearrest rates when compared to empirically-based tools. Use empirically-based tools to inform and augment professional judgment.
	Use the current offense to dictate how intensely to treat or supervise an offender.	Since it is the offender's characteristics that predict future offenses more than the current offense, use risk tools to determine supervision level. It is possible that offenders with high risk profiles will be under correctional supervision for minor offenses, and for offenders with low risk profiles to be under correctional supervision for serious offenses. For purposes of risk reduction, risk profile – rather than offense – should drive the intervention.
Motivation	Assume that it is entirely the responsibility of offenders to change, and minimize corrections professionals' role in the change process.	Motivation is dynamic and can be influenced through effective engagement techniques. Trained staff can use these techniques to increase the likelihood that offenders will become motivated to change.
Behavioral Management	Use lecture, threats of sanctions, and confrontational methods to attempt to influence offenders' behavior.	Offenders are more likely to respond to positive reinforcements and incentives. Use a 4:1 ratio of positive, affirming statements and actions for every expression of disapproval.
	Keep sanctions and consequences for rule-breaking a secret to keep offenders off-guard and fearful of consequences.	Offenders are more likely to comply when they know the rules and consequences, and are less likely to resist the consequences when the rules are broken and a sanction is imposed.
	Assume that offenders do not pay attention to, or respect, the subtle messages they receive through their interactions with staff.	Every interaction with offenders represents an opportunity for staff to role-model for offenders, affirm pro-social values, and offer expressions of disapproval for anti-social thinking/behavior.
Programming	Absent the right match between offenders' risk level, criminogenic needs, and program availability, put offenders in any program because something is better than nothing.	Programs that are mismatched to offender traits can actually do harm. Make sure that programs are appropriate based upon offenders' level of risk and criminogenic needs.
	Place all offenders in the same programs without regard to gender, culture, or other responsivity factors.	For programming to be effective, offenders' unique traits must be matched to the intervention. Make available a variety of programs and services to address these unique needs.
	Focus on sobriety and employment as the keys to offender change.	While substance abuse and employment may be important to address, they do not represent the most influential criminogenic needs (the top four). These top criminogenic needs often need to be addressed before other interventions (such as employment) will take hold.

## ***Getting Started: Implementing Evidence-Based Practices in Your Jurisdiction***

Given the number of policy, practice, process, and program changes involved, implementing evidence-based practices can be daunting. However, many jurisdictions have made tremendous progress in a few, short years. As your jurisdiction moves toward the implementation of evidence-based practices, be mindful of the following:

- ✓ Many agencies have already implemented evidence-based practices to some degree. Staff may have been trained in Motivational Interviewing; cognitive-behavioral interventions may be in use; assessment instruments may have been adopted. Most jurisdictions will not need to start from scratch.
- ✓ Recognize that advancing to evidence-based practices does not suggest that past practice was a mistake. Many existing practices have now been proven by research to be effective and should be continued and enhanced. But just as we expect our physicians to use the most advanced diagnostic tools and recent studies on effective treatments, so too should professionals in the justice field adapt practice to keep pace with new research. This is called making progress!
- ✓ Go slow and reach for the “low hanging fruit.” Small, planned changes can accumulate rapidly when one success is built upon another. Many small wins can be as significant as one large success. The organizational change literature reminds us that true change is a long-term process. Implementing evidence-based practices is a marathon, not a sprint.

Every agency is different in its history, resources, leadership, labor-management relations, political pressures, workload, and so forth. Likewise, each agency will begin with different strengths. Because of this, there is no “single roadmap” for an agency to follow on the path of implementing evidence-based practices. However, the experiences of dozens of jurisdictions suggest a few common first steps.

- ✓ ***Engage leadership.*** Engagement and commitment by leadership at all levels is critically important. Embracing an evidence-based practices approach involves a variety of organizational changes (e.g., adoption of new assessment procedures, changes in case management planning, new skills for staff, different approaches to offenders based upon risk and needs, implementation of incentive systems, revised job descriptions, new criteria for employee performance evaluations, etc.). These changes cannot take root without full support and commitment from the top leadership. In addition, mid-level management and first line supervisors are critically important. Some jurisdictions have learned this the hard way: top management institutes changes in policy and practice; line staff receive training and set to work to carry out new processes. But absent commitment, understanding, and skills in the middle of the organization, these changes are severely hampered if not jeopardized altogether.
- ✓ ***Involve line staff.*** Once leadership is prepared to move forward, engage line staff in meaningful ways. Work groups and focus groups are effective methods to include staff representatives in the development of new policies and procedures. Line staff can also assist in communicating to co-workers where the agency is going with evidence-based

practices and why and how these changes will impact day-to-day responsibilities. Having some key champions among the line staff will put wind in the effort's sails.

- ✓ ***Use an empirically-based risk/need assessment tool(s).*** Select a risk/need assessment tool(s) that is empirically-based, validated, and user-friendly. Provide staff initial and then on-going training in its administration, emphasizing the importance of reliance on the tool's scoring rules. Ensure that staff understand the limits of the tool (i.e., false positives, false negatives) and the population for which its use was intended.
- ✓ ***Provide training.*** All staff, regardless of position, should be trained in the fundamentals of evidence-based practices. This supports a collective understanding of the direction of the agency/jurisdiction and helps staff understand why certain changes in policy and practice will occur.
- ✓ ***Focus on risk level and criminogenic needs.*** Through policy and procedure, ensure that staff target more intensive interventions to higher risk offenders, less to the lower risk. Develop processes that will result in case management plans that take risk level into consideration and, for the medium/high risk offenders, address three or more of offenders' most significant criminogenic needs. Monitor case plans routinely to ensure they account for changes in offenders' conditions, risk/need areas, and progress towards their goals. For lower risk offenders, ensure that staff focus on stabilization factors.
- ✓ ***Provide an array of evidence-based programs.*** Assess the "match" between the programs available and the criminogenic needs these services are equipped to address, and the needs of the offender population (including responsivity factors). Identify gaps in the continuum of services and make plans to fill them. Where resources do not allow for continuum/program expansion, well trained staff can effectively address criminogenic needs through structured contacts with offenders.
- ✓ ***Assure the quality of your efforts.*** Any change process should be accompanied by a quality assurance plan. This step is often neglected and can seriously jeopardize the success of important efforts and investments. It is not uncommon, for example, for an agency to implement an assessment instrument without paying sufficient attention to equipping staff to understand the uses and purposes of the tool. Errors in administration, misuse or non-use of the tool may result in some staff concluding "the tool doesn't work." In such a case, the flaw is not in the instrument but in the implementation. A well considered quality assurance plan can prevent these critical missteps.

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive; there are many other areas to consider. To assist you in determining where your jurisdiction is in implementing or advancing evidence-based practices refer to the Implementing Evidence-Based Practices Coaching Packet Checklist in Section II.

## ***Making Progress: Quality Assurance in the Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices***

Research and practice have repeatedly demonstrated that implementation of effective tools and practices fall far short of their potential when sufficient quality assurance techniques are not put in place. Some of the core EBP initiatives that require quality assurance include the following:

- ✓ ***Assessment:*** Ensure that empirically-based assessment instruments are properly administered; consistently applied across assessors; and used in the manner for which they are intended.
- ✓ ***Case planning:*** Ensure that case plans are directly linked to assessment findings; match intensity of intervention to risk level; address three or more of the most significant criminogenic needs; account for individual offenders' unique responsivity factors; build on offenders' strengths; and reflect ongoing review and modification based upon changes in risk/need and offenders' progress towards meeting stated goals and objectives.
- ✓ ***Cognitive behavioral training:*** Ensure that programs use cognitive-behavioral techniques; are administered in accordance with the author's logic model; address offenders' individual risk factors; vary in intensity and duration according to risk level; and are staffed by skilled facilitators.
- ✓ ***Motivational Interviewing and core correctional practices:*** Ensure that staff role model and reinforce pro-social behavior; interact with offenders in ways that increase motivation and encourage choices and problem solving; effectively address anti-social attitudes and behavior; deflect power struggles; and advocate on correctional clients' behalf.

## ***Overcoming Barriers: Antidotes to Common Challenges in Implementing Evidence-Based Practices***

Organizational change is not easy, nor is it always successful. According to Rogers, Wellins, and Connor in their book *The Power of Realization: Building Competitive Advantage by Maximizing Human Resource Initiatives*:<sup>17</sup>

- ✓ Up to 85% of organizational change initiatives fail;
- ✓ Up to 70% of these failures are due to flawed execution; and
- ✓ Less than 10% of what is taught to staff in the classroom is transferred to the job.

The following are antidotes to these common challenges:

- ✓ ***A steadfast and dedicated commitment to change by managers, line staff, and everyone in between.*** For an evidence-based practices approach to truly take hold, the initiative cannot be "owned" by just a few staff, or units within an organization, or even by a single agency within the jurisdiction. As has been learned in recent years, successful offender reentry depends on full alignment within and among our criminal justice and partner organizations. So too is the case in the effective implementation of evidence-based practices.

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<sup>17</sup> Rogers, Wellins, & Connor, 2002.

- ✓ ***An openness to doing things differently.*** One of the greatest barriers to change is entrenchment in the notion of “the way we’ve always done it.” Changing the status quo takes clarity of purpose, the courage to challenge the status quo, and a fundamental willingness to do things differently. Effective implementation of evidence-based practices cannot simply be placed alongside past practice or through the piecemeal exchange of one past practice for a new one. Evidence-based practices requires a comprehensive review of vision, mission, policies, practices, attitudes and skills, and a thoughtful transition from what has been to what will be.
- ✓ ***Transparency and accountability.*** An enormous investment of public funds is made each year in the name of public safety. Research demonstrates that the strategic use of those funds can produce a profoundly positive impact on public safety, as measured by fewer new victims and fewer new crimes committed by offenders under correctional supervision. Collecting and analyzing performance data, making performance data available to others, and holding ourselves accountable for improvements in public safety are key components of evidence-based work.

## Section II: Implementing Evidence-Based Practices Coaching Packet Checklist

	Yes	No	Unclear (Make note of the additional information that needs to be collected to rate this item)
1. Are offender assessments conducted shortly after admission to prison – and in an ongoing fashion thereafter – to identify risk level, criminogenic needs, and responsivity factors?			
2. Are empirically supported assessment tools used? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If yes, please list which tools are used: _____</li> </ul>			
3. Do the results of the empirically supported assessment tools inform the offender management process (e.g., treatment planning, supervision case planning)?			
4. Are re-assessments conducted at appropriate intervals (i.e., every six months) to determine changes in risk/needs?			
5. Do case plans address offenders' risk and needs at each stage (intake and incarceration phase, pre-release planning phase, and reentry and post-supervision phase)?			
6. Are case plans updated to reflect changes in offenders' risk and needs, and to document improvement and progress made?			
7. Do offenders receive feedback on their progress addressing their risk/needs?			
8. Do case plans identify programmatic interventions appropriate for offenders based on their assessed level of risk and criminogenic needs?			
9. Do case management plans target the 3-4 (or more) most significant criminogenic needs?			
10. Do case management plans identify offenders' strengths and draw upon these as assets?			
11. Do case management plans reflect active engagement of the offender's pro-social network in their day-to-day life?			
12. Are offenders prioritized for participation in programs and services based on risk and needs?			
13. Do appropriate staff (within institutions and in the community) receive skills training on how to better engage offenders in the change process?			
14. Are interactions with offenders, including infractions and violations, viewed as opportunities to enhance motivation?			
15. Do staff provide offenders more positive reinforcements than negative (i.e., 4:1 ratio)?			
16. Institutional/Residential Interventions: Are existing institutionally-based programs and services for offenders (please indicate yes, no, or not clear for each): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multimodal and integrated?</li> <li>• Cognitive-behavioral in nature?</li> <li>• Skills-oriented?</li> <li>• Linked with parallel services in the community?</li> <li>• Matched to offenders based on risk, needs, and responsivity factors?</li> <li>• Monitored and evaluated?</li> </ul>			
17. Community Interventions: Are existing community-based programs and services for offenders (please indicate yes, no, or not clear for each): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multimodal and integrated?</li> <li>• Cognitive-behavioral in nature?</li> <li>• Skills-oriented?</li> <li>• Linked with parallel services in the community?</li> <li>• Matched to offenders based on risk, needs, and responsivity factors?</li> <li>• Monitored and evaluated?</li> </ul>			
18. Does the agency have a quality assurance program in place to ensure the fidelity of evidence-based practices?			
19. Do staff receive feedback on their effectiveness in applying evidence-based practices?			

## Section III: Action Planning Worksheet

<b>GOAL:</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 2:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 3:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

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# COACHING PACKET

## Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

One in a series of Coaching Packets designed  
to assist jurisdictions in the implementation  
of effective practices that will support  
successful offender outcomes

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Editor: Madeline M. Carter, Center for Effective Public Policy

2010



### ***Coaching Packet Series 1: Creating a Blueprint for an Effective Offender Reentry System***

- A Framework for Offender Reentry
- Establishing a Rational Planning Process
- Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### ***Coaching Packet Series 2: Delivering Evidence-Based Services***

- Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
- Effective Case Management
- Shaping Offender Behavior
- Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry
- Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring
- Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

### ***Coaching Packet Series 3: Ensuring Meaningful Outcomes***

- Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts
- Continuous Quality Improvement



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## Introduction to the Coaching Packet Series

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) and its partners, The Urban Institute and The Carey Group, were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to the Fiscal Year 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees (hereafter “PRI grantees”). The project team served in this capacity from April 2008 to June 2010.

The Center is a nonprofit criminal justice consulting organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since the early 1980s, the Center has provided training and technical assistance to the criminal justice field on a wide array of topics, including transition and reentry, and has administered a number of national projects of this kind. The Urban Institute was established as a private, nonprofit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1968 and is a leader in prisoner reentry research, focusing on making best practice information accessible to practitioners and policymakers. The Carey Group is a justice consulting firm with extensive practitioner experience in evidence-based practices, strategic planning, community and restorative justice and corrections.

As a part of its technical assistance delivery to the PRI grantees, the Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work. The final products of this work include eleven Coaching Packets in three series. These Coaching Packets offer practical value beyond the jurisdictions involved in this initiative and are available to criminal justice professionals and their partners interested in enhancing their strategies for reducing recidivism and improving offender outcomes.

Each Coaching Packet provides an overview of a specific topic as it relates to successful offender reentry, and offers tools and resources for those interested in exploring the topic in greater depth.

- *Series 1* provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system. This series provides a conceptual framework for addressing prisoner reentry at the policy level; outlines a strategic planning process to support implementation efforts; and explores the establishment of successful collaborative partnerships at the policy and case management levels.
- *Series 2* addresses key issues related to the delivery of evidence-based services to offenders. This series summarizes the key literature with regard to implementing evidence-based practices; explores advances in approaches to case management; addresses the important role of staff in changing offender behavior; and summarizes research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- *Series 3* provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes. This series describes methods to assess the effectiveness of reentry efforts and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

## FY 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Grantees

The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) – intended to support the development and implementation of institutional and community corrections-based reentry programs to help returning offenders find employment and provide other critical services – is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grants were awarded to state and local corrections agencies by DOJ to provide pre-release and transition services to offenders and were “matched” by DOL grants to faith- and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to provide post-release services, focusing on employment assistance and mentoring.

Thirty-five states received grants in three cycles of the Initiative during Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 23 FY 2007 PRI grantees received assistance under this project. FY 2007 grants were awarded in the fall of 2007 and implemented from 2008 to 2010; however, some grantees will not complete their activities until 2011. The FY 2007 grantees provided technical assistance under this project included:

- ✓ ALASKA, Native Justice Center
- ✓ ARIZONA, Criminal Justice Commission/ Yuma County Sheriff’s Office
- ✓ CALIFORNIA, Department of Community Services and Development
- ✓ COLORADO, Division of Criminal Justice Services/City of Denver
- ✓ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Government
- ✓ FLORIDA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ HAWAII, Department of Public Safety
- ✓ INDIANA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ IOWA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ KANSAS, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MAINE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MICHIGAN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MINNESOTA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEVADA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEW JERSEY, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NORTH CAROLINA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ OHIO, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- ✓ PENNSYLVANIA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ RHODE ISLAND, Department of Corrections
- ✓ TENNESSEE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ VIRGINIA, Department of Criminal Justice Services
- ✓ WISCONSIN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ WYOMING, Department of Corrections

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<sup>1</sup> The PRI program will end when the FY 2008 grantees complete their activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

Becki Ney, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program Project Director. Ms. Ney conceptualized and oversaw the development of the Coaching Packet series.

Madeline M. Carter, Principal, and Rachelle Giguere, Program Associate, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the key editors for the Coaching Packet series. Ms. Giguere also provided extensive research support to the development of the series.

# **Introduction to the Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders**

## **Coaching Packet**

### ***The Contents of this Packet***

This Coaching Packet provides:

- Support for the assertion that there are significant differences between male and female offenders that have implications for women's successful reentry;
- A review of the principles of gender-responsiveness for women offenders;
- An update on important developments in a number of critical practice areas;
- A list of strategies for assisting women offenders successfully transition from prison to the community;
- A tool to determine your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps regarding implementation of gender-responsive reentry strategies for women offenders;
- An aid for developing plans to address identified gap areas; and
- References to additional resources on the topic.

### ***The Intended Audience for this Packet***

This Coaching Packet was originally developed to assist grant teams that were established to manage local PRI initiatives. The teams were composed of representatives from institutional and community corrections and faith-based or community organizations involved in the delivery of pre- and post-release services to offenders transitioning from prison to the community. The content of these Coaching Packets has much broader application, however; the information and tools contained within this Coaching Packet can also be used by teams of criminal justice professionals and their partners to assess the status of their efforts in implementing evidence-based practices and effective reentry services to offenders.

This Coaching Packet may also serve as a resource for professionals at all levels who are interested in learning more about this topic.

### ***How to Use this Packet***

#### **SECTION I: READ THE OVERVIEW ON REENTRY CONSIDERATIONS FOR WOMEN OFFENDERS.**

This section of the Coaching Packet provides an overview of the ways in which women's experiences within and outside of the criminal justice system are different from their male counterparts, the principles of gender-responsiveness, and some strategies for achieving successful reentry with women offenders. Review its content and, if the information it contains is applicable to your work and addresses an area in which you feel you need to focus your efforts, use the tool in Section II to assess your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps with regard to implementing a gender-responsive approach to reentry for women offenders.

## **SECTION II: COMPLETE THE REENTRY CONSIDERATIONS FOR WOMEN OFFENDERS COACHING PACKET CHECKLIST.**

As a team, complete the Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders Coaching Packet Checklist. (Based upon the information you read in Section I, consider who may need to be involved so that you are able to answer the questions thoroughly.) Complete the checklist as a group and discuss your responses along the way.

- Rate each item listed in the checklist (yes, no, not clear).
- For items where your response is “not clear,” make note of the additional information the team needs to collect in order to be able to rate this item.
- Add additional items that may relate to your jurisdiction’s implementation of a gender-responsive approach to offender management and transition that are not already included on the checklist.
- Develop a consensus-based response for each item on the checklist.
- Once the checklist is completed, consider your jurisdictions’ strengths in implementing such an approach. Make note of these.
- Next, consider your most significant gaps. Make note of these as well.

## **SECTION III: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN.**

If, after completing the checklist in Section II, your team determines that further work on this topic is necessary or would be helpful, follow the steps below to identify your goals, objectives, and action items, and identify any additional assistance or expertise needed.

Working as a team, review your findings from the Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders Coaching Packet Checklist. Specifically:

1. Determine whether, based upon what you have read and discussed, you desire to advance your jurisdiction’s work with regard to implementing a gender-responsive approach to reentry.
2. If you determine you have a desire to improve in this area, write a goal statement that reflects where you want to be with regard to improving your current efforts. Your goal might be to “Conduct awareness building sessions with managers on the key differences between male and female offenders and the implications of these differences for policy and practice,” “Ensure that classification and risk and needs assessment tools have been validated for the agency’s women offender population,” “Develop or adopt a curriculum to train custodial staff or parole officers in gender-informed and evidence-based supervision strategies,” or another goal. Using the Action Planning Worksheet in Section III, note your goal in the area of implementing a gender-responsive approach to reentry.
3. Identify your three most significant strengths in this area and discuss how you might build on those to overcome some of your gaps.
4. Identify your three most significant gaps. For each gap, write an objective. Your objectives might be, “To develop a profile of the risk and needs of women offenders using one of several newly developed gender-responsive assessment tools,” “To review all established policies from a gender-responsive lens or with a gender-informed checklist to identify those

that require adaptation," or something else. Note your three objectives on the Action Planning Worksheet.

5. Add the following on the Action Planning Worksheet for each objective:
  - a. The specific sequential steps that must be taken to meet the objective.
  - b. The individual who will assume lead responsibility for this action item.
  - c. The completion date for this action item.
6. Discuss whether additional assistance or outside expertise is needed to successfully achieve any of your action items. For instance, explore whether additional literature, guidance from another practitioner over the telephone, examples of work products from other jurisdictions, or on-site technical assistance would be helpful options.
  - a. For each action item, identify those for which assistance/expertise is needed.
  - b. Identify the type of assistance/expertise needed.
  - c. Prioritize each of these need areas. If assistance/expertise will be limited, for which action items is assistance most needed?
  - d. Begin exploring ways to secure the needed assistance/expertise.

### ***How to Seek Additional Information***

To download copies of the Coaching Packets, please visit the Center's website at <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>. To obtain further information on the use or content of this or any of the Coaching Packets, or on the 2007 PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program, please contact:

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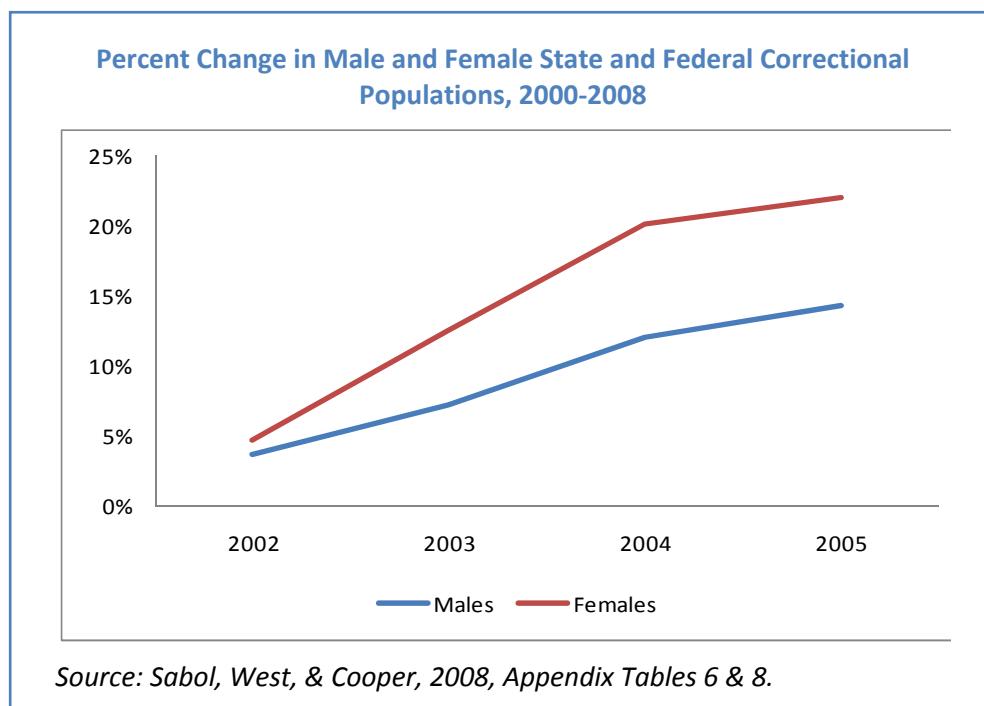
## Section I: Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

Research on the differences between male and female offenders invites institutional corrections and community supervision agencies to review the extent to which current practices acknowledge how women's experiences within and outside of the criminal justice system are different from their male counterparts. Through an understanding of these critical differences, corrections agencies can focus on those policies and programs that will maximize the success of women reentering the community.

### *Definition of the Problem and Rationale for Focusing on Women Offenders as a Distinct Population*

#### **WOMEN OFFENDERS: A GROWING POPULATION**

While prison population growth has slowed in the past decade<sup>2</sup>, the female offender population continues to rise at a faster rate than the male offender population. From 2000 to 2008, the number of women in state and federal prisons increased by 22%, while the number of men rose 14%.<sup>3</sup>



The increase in women offender populations can be traced to changes in state and national drug policies that mandated prison terms for even relatively low-level drug offenses. Between 1986 and 1999, the number of women incarcerated in state facilities for drug related offenses alone increased by 888% (compared to an increase of 129% for non-drug offenses).<sup>4</sup> For many women who are drug involved, or for whom community supervision obligations become

<sup>2</sup> Sabol, West & Cooper, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Lapidus et al., 2004.

obstacles in themselves (e.g., parole conditions, fees, and restitution), involvement in the criminal justice system is a revolving door from which they have difficulty escaping.

#### **FEMALE “PATHWAYS” TO CRIME**

The “pathways” research of the past 15 years has illuminated some distinct ways in which women and girls become involved in criminal behavior. The research on pathways studies girls’ and women’s life histories in order to understand the connections and relationships among child and adult experiences and criminality.<sup>5</sup> The following are some of these pathways:<sup>6</sup>

- ✓ Childhood victimization drives girls to run away from home and to use illegal drugs as a means of coping with the trauma of physical and sexual abuse. Drug selling, prostitution, and burglary often follow as a means of street survival.
- ✓ In a related sequence, adult women who have experienced childhood victimization resort to drugs to cope with the pain of abuse as well as other stressors in their lives such as adult intimate partner violence, sexual assault, or grief over the loss of custody of children. Thus, the interconnections of prior or current victimization, mood and anxiety disorders (e.g., depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder), and self-medicating, substance-abusing behaviors comprise a frequent pathway for women offenders.
- ✓ Poverty or economic motivation often contributes to both women’s involvement in the drug trade or prostitution (sex for drugs) as well as non-drug related crimes – to support a drug addiction or because they encounter economic difficulties in supporting themselves and their children.
- ✓ Finally, a small proportion of women appear to be primarily economically motivated and not drug involved; their criminality is instead related to the poor economic conditions they face and the desire for monetary and material possessions.<sup>7</sup>

It is important to note that there is not one single, dominant pathway for women offenders, but rather multiple ways in which their experiences contribute to their illegal behavior. However, the key factors that have emerged through the observation of offense patterns and qualitative research are violence/abuse, poverty, and substance abuse.

#### **DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE OFFENDERS**

There are important differences between male and female offenders in terms of offending histories, risk factors, and life circumstances. Some factors or dimensions are critical to both genders but observed with greater frequency among women; others occur with relatively equal frequency in both genders (e.g., substance abuse) but with distinct physical, personal, and social effects for women, and yet other factors are not typically seen with men. These issues are described in detail below and are summarized in Exhibit 1.

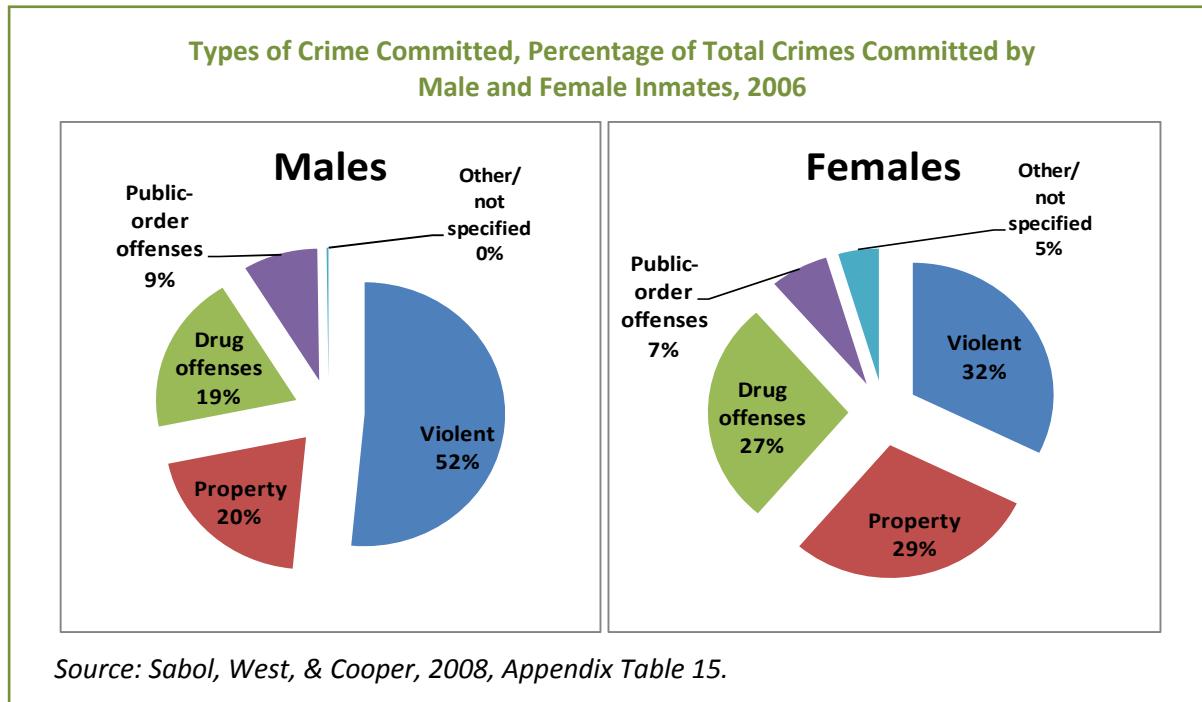
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<sup>5</sup> Belnap, 2007.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on different categorizations of pathways see Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003; Chesney-Lind, 1997; Daly, 1992; Dehart, 2005; Green et al., 2005; Lapidus et al., 2004; Salisbury, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> As Morash (2010) comments, this pathway more closely resembles male criminality.

**Offending Patterns.** Women are convicted primarily of property and drug offenses, and the majority of violent offenses are in the simple assault category. Women are less likely to have been convicted of a violent crime and are less likely to use a gun or other weapon in the commission of a crime.<sup>8</sup> Further, female offenders as a whole are at lower risk of institutional misconducts and reoffending in the community than male offenders.<sup>9</sup>



**Victimization and Abuse.** Women under correctional supervision are more likely to have experienced physical and sexual abuse as children and adults than women in the general population or the male correctional population. Between 32% and 47% of female offenders experience physical abuse prior to sentencing, while only 6-13% of male offenders report the same experience.<sup>10</sup> For sexual abuse the discrepancy is even larger, with 22-39% of female offenders and 2-6% of male offenders reporting sexual abuse. These rates of “officially reported” abuse are considered conservative. For example, a study of women in a New York maximum security prison found that 70% had been physically abused as children and 75% as adults.<sup>11</sup>

Another important difference between the abuse histories of men and women is the length of time in which they experience abuse. While the risk of abuse for males drops after childhood, the risk of abuse for females continues throughout their adolescent and adult lives.<sup>12</sup>

**Mental Health.** Women inmates suffer a great deal more from mental illness than male inmates. A recent report found that 55% of male adults in state prisons exhibited mental

<sup>8</sup> Greenfeld & Snell, 1999.

<sup>9</sup> Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004.

<sup>10</sup> Harlow, 1999.

<sup>11</sup> See Browne, Miller & Maguin, 1999.

<sup>12</sup> Covington, 2001.

health problems as compared to 73% of women prisoners.<sup>13</sup> In addition, women prisoners are twice as likely as male prisoners to take prescription medications for mental health problems and receive therapy for their illness.<sup>14</sup> Significant for custody management, women prisoners with mental health problems have higher infraction rates than non-mentally ill females.<sup>15</sup>

Women typically experience different types of mental illness than men.<sup>16</sup> For example, women are more likely to be diagnosed with depression or anxiety disorders than men, and are more likely to experience eating disorders. Conversely, men may be more likely to experience a substance abuse disorder or antisocial personality disorder.

Trauma is a special case for women. While the rates of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among all substance abusers range from 12-34%, for women with substance abuse disorders, it ranges from 30-59%.<sup>17</sup>

**Substance Abuse.** Like male offenders, a large proportion of women offenders suffer from addiction. In a 2006 Bureau of Justice Statistics study, over 60% of women met the DSM-IV criteria for a drug dependence or abuse problem during the year prior to their incarceration.<sup>18</sup> Another concern is the prevalence of co-occurring substance abuse disorders and mental illness: the majority of women (75%) who suffer from mental illness also have substance abuse disorders.<sup>19</sup>

Research suggests that the onset and use of drugs looks different for female offenders than male offenders:<sup>20</sup>

- ✓ Women describe the onset of drug use as sudden, rather than gradual, and that the drug use begins as a result of a specific reason such as depression or family problems.
- ✓ Women experience the adverse physical effects of alcohol more quickly than men, a condition referred to as “telescoping.”<sup>21</sup>
- ✓ Women are more likely than men to be introduced to drugs by a sexual partner and continue to use drugs to maintain the relationship.
- ✓ Women who abuse drugs also have higher rates of childhood physical and sexual abuse than men and non-substance abusing women.

**Relationships.** While relationships are important to all people, they are critical to women in particular.<sup>22</sup> Research on female psychological development illuminates how female's identity, self worth, and sense of empowerment are defined by and through relationships with others.

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<sup>13</sup> James & Glaze, 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003; Kassebaum, 1999; WHO, 2010.

<sup>17</sup> The lifetime prevalence for the general population is 8%; see Sacks & Ries, 2005.

<sup>18</sup> Mumola & Karberg, 2006.

<sup>19</sup> Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Telescoping is defined as the faster and more intense effect of alcohol on women as compared to men.

<sup>22</sup> See Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003; Covington, 2001.

This is in contrast to males for whom the major developmental issues are achieving autonomy and independence.

However, because of the high incidence of abuse, trauma and neglect experienced by female offenders, their ability to achieve healthy, empathic and mutually empowering relationships is limited. In fact, the criminal experiences of women are often best understood in the context of *unhealthy* relationships (e.g., a male partner who encourages substance abuse or prostitution).<sup>23</sup>

In order to provide effective correctional services to women, we must understand *Relational Theory*. That is...females are motivated by their connections with others and develop their self worth from the relationships they hold.

**Family Roles.** Women are more likely to have served as the primary caretakers of children prior to entering prison<sup>24</sup> and have plans to return to that role upon release<sup>25</sup>. This fact transforms the experience of many incarcerated women. They are concerned in an ongoing way with their children's welfare and the potential loss of legal custody. For instance, the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA) requires termination of parental rights when a child has been in foster care for 15 or more of the past 22 months. Given that average prison terms for women are 18 to 20 months, this time period has particularly serious consequences for incarcerated mothers.<sup>26</sup>

Only 28% of children of female offenders live with their other parent, while 90% of the children of incarcerated fathers live with their mothers. Instead, most live with grandparents (52.9%), other relatives (25.7%), with friends/others (10.4%) or in non-relative foster care (9.6%).<sup>27</sup>

**Poverty and Economic Marginalization.** Poverty is also of particular concern for females involved in the criminal justice system. A greater percentage of women (37%) than men (28%) report incomes of less than \$600 per month prior to their arrest.<sup>28</sup> Most incarcerated women were previously employed in low wage, entry-level positions, and two-thirds earned a maximum wage of \$6.50 per hour. In interviews with women inmates in California, researchers found that the primary source of income was a legitimate job for only 37% of those women interviewed, while nearly 22% said their primary source was public assistance.<sup>29</sup> An additional 16% reported that selling drugs was their way of providing for themselves and their children.

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<sup>23</sup> Berman, 2005.

<sup>24</sup> Mumola, 2000.

<sup>25</sup> Hairston, 2002.

<sup>26</sup> Jacobs, 2001.

<sup>27</sup> Mumola, 2000.

<sup>28</sup> Greenfeld & Snell, 1999.

<sup>29</sup> Owen & Bloom, 1995.

**Exhibit 1: Comparison of Female and Male Offenders**

	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>
<b>Offending Patterns</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primarily commit property (29%) and drug offenses (27%)</li> <li>While 1/3 are violent offenses, these are mostly simple assault (Sabol, West, &amp; Cooper, 2008)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less than half are property (20%) and drug offenses (19%)</li> <li>About half (52%) commit violent offenses (Sabol, West, &amp; Cooper, 2008)</li> </ul>
<b>Victimization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More likely to be involved in abusive families and battering relationships</li> <li>Greater risk of sexual, physical, and domestic violence (Bloom, Owen, &amp; Covington, 2003)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16% of men report experiencing physical or sexual abuse, while up to 57% of women report the same (Harlow, 1999)</li> </ul>
<b>Mental Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>73% of female state prisoners exhibit mental health problems (James &amp; Glaze, 2006)</li> <li>Depression, anxiety disorders (e.g., PTSD), and eating disorders are more prevalent (Bloom, Owen, &amp; Covington, 2003; Kassebaum, 1999; WHO, 2010)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>55% of male state prisoners exhibit mental health problems (James &amp; Glaze, 2006)</li> <li>Substance abuse and antisocial personality disorders are more prevalent (Bloom, Owen, &amp; Covington, 2003; Kassebaum, 1999; WHO, 2010)</li> </ul>
<b>Substance Abuse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60% of female state prisoners met the DSM-IV drug dependence or abuse criteria (Mumola &amp; Karberg, 2006)</li> <li>More likely to suffer from co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders (Bloom, Owen, &amp; Covington, 2003)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>53% of male state prisoners met the DSM-IV drug dependence or abuse criteria (Mumola &amp; Karberg, 2006)</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sense of self worth is built from their connections with others (Bloom, Owen, &amp; Covington, 2003)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Psychological theories describe men's path to maturity as becoming self sufficient and autonomous (Bloom, Owen, &amp; Covington, 2003)</li> </ul>
<b>Family Roles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two-thirds of women in state prisons are mothers of a minor child (The Sentencing Project, 2007)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less likely to serve as the primary caretaker of children (The Sentencing Project, 2007)</li> </ul>
<b>Poverty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most earn lower monthly incomes than men (The Sentencing Project, 2007)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More likely to be employed full time (60% of men vs. 40% of women) (The Sentencing Project, 2007)</li> </ul>

### ***Operating Principles for the Management of Female Offenders***

Since the correctional system was designed for and serves a predominantly male population (i.e., it incorporates assumptions about typical male behaviors, experiences, and criminal pathways), a successful reentry strategy for women must take into consideration key differences between male and female offenders as it applies and integrates both evidence-based and gender-informed strategies to such areas as assessment, case management and treatment.

### **What Does Gender-Responsiveness Mean for Corrections?**

Gender-responsiveness means understanding and taking account of the differences in characteristics and life experiences that men and women bring to institutional corrections and community supervision and adjusting strategies and practices in ways that appropriately respond to those conditions. (*Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003*)

*By developing and applying gender-informed strategies, corrections professionals can promote law abiding behavior and improve the physical, social, and economic well-being of women and their children – while women are in the institution and under release supervision.*

In 2003, the National Institute of Corrections published a report on gender-responsive strategies based on inter-disciplinary research.<sup>30</sup> This foundational report defines six core elements of gender-responsiveness that have been widely accepted by the field:<sup>31</sup>

#### **ACKNOWLEDGE THAT GENDER DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR CORRECTIONAL PRACTICE.**

Without an understanding of gender differences, there is little support for changing policy and practice based on the specific characteristics of women offenders. It is critical to acknowledge that women come into the criminal justice system through distinctly female pathways, exhibit dissimilar characteristics, require unique custody and supervision considerations, and pose different risk levels for misconduct and crime. For instance, it is well understood that women have different communication styles than men, and this fact has implications for all supervision settings. Women offenders are more willing to share the details of their lives than men and express themselves more extensively. This requires more “listening skills,” patience, and time on the part of corrections professionals in order to avoid unnecessary conflict (e.g., write-ups for minor infractions) and to effectively engage women as partners in their supervision and program plans.

#### **CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT BASED ON SAFETY, RESPECT, AND DIGNITY.**

Given the high rates of trauma and victimization experienced by women offenders, it is important that the physical environment, and standard protocols and staff behaviors do not unintentionally exacerbate the impact of those experiences. It is well understood that a safe, consistent and supportive environment is fundamental to positive behavioral change. Thus all staff should be expected to interact professionally and respectfully with women. Further, staff should be trained to recognize and respond appropriately to the behavioral impacts of trauma (e.g., flashbacks, severe depression, anxiety, fear of isolation and restraints, suicidal thoughts and self cutting). Care must be taken to ensure that standard procedures (e.g., segregation, use of restraints, medical examinations) do not retraumatize women.

<sup>30</sup> Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003.

<sup>31</sup> This section contains text adapted from Berman, 2005.

**DEVELOP POLICIES, PRACTICES, AND PROGRAMS THAT ARE RELATIONAL AND PROMOTE HEALTHY CONNECTIONS TO CHILDREN, FAMILY, SIGNIFICANT OTHERS, AND THE COMMUNITY.**

This principle is based on the importance of relationships in women's psychosocial development (i.e., relational theory) and the fact that so many women have experienced unhealthy relationships involving domestic violence, substance abuse, and crime-involved partners. To increase women offenders' success, practitioners must assist them in forming healthy relationships with their families, children, partners, and pro-social others in the community.

**ADDRESS THE COMPLEX PROBLEMS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE, TRAUMA AND MENTAL ILLNESS IN AN INTEGRATED AND COMPREHENSIVE WAY.**

In order to respond more effectively to the interconnectedness of substance abuse, trauma, and mental health issues in women's lives, services for women offenders in these areas should be managed in a comprehensive and integrated way. Cultural issues also need to be appropriately integrated into the program design in order to increase retention and impact on women.

**PROVIDE WOMEN WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE THEIR SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS.**

Most women who enter the criminal justice system are economically disadvantaged, with little education, few job skills, and sporadic employment histories. Many have relied on public assistance that, in some states, will no longer be available following a felony drug conviction. At the same time, many women offenders are single mothers who must find ways to support themselves and their children when they reenter the community. For these reasons, assisting female offenders with education and training to improve their financial situations is critical.

*Elements of Gender-Responsive Practice*

**RELATIONAL:** Work with women in a relational way to promote mutual respect and empathy.

**STRENGTHS-BASED:** Recognize that all women have strengths that can be mobilized.

**TRAUMA-INFORMED:** Recognize that the history and context of personal abuse plays an important role in how women respond to services.

**HOLISTIC:** Provide a comprehensive case management model that addresses the complex and multiple needs of women in conflict with the law.

**CULTURALLY COMPETENT:** Provide services that value and acknowledge the diverse cultural backgrounds of women.

*Source: Benedict, 2008.*

## **ESTABLISH A SYSTEM OF REENTRY AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION WITH COMPREHENSIVE AND COLLABORATIVE SERVICES.**

Women offenders leaving prison must stay clean and sober, return to a primary caretaker role for their children, earn a livable wage, obtain reliable child care and transportation, and find safe and sober housing for themselves and their children. This must occur while meeting the requirements of community supervision and additional demands of other public agencies (e.g., child welfare). Furthermore, many women must find care for chronic health conditions such as HIV.

To ensure that women are not overwhelmed by the requirements of multiple service agencies, case management approaches must ensure that essential services are readily available and well coordinated. That is, the organizations providing substance abuse, public health, employment, child welfare, and housing services must work with corrections agencies to provide “wraparound services” or a “holistic and culturally sensitive plan” for providing services to women within their communities.<sup>32</sup>

## ***Critical Issues for Women Offender Management and Transition***

This section provides an overview of the current literature on key issues in managing women offenders including gender-responsive classification, risk and needs assessments, case management, and programming.

### **TRADITIONAL CLASSIFICATION TOOLS**

In the prison setting, classification tools are used at intake to assess the risk of major and minor misconducts, in order to determine custody level, and to identify programming needs of offenders related to the reduction of future offending. It is essential that these tools be valid for both men and women.

Unfortunately, a 2004 survey of state classification systems revealed that the static, offense-related classification tools in use in many systems are not valid for women, either because they have not been validated on a female offender population or because they ignore important aspects of women’s lives relevant to their institutional behavior.<sup>33</sup> As discussed below, *a particular concern is over-classification, where classification tools prescribe higher and more restrictive custody levels than women’s behaviors warrant. Inappropriately high custody levels may limit access to reentry and community release programs typically reserved for lower custody women.*

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<sup>32</sup> Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003, pg. 82.

<sup>33</sup> Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004. A recent validation study of a gender-responsive assessment tool provides additional support to the finding that traditional custody classification tools based on static, offense-related variables are less predictive of future offending than gender-responsive factors (Van Voorhis et al., 2010). The results of this study are discussed below.

## GENDER-RESPONSIVE RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

The first principle of evidence-based practice posits the use of empirically valid risk and needs assessments of offenders.<sup>34</sup> However, the use of the same assessment tools used with male offenders may not provide an accurate picture of women's risk to reoffend or their treatment needs.

Consider the following concerns about the use of "gender-neutral" (i.e., those tools that do not differentiate between men and women) risk and need assessments and classification tools for women:<sup>35</sup>

- ✓ Women who are assessed using gender-neutral tools as high risk in institutions for misconducts, escapes, and violence actually engage in fewer high risk infractions than men similarly assessed as high risk. That is, high risk women "look more like" medium risk men.
- ✓ Some factors operate differently in women than men (e.g., higher levels of education lower risk of infractions for men in institutions, but increase risk for women).<sup>36</sup>
- ✓ Factors important to women may not be accounted for in gender-neutral tools (e.g., children's well-being may be a critical factor for women in terms of both positive institutional behavior and reentry success, but is not addressed in these tools).

To address these concerns, a number of gender-responsive tools and supplements for women have been developed or are currently under development. These include:

- ✓ The Women's Risk/Need Assessment, a "stand-alone" gender-responsive tool, developed by the University of Cincinnati (UC) in collaboration with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), and validated on a sample of women on probation, prison, and pre-release in Missouri.<sup>37</sup>
- ✓ The Women's Risk/Need Supplement ("the trailer"), designed to supplement current dynamic risk/needs tools such as the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) and the Northpointe Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS). The supplement was also developed by UC and NIC. The supplement was validated for use with the LSI-R, but a more comprehensive version is currently being studied for use with both the COMPAS and the LSI-R. Preliminary findings from California's institutions for women are favorable regarding the Women's COMPAS supplement.
- ✓ The Service Planning Instrument for Women (the SPIn-W) by Orbis Partners of Ottawa Canada, which is currently being validated on a large sample of women in Connecticut.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Readers are encouraged to read and become familiar with the Coaching Packet on Implementing Evidence-Based Practices before reading this Coaching Packet.

<sup>35</sup> Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004.

<sup>36</sup> This dynamic is not well understood. However, some researchers hypothesize that more educated women are effective advocates for their needs and rights, thus appearing troublesome or demanding – characteristics that can result in write-ups for minor infractions.

<sup>37</sup> See <http://www.uc.edu/womenoffenders/> & <http://www.nicic.org/WomenOffenders>.

<sup>38</sup> See <http://www.orbispartners.com/index.php/assessment/spin-w/>.

- ✓ A version of Northpointe's COMPAS that includes gender-responsive risk/need factors for women.<sup>39</sup>

#### **EMERGING LESSONS FROM IMPLEMENTING GENDER-RESPONSIVE RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENTS**

Efforts to validate gender-responsive instruments for women offenders provide some noteworthy findings that may change the way that women offenders are managed in institutional and community settings. One year follow-up studies of the Women's Risk/Need Assessment and "the trailer" by the University of Cincinnati and NIC show promising results:<sup>40</sup>

- ✓ Many gender-responsive factors (e.g., depression, psychosis, anger) were predictive of misconduct (in the institution) and/or recidivism (in the community) for women.
- ✓ Certain factors emerged from the research as strengths of women: family support significantly reduced the risk of both misconduct and reoffense, while educational assets and self-efficacy reduced the likelihood of reoffense.
- ✓ The traditional predictors of criminal behavior (i.e., gender-neutral factors) were also predictive of both prison misconduct and reoffending for women.
  - However, the relative importance of these criminogenic needs was different for women than that which is generally recognized as the "Top 4" and "Next 4" criminogenic needs.<sup>41</sup> For instance, antisocial attitudes and antisocial associates were not as predictive of women's recidivism as expected on the basis of the research on men. Meanwhile, the most important predictors for women included substance abuse, education, and employment, factors not considered as part of the traditional "Top 4" criminogenic needs based on predominantly male samples.

While these findings should be considered preliminary until further research is conducted, it is noteworthy that *consideration of gender-responsive factors in addition to the gender-neutral predictors of criminal behavior will increase corrections professionals' accuracy in predicting women offenders' prison misconduct and reoffense*.<sup>42</sup> Inclusion of these factors also offers case managers more relevant information – gender-responsive and gender-neutral risk factors and, importantly, strengths – with which to build case plans and prioritize interventions to reduce reoffending.

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<sup>39</sup> See <http://www.northpointeinc.com/software---women.aspx>.

<sup>40</sup> See also Exhibit 2. Van Voorhis et al., 2010; Van Voorhis et al., 2009.

<sup>41</sup> See the Coaching Packet on Implementing Evidence-Based Practices.

<sup>42</sup> See Van Voorhis et al., 2010; Van Voorhis et al., 2009 for a more in depth discussion of their findings.

**Exhibit 2: Risk Factors and Strengths of Women Offenders<sup>43</sup>**

	<b>Gender-Neutral</b>	<b>Gender-Responsive</b>
<b>Institutional Risk Factors<sup>44</sup></b> <i>Increases risk of misconduct</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal history</li> <li>• Antisocial attitudes</li> <li>• Family conflict</li> <li>• History of mental illness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depression/anxiety symptoms</li> <li>• Psychotic symptoms</li> <li>• Child abuse</li> <li>• Anger</li> <li>• Relationship dysfunction</li> </ul>
<b>Institutional Strengths</b> <i>Reduces risk of misconduct</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Support</li> </ul>
<b>Community Risk Factors<sup>45</sup></b> <i>Increases risk of recidivism in the community</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal history</li> <li>• Antisocial attitudes</li> <li>• Antisocial associates</li> <li>• Educational challenges</li> <li>• Employment/financial</li> <li>• Family conflict</li> <li>• Substance abuse history</li> <li>• Dynamic substance abuse</li> <li>• History of mental illness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depression/anxiety symptoms</li> <li>• Psychotic symptoms</li> <li>• Housing safety</li> <li>• Anger</li> <li>• Parental stress</li> </ul>
<b>Community Strengths</b> <i>Reduces risk of recidivism</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education assets</li> <li>• Family support</li> <li>• Self-efficacy</li> </ul>

## CASE MANAGEMENT

Similar to the new risk and needs assessment instruments for women, a new model has emerged for women offender case management based on the evidence-based and gender-responsive literature. Orbis Partners Inc., in partnership with the National Institute of Corrections, and with an advisory group of practitioners and researchers, developed the *Women Offender Case Management Model* (WOCMM).<sup>46</sup>

The goals of this case management model are not only to reduce future criminal behavior but also to increase the health and well being of women, their families, and communities. The model is intended for use with women sentenced directly to probation and throughout the reentry process, including in-prison assessment and programming, transitional planning, and

<sup>43</sup> Van Voorhis et al., 2010.

<sup>44</sup> The risk factors of substance abuse history and dynamic substance abuse did not predict misconduct in the research samples and therefore are not included in this chart as predictors of misconduct. As with all the gender-responsive risk factors, these are undergoing further research with larger samples.

<sup>45</sup> Child abuse and adult victimization were only found to be strong predictors of recidivism in some of the research samples in community settings and therefore are not included in this chart as predictors of recidivism. These are also undergoing further research with larger samples.

<sup>46</sup> See Orbis Partners, 2006. The WOCMM model, while building from the best available research, is currently being piloted in three jurisdictions: one with probation cases and two with women transitioning from prison to the community. Research is underway to test its effectiveness.

community supervision. The implementation of the Women Offender Case Management Model should be guided by the following “core practices:”<sup>47</sup>

1. Provide a comprehensive set of mutually supportive services that address the complex needs of women.
2. Recognize that all women have strengths and resources that can be utilized to address their challenges (i.e., do not solely focus on risk factors).
3. Work intentionally to ensure that women are involved in case planning and the supervision process (i.e., enhance their intrinsic motivation<sup>48</sup>) and respect women’s rights to choose which needs to addressed and in what order.
4. Promote services that are “limitless” and are available to women and their families long after the termination of criminal justice supervision.
5. Match services to the risk level and criminogenic needs of women.
6. Build essential partnerships with the community and enhance its capacity to serve women offenders (i.e., ensure that critical resources are available and readily accessible).<sup>49</sup>
7. Establish a multi-disciplinary case management team (including women as part of this team).<sup>50</sup>
8. Monitor progress and evaluate outcomes (i.e., assure that case plans address the unique needs of women offenders).<sup>51</sup>
9. Establish quality assurance methods to ensure program integrity.

***WOCMM Definition of Case Management***

**Case Management is a dynamic, seamless process that starts at sentencing and continues beyond discharge from prison and/or community supervision until women are stabilized in their communities.**

In order to be successful, the case management team must work collaboratively with women offenders to define individual needs and strengths, and find mutually agreed upon goals. The team must also utilize a common framework to monitor progress and update outcomes as women transition through the criminal justice system.

*Adapted from: Orbis Partners, 2006.*

<sup>47</sup> Orbis Partners, 2006.

<sup>48</sup> For more information on enhancing offender motivation, see the Shaping Offender Behavior Coaching Packet.

<sup>49</sup> See the Coaching Packet on Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry.

<sup>50</sup> See the Effective Case Management Coaching Packet.

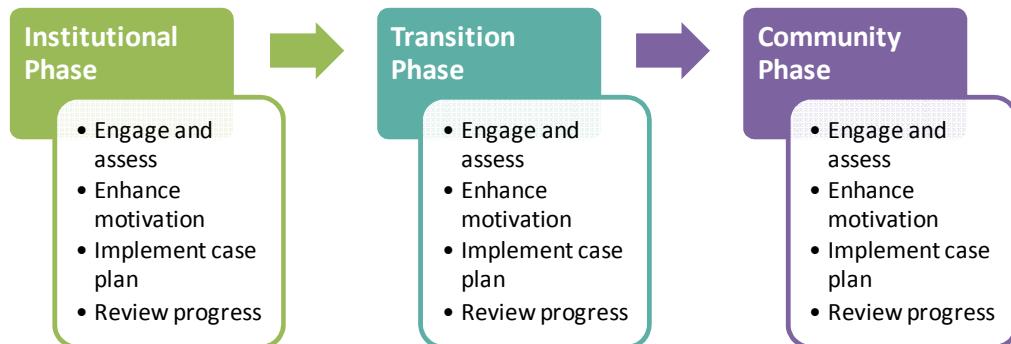
<sup>51</sup> For more information, see the Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts Coaching Packet.

The WOCMM has four stages, all of which can and should be implemented at all stages of the reentry process including the institutional phase, the transition phase, and the community phase. That is, during each of these phases of reentry, the case management team should<sup>52</sup>:

- ✓ **Engage and assess:** Gather a complete picture of the factors that contribute to criminal justice involvement; and identify women's protective factors and strengths.
- ✓ **Enhance women's motivation:** Increase commitment and self-efficacy by enhancing intrinsic motivation (e.g., use Motivational Interviewing techniques).
- ✓ **Implement the case plan:** Identify personal goals for the case plan, and deliver and broker the necessary services to assist women in achieving these goals.
- ✓ **Review progress:** Determine if goals have been achieved, and update the case plan with new goals or alternative steps in achieving goals that have not been realized.

The responsibilities of the team and anticipated outcomes from the four stages of the Women Offender Case Management Model are illustrated in Exhibit 3.

#### Integrating the Four Stages of the Women Offender Case Management Model into the Three Phases of Reentry



<sup>52</sup> A number of tools and resources for use by case management teams in implementing this model are provided at <http://nicic.org/Downloads/PDF/Library/021814.pdf>.

**Exhibit 3: Women Offender Case Management Model (WOCCM) Stages**

Core Stages	Case Management Team Responsibilities	Anticipated Outcomes
<b>Engage and Assess</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a safe environment.</li> <li>• Focus on building rapport and establishing a respectful relationship.</li> <li>• Use a gender-responsive assessment.</li> <li>• Identify major needs and strengths that influence behavior.</li> <li>• Listen to the woman's perspective on her strengths, needs and life experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of the personal, situational, and contextual factors that contribute to criminal justice involvement and that impact life satisfaction.</li> <li>• Increased awareness of strengths that can be mobilized to mediate the impact of risk.</li> </ul>
<b>Enhance Motivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a gender-responsive approach to enhancing motivation.</li> <li>• Provide feedback by summarizing the assessment results.</li> <li>• Explore the priority targets (the strength and need areas resulting from the assessment) with women.</li> <li>• Ask women to identify their personal goals.</li> <li>• Review incentives and disincentives for change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification (by women) of one or more priority targets.</li> <li>• Expression of commitment (by women) to work on one or more of the priority targets.</li> </ul>
<b>Implement the Case Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work collaboratively to develop the case plan (goals, actions steps).</li> <li>• Identify personal and social resources that will augment the case plan.</li> <li>• Provide the opportunity to build formal supports.</li> <li>• Explore service and treatment options across four dimensions: personal, vocational, family, and community.</li> <li>• Promote healthy informal relationships that will support change efforts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action steps are formalized.</li> <li>• Ability (of women) to identify personal and social supports necessary to achieve goals.</li> </ul>
<b>Review Progress</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update progress.</li> <li>• Reinforce successes.</li> <li>• Introduce problem-solving strategies when obstacles arise.</li> <li>• Make deliberate plans to maintain women in success areas (e.g., sustain employment, keep safe housing, comply with supervision conditions, maintain sobriety, sustain positive social connections).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability (by women) to rate personal successes.</li> <li>• Ability (by women) to mobilize strengths and supports when faced with challenges.</li> <li>• Development (by women) of maintenance strategies to ensure proactive responses to high-risk situations.</li> </ul>

#### **GENDER-RESPONSIVE PROGRAMMING**

The number of promising gender-responsive programs has grown in the past 15 years with an increased understanding of women's unique pathways to crime and gender-specific needs.

While the field has suffered from a lack of research on the effectiveness of these programs, this situation is beginning to change. Exhibit 4 illustrates some of these promising gender-responsive programs, and where available, the research evaluating their effectiveness with women.

**Exhibit 4: Promising Gender-Responsive Programs<sup>53</sup>**

Program Name	Description	Evaluations and Resources
<b>Moving On</b> (by Dr. Marilyn Van Dieten)	Goals are to provide women with opportunities to mobilize and enhance existing strengths, and access personal and community resources; incorporates cognitive-behavioral techniques with Motivational Interviewing and relational theory.	A recent evaluation of its use with women on probation in Iowa confirmed its effectiveness in reducing recidivism (Gehring, Van Voorhis, & Bell, 2010).
<b>Beyond Trauma: A Healing Journey for Women</b> (by Dr. Stephanie Covington)	Uses psycho-educational and cognitive skills approaches to help women develop coping skills and emotional wellness to counter the effects of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.	Van Dieten, 1998 <a href="http://www.orbispartners.com/index.php/programs/moving-on/">http://www.orbispartners.com/index.php/programs/moving-on/</a>
<b>Helping Women Recover: A Program for Treating Addiction</b> (by Dr. Stephanie Covington)	Addresses substance abuse by integrating the four theories of women's offending and treatment: pathways, addiction, trauma, and relational theories.	Covington, 2003 <a href="http://www.stephaniecovington.com/b_beyond.asp">http://www.stephaniecovington.com/b_beyond.asp</a>
<b>Seeking Safety</b> (by Dr. Lisa Najavits)	Treats the co-existing disorders of trauma, PTSD, and substance abuse; draws from the research on cognitive-behavioral treatment of substance abuse disorders, post-traumatic stress treatment, and education.	Evaluations indicate improvements in social adjustment, psychiatric symptoms, problem-solving, substance abuse, and depression ( <a href="http://www.seekingsafety.org/3-03-06/studies.html">http://www.seekingsafety.org/3-03-06/studies.html</a> ).
<b>Forever Free<sup>54</sup></b> (California Institution for Women)	Goals are to reduce in-prison disciplinary actions as well as substance use and recidivism; run as a modified therapeutic community; provides substance abuse treatment and relapse prevention services.	The one program evaluation conducted thus far demonstrated that participants had fewer arrests or convictions while on parole supervision than participants in a comparison group (Hall et al., 2004).
<b>Female Offender Treatment and Employment Programs (FOTEP)</b> (Implemented within 13 counties in California)	Assists with employment, substance use, criminal involvement and parenting for reentry; employs intensive case management, vocational and family services, and facilitates reunification with children.	Kassebaum, 1999 <a href="http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/programfulldetails.asp?PROGRAM_ID=90">http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/programfulldetails.asp?PROGRAM_ID=90</a> An ongoing evaluation indicates that participants are less likely to recidivate and use alcohol/drugs, and are more likely to find employment and live with their children (Grella, 2005).
		Grella & Greenwell, 2007 <a href="http://www.waldenhouse.org/services/cj_residential.html">http://www.waldenhouse.org/services/cj_residential.html</a>

<sup>53</sup> Adapted from: Gehring & Bauman, 2008; Van Voorhis et al., 2009.

<sup>54</sup> This program implements the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) guide for treating women offenders (Kassebaum, 1999).

## *Some Gender-Responsive Strategies for Successful Reentry*

Despite the growing literature on the management of women offenders, the challenge remains in determining how best to implement policies and practices that assist women offenders in making a successful transition to the community. This section provides some policy and practice considerations for correctional agencies, community supervision agencies, and their partners as they work with women offenders during the three phases of reentry.<sup>55</sup>

### **INCARCERATION PHASE**

During the first phase of reentry, there are a number of considerations specific to women offenders:

- ✓ Ensure that institutional classification tools, and risk and need assessments used with women have been validated on an appropriate female population.
- ✓ In the short-term, supplement tools with additional instruments to ensure that information is collected on what we know to be the critical factors for women.
- ✓ Collect information on women offender strengths and protective factors that can be built upon while women prepare for release to the community.
- ✓ Create institutional environments that feel safe for women (i.e., where the physical environment and staff behavior do not further traumatize women physically, sexually, or emotionally).
- ✓ Ensure that women in institutions are provided with needed medical, mental health, substance abuse, and support services.
- ✓ Consider including mentors on the case management teams who can work closely with women, encouraging them to work towards their case management goals.
- ✓ Encourage women to develop healthy and supportive relationships while incarcerated; encourage staff to build rapport with women, treat them with respect, and show genuine interest in their success.
- ✓ Once stabilized, assist women in working towards the goals outlined in their case plans in order to begin preparing for life in the community.
- ✓ Provide gender-responsive programming to address women offenders' unique criminogenic needs.

### **Critical Information to Collect when Assessing Women Offenders**

- History of abuse
- Relationship status/issues
- Self-esteem/self-efficacy
- Mental health (including depression and PTSD)
- Parental stress (e.g., number of children, current arrangements for children)
- Level of family support or conflicts
- Financial status/poverty
- Safety concerns
- Strengths/protective factors

*Adapted from: Berman & Gibel, 2007;  
Van Voorhis et al., 2009.*

<sup>55</sup> The strategies outlined here are adapted from Berman, 2005; Berman & Gibel, 2007; readers are referred to these documents for a more in-depth discussion of women offender reentry issues.

- ✓ Provide education and vocational training to women that match the job opportunities available in the community to assist women in achieving financial independence.
- ✓ Institute policies that help women to sustain healthy prosocial relationships with their families and communities (e.g., family-friendly visiting rooms, encouraging correspondence through mail and phone calls).
- ✓ Collaborate with a child welfare liaison to ensure that women are meeting obligations that will prevent termination of their parental rights.

#### ***Women's Protective Factors***

Protective factors are the **strengths of the woman** and **aspects of her social environment** (also called human and social capital) that help her resist pressure to return to offending behavior. Some protective factors include:

- Strong self-efficacy (i.e., the belief that one's life is under her own power and control and that she can take positive steps to improve her circumstances)
- Positive social networks (e.g., supportive families, friends, religious groups, etc.)
- Higher levels of education

#### **TRANSITION PHASE**

As incarcerated women prepare for their release from prison, there are a number of considerations for assisting women as they transition to the community:

- ✓ Modify membership of the case management team as needed to ensure planning for supervision and services that are essential to stabilizing women in the community (e.g., parole supervision, physical and mental health, employment, family reintegration services).
- ✓ Work with women to maintain the progress they have made in achieving the goals identified in their case plans.
- ✓ Utilize community-based programs and services which might continue to provide services to women upon their release to the community (i.e., to build trust and increase retention in the community); at a minimum, invite representatives to meet with women prior to release for introductory purposes.
- ✓ Consider the use of community-based residential facilities as early as possible in the sentence to assist women in their adjustment to community life.
- ✓ When developing a plan for housing post-release, consider the safety of the women (e.g., whether they will be free from domestic violence by a romantic partner, whether the housing option jeopardizes their sobriety), as well as accommodating their children.
- ✓ Assist women in working towards job opportunities that provide a living wage for their families (and which provides independence from relationships that may jeopardize their success and safety).

- ✓ Pay attention to the survival needs of women (i.e., where they will acquire food, clothing, housing, transportation, identification) to ensure that they are prepared for the first few weeks of living in the community.
- ✓ Assist in family reunification by providing opportunities for families to prepare together for women's release to the community (e.g., offer family counseling, informational sessions).

#### Achieving Successful Reentry: Reports from Women Offenders

When surveyed about what helped them successfully transition to the community, women said the following:

- Relationships with family, friends, and other women who were positive role models.
- Positive support from social networks, particularly once in the community (e.g., housing, job connections, transportation).
- Positive support from/relationships with corrections staff, especially female staff.
- Safe environments in which to live (e.g., efforts to reduce trauma in their lives, like not using restraints).
- Programming such as substance abuse, mental health, parenting, education/vocational, within the institution and in the community.
- Ability to secure employment/financial support.

*Adapted from: Cobbina, 2009; Covington, 2001.*

#### COMMUNITY PHASE

When women are released to the community, there are a number of strategies that might assist them in finding success:

- ✓ Ensure survival needs are met for the immediate future (e.g., connect women with services that offer clothing and food, provide bus passes for transportation).
- ✓ Link women with substance abuse issues to treatment immediately upon release (i.e., set up appointments ahead of time, share information from institutionally-based programs with community treatment providers) to ensure continuity of care and prevent relapse.
- ✓ Ensure that women are connected to physical and mental health services in the community that will provide needed medications and ongoing care.
- ✓ Be clear with women about community supervision expectations and consequences (to ensure that women see sanctions as fair and predictable).
- ✓ Offer legal assistance and transportation for women who must meet obligations to the child welfare system in order to gain or keep custody of their children.
- ✓ Acknowledge the challenges women face in reintegrating with their families and remain flexible in assisting women in dealing with these challenges (i.e., additional effort by

parole officers and others on the team beyond simply referring women to community-based services).

- ✓ Assist women in applying their knowledge and skills (i.e., parole officers and others on the case management team should expect that women may need continual support and advice to make changes in their lives).
- ✓ Support the successful employment of women offenders under supervision (e.g., create plans for childcare, determine transportation, educate women about on the job sexual harassment).
- ✓ Include family and friends involved in women's lives (whether providing housing, transportation, etc.) in their supervision and management.
- ✓ Continue to assist in building resources for women to support their vocational, personal, and social needs.
- ✓ Prepare women for discharge from community supervision (i.e., explain what will change once formal supervision by the criminal justice system ends, ensure that women are integrated into a network of community resources that will continue in the after-care phase).

### **Some Indicators of a Gender-Responsive and Evidence-Based Correctional Facility**

- A gender-informed mission statement is clearly articulated and prominently displayed throughout the facility.
- Attention is paid to the adequacy and appropriateness of basic living conditions (cleanliness, heating, cooling, comfortable furnishings, and visual environment).
- The facility design and operation match the demonstrated security requirements of the women (i.e., no higher security than warranted).
- There are written policies and procedures for the implementation of gender-informed practice in critical areas (i.e., property list, hygiene products, transportation of pregnant women, cross-gender supervision, privacy, pat and strip searches, and sexual harassment/PREA).
- The staffing pattern supports the operational requirements of working with women and pays particular attention to the number of female staff overall, including same sex supervision at important times.
- Inmates and staff feel physically and emotionally safe (i.e., basic management and security procedures ensure the safety of both).
- Staff members receive initial and ongoing training that provides them with the skills and competencies for working effectively with women (e.g., behavioral impacts of trauma, communication style).
- Staff interact professionally and respectfully with women offenders, and maintain appropriate staff-to-inmate and staff-to-staff boundaries. Staff encourage respectful language, model effective problem solving and conflict resolution, and exhibit consistent practice across shifts.
- Staff members set a positive tone in interactions with inmates, use affirmations and reinforcers instead of inappropriate confrontation, acknowledge strengths and assets, and use problem solving techniques to de-escalate problems.
- The facility uses an objective tool for custody classification that has been validated on a sample of women offenders in the facility.
- The facility uses an objective and valid assessment of risk of reoffending, needs, and strengths that includes items relevant for women.
- The assessment of risk, needs, and strengths guides the development of individual case plans, and recommends access and referral to critical services.
- Women receive the medical, mental health, transportation, legal and victim services as indicated in their case plans.

*Note: These indicators are drawn from a comprehensive instrument, developed under funds from the National Institute of Corrections, called the Gender Informed Practice Assessment (GIPA). This tool, which looks comprehensively at the management, operations, climate, and programming in women's prisons, is currently being piloted.*

### **Some Indicators of a Gender-Responsive and Evidence-Based Correctional Supervision Approach**

- A gender-informed mission statement is clearly articulated to supervision staff and prominently displayed in field offices and in official correspondence.
- There are written policies and procedures for the implementation of gender-informed practice.
- Staff members receive initial and ongoing training that provides them with the skills and competencies for working effectively with women (e.g., behavioral impacts of trauma, communication style).
- Supervision staff interact professionally and respectfully with women offenders, and maintain appropriate boundaries. Staff encourage respectful language, and model effective problem solving and conflict resolution.
- Supervision staff understand that their role goes beyond surveillance and enforcement; instead, they also have an obligation to promote offender success.
- Supervision staff set a positive tone in interactions with offenders, use affirmations and reinforcers instead of inappropriate confrontation, acknowledge strengths and assets, and use problem solving techniques to de-escalate problems.
- Appropriate information is received from the correctional facility and incorporated into women's community supervision plans.
- An objective and valid assessment of risk of reoffending, needs, and strengths, that includes items relevant for women, is used.
- The assessment of risk, needs, and strengths guides the development of individual case plans.
- Supervision levels are dictated by the risk instrument; interventions are dictated by the assessment of needs.
- Conditions of supervision are realistic, relevant, and research based. The number and type of conditions do not exceed the level of risk women pose to the community.
- Women understand the conditions of supervision, the expectations of the supervision officer, and the potential consequences.
- Supervision staff effectively partner with community-based services to ensure that women receive the necessary mental health, substance abuse, employment, and victim services.
- Responses to violations are graduated, gender-responsive, and appropriate to the seriousness of the behavior.

## Section II: Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders Coaching Packet Checklist

Considering Women Offenders	YES	NO	NOT CLEAR	NOTES
1. Have classification tools been validated on an appropriate female offender population?				
2. Are gender-responsive risk and need assessments used with female offenders (or have existing tools been validated for women)?				
3. Do staff understand the differences between female and male offenders (e.g., pathways to crime, gender-specific needs)?				
4. Is case management a seamless, dynamic process from intake to discharge from community supervision?				
5. Has a multi-disciplinary case management team been formed that includes representatives who can address the specific needs of women (i.e., substance abuse, mental health, trauma)?				
6. Are institutional settings for women safe and managed in such a way as to not retraumatize them (i.e., free from sexual misconduct, and verbal and physical abuse)?				
7. Do staff and case management team members treat women with respect and indicate a genuine interest in their well being?				
8. Are women involved in the development of their own case plans?				
9. Are techniques used to enhance women's intrinsic motivation (e.g., Motivational Interviewing)?				
10. Are women's strengths and resources accounted for when developing case plan goals?				
11. Are programs provided that address the criminogenic needs of women (e.g., those factors linked with future criminal behavior such as self-efficacy, family conflict, past abuse)?				
12. Are services provided to address the survival needs of women upon transition to the community (e.g., housing, transportation, food, clothing)?				
13. Is specific attention paid to women's concerns about their children (e.g., loss of custody, reintegration upon release)?				
14. Do staff promote healthy and supportive relationships among women and others?				
15. Are women provided with educational and vocational opportunities to assist them in achieving financial independence?				
16. Do housing plans include consideration of the women's children, and whether significant others with whom they will live might jeopardize their safety or sobriety?				
17. Is information passed on to the necessary agencies/organizations to ensure continuity of care when women transition from prison to the community?				
18. Are women provided with information regarding available after-care upon discharge from community supervision?				

## Section III: Action Planning Worksheet

<b>GOAL:</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 2:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 3:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

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<http://nicic.gov/WODP/>

National Institute of Corrections, Women Offenders Project Web Site:  
<http://nicic.gov/WomenOffenders>

Women's Prison Association Web Site: <http://www.wpaonline.org/>

# COACHING PACKET

## Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

One in a series of Coaching Packets designed  
to assist jurisdictions in the implementation  
of effective practices that will support  
successful offender outcomes

Author: Madeline M. Carter, Center for Effective Public Policy

2010



### ***Coaching Packet Series 1: Creating a Blueprint for an Effective Offender Reentry System***

- A Framework for Offender Reentry
- Establishing a Rational Planning Process
- Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### ***Coaching Packet Series 2: Delivering Evidence-Based Services***

- Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
- Effective Case Management
- Shaping Offender Behavior
- Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry
- Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring
- Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

### ***Coaching Packet Series 3: Ensuring Meaningful Outcomes***

- Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts
- Continuous Quality Improvement



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## Introduction to the Coaching Packet Series

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) and its partners, The Urban Institute and The Carey Group, were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to the Fiscal Year 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees (hereafter “PRI grantees”). The project team served in this capacity from April 2008 to June 2010.

The Center is a nonprofit criminal justice consulting organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since the early 1980s, the Center has provided training and technical assistance to the criminal justice field on a wide array of topics, including transition and reentry, and has administered a number of national projects of this kind. The Urban Institute was established as a private, nonprofit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1968 and is a leader in prisoner reentry research, focusing on making best practice information accessible to practitioners and policymakers. The Carey Group is a justice consulting firm with extensive practitioner experience in evidence-based practices, strategic planning, community and restorative justice and corrections.

As a part of its technical assistance delivery to the PRI grantees, the Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work. The final products of this work include eleven Coaching Packets in three series. These Coaching Packets offer practical value beyond the jurisdictions involved in this initiative and are available to criminal justice professionals and their partners interested in enhancing their strategies for reducing recidivism and improving offender outcomes.

Each Coaching Packet provides an overview of a specific topic as it relates to successful offender reentry, and offers tools and resources for those interested in exploring the topic in greater depth.

- *Series 1* provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system. This series provides a conceptual framework for addressing prisoner reentry at the policy level; outlines a strategic planning process to support implementation efforts; and explores the establishment of successful collaborative partnerships at the policy and case management levels.
- *Series 2* addresses key issues related to the delivery of evidence-based services to offenders. This series summarizes the key literature with regard to implementing evidence-based practices; explores advances in approaches to case management; addresses the important role of staff in changing offender behavior; and summarizes research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- *Series 3* provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes. This series describes methods to assess the effectiveness of reentry efforts and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

## FY 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Grantees

The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) – intended to support the development and implementation of institutional and community corrections-based reentry programs to help returning offenders find employment and provide other critical services – is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grants were awarded to state and local corrections agencies by DOJ to provide pre-release and transition services to offenders and were “matched” by DOL grants to faith- and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to provide post-release services, focusing on employment assistance and mentoring.

Thirty-five states received grants in three cycles of the Initiative during Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 23 FY 2007 PRI grantees received assistance under this project. FY 2007 grants were awarded in the fall of 2007 and implemented from 2008 to 2010; however, some grantees will not complete their activities until 2011. The FY 2007 grantees provided technical assistance under this project included:

- ✓ ALASKA, Native Justice Center
- ✓ ARIZONA, Criminal Justice Commission/ Yuma County Sheriff’s Office
- ✓ CALIFORNIA, Department of Community Services and Development
- ✓ COLORADO, Division of Criminal Justice Services/City of Denver
- ✓ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Government
- ✓ FLORIDA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ HAWAII, Department of Public Safety
- ✓ INDIANA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ IOWA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ KANSAS, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MAINE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MICHIGAN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MINNESOTA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEVADA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEW JERSEY, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NORTH CAROLINA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ OHIO, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- ✓ PENNSYLVANIA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ RHODE ISLAND, Department of Corrections
- ✓ TENNESSEE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ VIRGINIA, Department of Criminal Justice Services
- ✓ WISCONSIN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ WYOMING, Department of Corrections

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<sup>1</sup> The PRI program will end when the FY 2008 grantees complete their activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

Becki Ney, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program Project Director. Ms. Ney conceptualized and oversaw the development of the Coaching Packet series.

Madeline M. Carter, Principal, and Rachelle Giguere, Program Associate, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the key editors for the Coaching Packet series. Ms. Giguere also provided extensive research support to the development of the series.

Special thanks are extended to Tom Talbot, Senior Manager, Center for Effective Public Policy, for his significant contributions to the early development of this Coaching Packet.

# **Introduction to the Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry Coaching Packet**

## *The Contents of this Packet*

This Coaching Packet provides:

- A definition of collaboration, its distinction from other forms of working together, and examples of the differences between the collaborative activities that occur at the case management and policy levels;
- A discussion of the importance of collaborative relationships to achieving successful offender reentry and the various stages of the reentry process;
- A tool to identify the individuals who might be included on case management teams at each of these phases and to determine the effectiveness of existing case management teams;
- An aid to developing plans to address identified gap areas; and
- References to additional resources on this topic.

## *The Intended Audience for this Packet*

This Coaching Packet was originally developed to assist grant teams that were established to manage local PRI initiatives. The teams were composed of representatives from institutional and community corrections and faith-based or community organizations involved in the delivery of pre- and post-release services to offenders transitioning from prison to the community. The content of these Coaching Packets has much broader application, however; the information and tools contained within this Coaching Packet can also be used by teams of criminal justice professionals and their partners to assess the status of their efforts in implementing evidence-based practices and effective reentry services to offenders.

This Coaching Packet is intended specifically for policy level and mid level management teams who have the authority to make policy decisions for their agencies. However, it may also be useful for mid-level managers who have the authority and responsibility to influence those above and below them, or to assume responsibility for policy changes themselves.

## *How to Use this Packet*

**SECTION I: READ THE OVERVIEW ON ENGAGING IN COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT REENTRY.**  
This section of the Coaching Packet provides an overview of using partnerships to achieve the successful transition of offenders to the community. Review its content and, if the information it contains is applicable to your work and addresses an area in which you feel you need to focus your efforts, use the tool in Section II to assess your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps with regard to implementing a collaborative approach to reentry.

## **SECTION II: COMPLETE THE ENGAGING IN COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT REENTRY COACHING PACKET CHECKLIST.**

As a team, complete the Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry Coaching Packet Checklist. (Based upon the information you read in Section I, consider who may need to be involved so that you are able to answer the questions thoroughly.) Complete the checklist as a group and discuss your responses along the way.

- Rate each item listed in the checklist (yes, no, not clear).
- For items where your response is “not clear,” make note of the additional information the team needs to collect in order to be able to rate this item.
- Add additional items that may relate to your jurisdiction’s implementation of a collaborative approach to offender management and transition that are not already included on the checklist.
- Develop a consensus-based response for each item on the checklist.
- Once the checklist is completed, consider your jurisdictions’ strengths in implementing such an approach. Make note of these.
- Next, consider your most significant gaps. Make note of these as well.

## **SECTION III: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN.**

If, after completing the checklist in Section II, your team determines that further work on this topic is necessary or would be helpful, follow the steps below to identify your goals, objectives, and action items, and identify any assistance or expertise needed.

Working as a team, review your findings from the Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry Coaching Packet Checklist. Specifically:

1. Determine whether, based upon what you have read and discussed, you desire to advance your jurisdiction’s work with regard to engaging in collaborative partnerships.
2. If you determine you have a desire to improve in this area, write a goal statement that reflects where you want to be with regard to improving your current efforts. Your goal might be to “Enhance our collaborative team by inviting new members not previously involved,” “Refine our team’s vision and mission statement to include the goals and interests of new team members,” “Engage in team building activities to increase team member commitment,” or another goal. Using the Action Planning Worksheet in Section III, note your goal in the area of building more collaborative partnerships.
3. Identify your three most significant strengths in this area and discuss how you might build on those to overcome some of your gaps.
4. Identify your three most significant gaps. For each gap, write an objective. Your objectives might be, “To determine which member is best positioned to invite mental health and substance abuse professionals to the team’s next meeting,” or “Establish a regular meeting schedule for the team to better accomplish its work,” or something else. Note your three objectives on the Action Planning Worksheet.
5. Add the following on the Action Planning Worksheet for each objective:
  - a. The specific sequential steps that must be taken to meet the objective.

- b. The individual who will assume lead responsibility for this action item.
  - c. The completion date for this action item.
- 6. Discuss whether additional assistance or outside expertise is needed to successfully achieve any of your action items. For instance, explore whether additional literature, guidance from another practitioner over the telephone, examples of work products from other jurisdictions, or on-site technical assistance would be helpful options.
  - a. For each action item, identify those for which assistance/expertise is needed.
  - b. Identify the type of assistance/expertise needed.
  - c. Prioritize each of these need areas. If assistance/expertise will be limited, for which action items is assistance most needed?
  - d. Begin exploring ways to secure the needed assistance/expertise.

### ***How to Seek Additional Information***

To download copies of the Coaching Packets, please visit the Center's website at <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>. To obtain further information on the use or content of this or any of the Coaching Packets, or on the 2007 PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program, please contact:

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## Section I: Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### *The Need for a Collaborative Approach to Offender Reentry*

In recent years, corrections agencies have become increasingly cognizant of the complex dimensions of offender reentry, and the importance of partnerships in addressing these issues. Some of the most profound among the barriers to successful reentry include:

- ✓ **Lack of education.** 35% of prisoners released from prison do not have a high school diploma or GED, and a large portion (80%) do not have any postsecondary education, despite the growing importance of a college education to obtaining employment.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ **Lack of job skills and employment barriers.** While many inmates held legal jobs prior to coming to prison, they may lose their skills while incarcerated.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the stigma of being in prison coupled with an inconsistent employment history may prevent them from finding employment once they are released to the community.<sup>4</sup>
- ✓ **Alcohol and Drug Addiction.** Offenders are four times more likely to have substance abuse problems than the general population,<sup>5</sup> which can interfere with successful reentry into the community. At least half of state and federal prisoners meet DSM-IV criteria for drug abuse or dependence.<sup>6</sup>
- ✓ **Mental Health Issues.** More than half of incarcerated adults exhibit mental health problems, with women inmates being disproportionately affected. Fifty-five percent (55%) of male adult inmates exhibit mental health problems, while 73% of women inmates do.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, of those with mental health disorders, a majority also have a co-occurring substance abuse disorder.<sup>8</sup>
- ✓ **Housing.** It is estimated that about one-tenth of offenders entering prison have experienced homelessness and about the same percentage leave prison facing the same reality.<sup>9</sup>
- ✓ **Childcare.** Fifty-five percent (55%) of inmates have children under 18 years of age.<sup>10</sup> For offenders who are primary caregivers, transition to the community includes the stressful event of reunification with children, as well as the pressure to once again provide for them physically, emotionally, and financially.
- ✓ **Transportation.** Offenders returning to the community often struggle to find adequate transportation; this is problematic when they are expected to access services and report to jobs that may be located in remote locations where public transportation is not available.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Brazzell et al., 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Visher, Debus, & Yahner, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> NIJ, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> Mumola & Karberg, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> James & Glaze, 2006.

<sup>8</sup> National GAINS Center, 2002.

<sup>9</sup> Gouvis Roman & Travis, 2004.

<sup>10</sup> Travis, McBride & Solomon, 2003.

<sup>11</sup> Visher, LaVigne, & Travis, 2004.

- ✓ **Identification.** For offenders who are released from prison without identification, obtaining appropriate housing, employment, and public assistance is a challenge if not impossible.<sup>12</sup>

Clearly, corrections agencies cannot address these reentry barriers on their own – nor should they. Other stakeholders, those with greater expertise and perhaps more extensive and specific resources to address these barriers, must be brought to the table to engage in the development of meaningful solutions to the reentry challenge if the justice system is to be successful in effectively preparing offenders for post-release success.

## **Defining Collaboration**

There are several forms of working together, each of which is important to the conduct of criminal justice activities. For instance,

- ✓ **Networking** is the exchange of information between two or more parties, while
- ✓ **Cooperating** is the altering of activities to achieve a common goal, and
- ✓ **Coordinating** is the sharing of resources for mutual benefit.

These forms of working together, while important, are distinct from collaboration.

Collaboration results in a more meaningful outcome and, in turn, requires a much higher level of commitment and responsibility on the part of those who are involved. Exhibit 1 provides an illustration of the differences between networking, cooperating, coordinating, and collaboration. As is illustrated in the examples provided, each form of working together can result in meaningful outcomes. However it is the collaborative approach that offers the greatest promise for efficient and effective offender reentry.

For the purposes of this Coaching Packet, **collaboration** is defined as:

*Working together to achieve a common goal that is difficult or impossible to reach without the assistance of another.*

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

**Exhibit 1:**  
**Working Together: The Differences Between Networking, Coordinating, Cooperating and Collaborating<sup>13</sup>**

Form of Interaction	Definition of this Form of Working Together	An Illustration at the...
<b>Networking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The exchange of information for mutual benefit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Case management level:</i> Prison-based reentry managers meet with community-based substance abuse counselors to share general information about the type of work they do with substance abusing offenders (e.g., how they are assessed, who assesses them, what services are provided, how progress is measured).</li> <li>• <i>Policy level:</i> Leadership of the corrections and substance abuse agencies share information about the number of offenders under their care with substance abuse concerns, patterns of abuse, and the services each agency provides in these cases.</li> </ul>
<b>Coordinating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The exchange of information, and</li> <li>• The altering of activities for mutual benefit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Case management level:</i> Prison-based reentry managers, parole officers and community-based substance abuse counselors develop a method to share substance abuse assessments and treatment completion reports for releasing offenders. Community-based substance abuse counselors develop a new treatment progress report that is routinely shared with parole officers to report on offenders' attendance and progress in treatment.</li> <li>• <i>Policy level:</i> Leadership of the corrections and substance abuse agency agree to adopt the same tools and protocols for assessing substance abuse.</li> </ul>
<b>Cooperating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The exchange of information,</li> <li>• The altering of activities, and</li> <li>• The sharing of resources for mutual benefit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Case management level:</i> Community-based substance abuse counselors agree to supply to prison-based reentry managers and parole officers self-help workbooks they have developed. They are provided at no cost and can be distributed to and used by offenders who are on the waiting list for treatment.</li> <li>• <i>Policy level:</i> Leadership of the corrections agency agrees to provide office space to substance abuse counselors to see offenders and conduct groups in the local parole offices.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The exchange of information,</li> <li>• The altering of activities,</li> <li>• The sharing of resources, and</li> <li>• Working together to achieve a common goal that is difficult or impossible to reach without the assistance of another.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Case management level:</i> Prison-based reentry managers, assigned substance abuse counselors, and parole officers meet jointly with offenders before and following release to share information about offenders and jointly develop a case management plan.</li> <li>• <i>Policy level:</i> Leadership of the corrections and substance abuse agencies agree to pool their funds to jointly create a unit to oversee the continuity of substance abuse care for offenders in prison and transitioning to the community.</li> </ul>

<sup>13</sup> Carter, 2005a.

## ***Varying Forms of Collaborative Partnerships***

Collaborative partnerships are important on two levels.

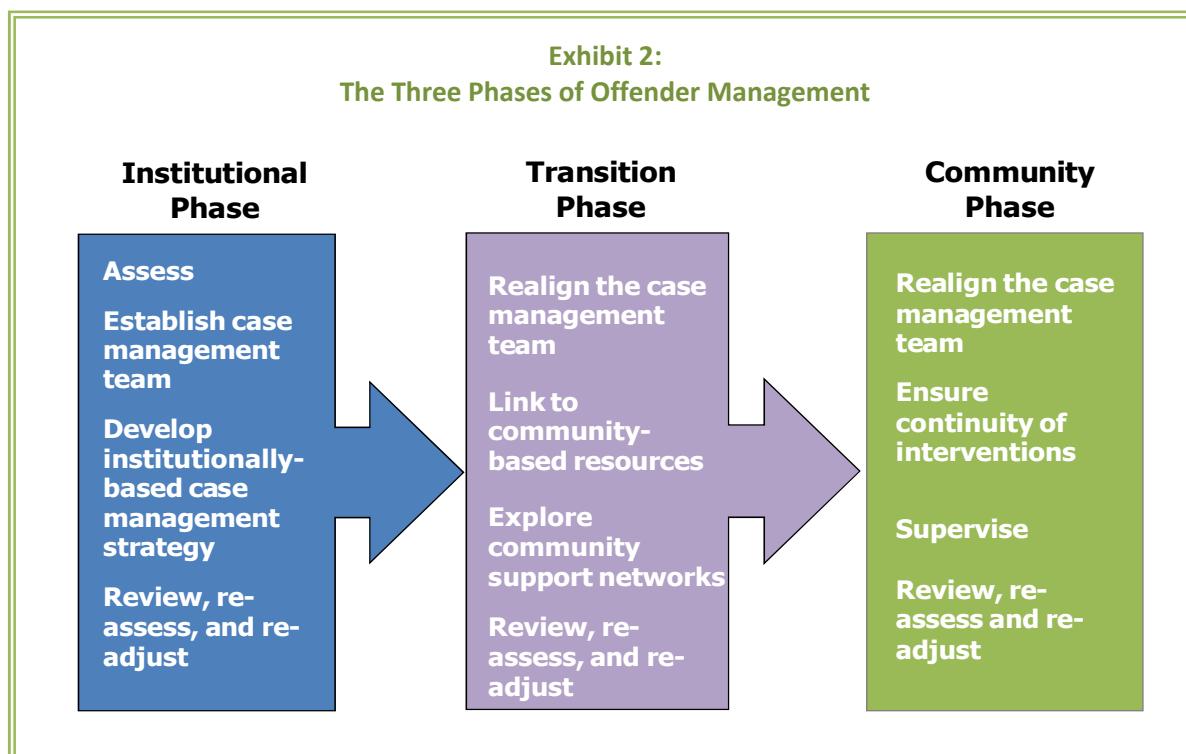
- ✓ ***Collaborative Policymaking:*** Given the many needs associated with a seamless transition from confinement to the community – that is, for example, the need for suitable, sustainable housing; continuous medical and mental health care; reliable transportation; government issued identification; and the flow of information from those who have been working with releasing offenders to those who will assume responsibility for them in the community – it is important that stakeholders come together at the policy level to open lines of communication, create methods for staff to work efficiently across agency boundaries, pool resources, and resolve barriers that are common to releasing offenders (e.g., ineligibility for certain community-based services for those with a criminal record).
- ✓ ***Collaborative Case Management:*** Throughout offenders' custodial and non-custodial care, a variety of individuals are involved in the management of offenders' cases, each with a different area of expertise and focus. Traditionally, these individuals have worked in relative isolation of one another, oftentimes with little communication about their related (and sometimes overlapping) activities. For instance, at one time it was not uncommon for correctional staff to assign offenders to a work crew without regard to their programming needs or risk factors. Likewise, it was not uncommon for offenders to have multiple community-based case workers (e.g., social services, probation/parole, child welfare), each collecting information and monitoring offenders' activities independently and without benefit of the knowledge of others.

The primary focus of this Coaching Packet is on the second of these two: collaborative case management. However, because collaborative policymaking is essential to reentry efforts, this issue is discussed briefly at the end of this Coaching Packet and additional resources are identified to support further exploration and discussion of this important component of the reentry process.

## *Collaboration and the Phases of Reentry*

Collaborative partnerships are important during all three phases of the reentry process.

- ✓ **Institutional Phase:** Reentry begins at the point of institutional intake when key information is gathered or collected (e.g., data and information critical to risk/needs assessment) and a strategy for preparing offenders for release is initially developed. Such a strategy might address those interventions that will be delivered while offenders are in custody and those that will be planned for post-release; behavior management concerns that will be addressed through modeling, reinforcement, and other skill-based approaches; the use of institutional work assignments to build skills, develop prosocial relationships and behaviors; etc. Those involved in the collaborative day-to-day management of cases may include, among others:
- Institutional case managers
  - Treatment providers
  - Educators
  - Work assignment supervisors
  - Correctional staff (line and supervisory) from offenders' housing units



- ✓ **Transition Phase:** Approximately 6-12 months prior to offenders' anticipated release, the process of preparing offenders for imminent release begins. During this period, concrete plans are developed including specific housing arrangements; place of employment; enrollment in community-based programs and services; formalizing plans with prosocial

members of the community who will serve as offenders' community support networks; arranging for transportation and identification; etc. Those involved in the collaborative management of offenders during this transition phase include individuals who work in both the institution and those based in the community, and may include, among others:

- Institutional case managers
- Parole and probation officers
- Institutional and community-based treatment providers
- Educators
- Employers
- Community support networks

✓ **Community Phase:** Following release, the collaborative case management team once again is reconstituted to include those individuals involved in providing accountability and support services to offenders in the community. Those involved may include, among others:

- Parole and probation officers
- Community-based treatment providers
- Educators and/or employers
- Community support networks

**Exhibit 3:**  
Examples of Collaborative Partners in the Offender Management Process



## *The Role of Case Management Teams*

As has been demonstrated above, case management teams are not characterized by their specific composition (either institutional, transition, or community-based) since the make-up of the team may be different based upon the unique circumstances of the: sub-population of offenders; facility or community; or phase of reentry. What *is* common among these collaborative case management teams is the recognition that each member brings an essential perspective, set of skills, and array of resources to bear upon the case; each has the opportunity to build upon and strengthen the effectiveness of the other members' work; and each has an equal investment in the successful outcome of the case. Collaborative case management teams recognize that together they can:

- ✓ Comprehensively assess offenders needs;
- ✓ Develop a coordinated and holistic strategy for delivering services and other interventions designed to prepare offenders for success in the community;
- ✓ Observe offenders progress over time in a variety of settings;
- ✓ Evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies on an ongoing basis; and
- ✓ Adjust strategies over time based upon progress or the identification of new needs.

### **Exhibit 4: Identifying Your Case Management Collaborative Partners**

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If you were to gather together all of the professionals who have routine contact with a particular offender, who would those individuals be during the...

Institutional Phase:	Transition Phase:	Community Phase:
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.
7.	7.	7.
8.	8.	8.

## *Key Steps in Collaborative Case Management*

Identifying the appropriate membership of a case management team is the first of several steps towards building a meaningful partnership. Other key steps include:

- ✓ Sharing information about case(s) and, if new to working together, one another;
- ✓ Establishing ground rules for working together, particularly those related to the methods and frequency of communication and processes for decisionmaking;
- ✓ Clarifying team members' individual and collective roles and responsibilities;
- ✓ Discussing expectations of one another;
- ✓ Identifying the strengths and assets of each team member;

- ✓ Agreeing upon outcomes for cases overall and for individuals specifically; and
- ✓ Developing a strategy for monitoring these outcomes.

In order to ensure that teams achieve the results they want, they must invest in their *process* as much as their *activities*. The success of this process will depend in part on the ability of the team to carry out the steps defined above, but perhaps more importantly, the extent to which the team establishes a climate of trust. A climate of trust is built upon:

- ✓ Equal investment by all team members;
- ✓ An agreement to share responsibility for outcomes – both successes and failures; and
- ✓ A willingness to bring issues and concerns (about the work and/or about the team and its process) to the collaborative table and address them proactively and without judgment.

Exhibit 5 reflects some of the most common barriers to collaborative case management and some suggested strategies for overcoming them. Exhibit 6 is a tool designed to assist case management teams in assessing their collaborative activities. Other tools are available to assist teams to assess their collaborative process.<sup>14</sup>

Exhibit 5: Strategies for Overcoming Common Barriers to Collaborative Case Management	
Common Barriers	Suggested Strategies
<b>Routine meetings pose challenges (e.g., scheduling difficulties, high workload, uncompensated activity, etc.)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Meet over lunch</li> <li>✓ Schedule conference calls to save on travel time</li> <li>✓ Schedule longer, less frequent rather than short, regular meetings (or short, regular meetings rather than longer, less frequent meetings)</li> <li>✓ Conduct “as needed” rather than routine meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Confidentiality constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Seek a legal review to determine the limits of constraints</li> <li>✓ Develop waivers that will allow for the exchange of information among those with a need to know</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of awareness about collaborative case management team member roles and responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Allocate a portion of the meeting time for each member to brief the others on their roles, responsibilities, and most significant challenges</li> <li>✓ Shadow one another for a portion of a work day (e.g., attend a treatment group, an office visit, or a mentoring class)</li> </ul>

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<sup>14</sup> See <http://www.collaborativejustice.org/> for additional tools, including the survey, *Working Together: A Profile of Collaboration* (OMNI Institute, 1992).

**Exhibit 6:**  
**Rate your Collaborative Activities at the Case Management Level**

Using the case management team identified in Exhibit 4, rate the extent to which these individuals...	For ratings of "2" and "3," identify two steps you can take to improve your score in this area.	
<b>Rating Scale</b> 1 = Consistently and in all cases 2 = Occasionally; in some cases 3 = Never; in no cases		
	Rating	
	Action Items	
1. Have equal access to the offenders' <i>historical</i> records (e.g., criminal history; social history; prior institutional/supervision performance; etc.).		1. 2.
2. Have equal access to offenders' <i>current</i> records (e.g., risk/needs and other assessment data; case plan; treatment progress summary; job performance assessment; institutional conduct record; release plan; etc.).		1. 2.
3. Access this information on a routine basis to inform their work and interactions with offenders.		1. 2.
4. Add to this information, by documenting their work and interactions with offenders (e.g., frequency and results of contacts).		1. 2.
5. Informally share information with one another verbally about offenders (e.g., performance in the work setting, housing unit, or treatment group; stressors that arise that are or could be problematic for offenders, such as family circumstances or conflicts with other inmates; etc.).		1. 2.
6. Formally meet as a team to develop a collaborative case management plan.		1. 2.
7. Formally and routinely meet to discuss offenders' progress, as well as potential modifications to case management plans.		1. 2.

## ***Collaboration at the Policy Level***<sup>15</sup>

While this Coaching Packet focuses on collaboration at the case management level, establishing meaningful collaborative partnerships at the policy level is of equal importance. To be sure, collaborative case management teams can only be as effective as their agencies and managers will allow. For instance, a parole officer and a substance abuse counselor could have a remarkable working relationship, but if supervisors discourage time spent in case management activities, or agency policy discourages or disallows the delivery of services to offenders, that individual working relationship will be rendered irrelevant.

To that end, collaborative policy level partnerships should involve those with the authority to make policy and resource allocation decisions for their agency. Policy level teams may include, among others, leadership from the:

- ✓ Criminal courts
- ✓ Adult institutional corrections agency
- ✓ Community supervision agency
- ✓ Paroling authority
- ✓ Victim advocacy organization
- ✓ Mental health agency
- ✓ Public health department and other healthcare agencies
- ✓ Veteran's affairs office
- ✓ Housing authority
- ✓ Employment agencies
- ✓ Social service agency
- ✓ Faith and community-based partners

Some common undertakings for policy level teams focused on offender reentry issues include:<sup>16</sup>

- ✓ Examining critically the offender reentry process in the jurisdiction, including the policies, procedures, and practices of the various agencies that have a role in reentry;
- ✓ Identifying specific needs and challenges related to current reentry efforts;
- ✓ Developing a strategic plan to address the needs and challenges that are surfaced; and
- ✓ Establishing strategies to monitor over time the impact of the changes that were implemented, and continuing to make adjustments as necessary in order to maximize the likelihood of positive offender outcomes and increases in public safety.

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<sup>15</sup> Because material on policy level collaboration is fully developed and available elsewhere, it is not discussed in detail in this Coaching Packet. For more information on policy level collaboration, see <http://www.collaborativejustice.org/>, CEPP, 2007 and Burke, 2008.

<sup>16</sup> For more information regarding these steps and the critical work activities associated with each, please see the Coaching Packet on Establishing a Rational Planning Process.

Exhibit 7, Collaboration to Achieve Successful Transition to the Community in Michigan, illustrates the different types of collaborative teams highlighted in this Coaching Packet.

**Exhibit 7:**  
**Collaboration to Achieve Successful Transition to the Community in Michigan**

In Michigan, collaboration is a critical ingredient of the state's effort to achieve successful offender reentry. The Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative (MPRI) began with a mission to "reduce crime by implementing a seamless plan of services and supervision developed with each offender—*delivered through state and local collaboration*—from the time of their entry to prison through their transition, reintegration, and aftercare in the community."

Currently, 18 sites serving 69 counties implement a local MPRI model that includes:

- A **Local ReEntry Advisory Council** made up of key stakeholders in the community who work to educate the community and build local support for the initiative.
- A **Steering Team** – including the Warden of the community's releasing facility and representatives of local law enforcement, victim rights, faith-based organizations, employment, healthcare, housing, substance abuse, mental health, and family and child welfare – to design a local Comprehensive Prisoner ReEntry Plan for the site and monitor its implementation.
- Two **Coordination Teams**, made up of prison-based and community-based staff, which work together and with the Steering Team to implement the local Comprehensive Prisoner ReEntry Plan and ensure a seamless transition back to the community.

Collaborative case management plays a central role with the MPRI model. **Collaborative Case Management Teams** include institutional and field staff, coordination team members, and others involved with the offender in each phase of reentry (institutional, transition, community). Case Management Teams have four key responsibilities when working with offenders:

- Build rapport and establish a working relationship;
- Work intentionally to enhance motivation;
- Provide opportunities for success; and
- Reinforce success.

As of August 2008, preliminary results indicate that offenders released under the MPRI model are 26% less likely to recidivate compared to offenders released on parole before the beginning of the initiative.

*Sources: MDOC, 2009; 2008.*

## Section II: Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry Coaching Packet Checklist

Collaboration to Support Reentry	YES	NO	NOT CLEAR	NOTES
1. Is there a shared interest by stakeholders to use collaborative case management as a means to successful reentry?				
2. Is there currently a team of diverse individuals established to manage offenders in the institutional setting?				
3. Are there additional partners that are currently not included on this team that should be (i.e., are there individuals absent who have routine contact with offenders)?				
4. Does this team gather information to comprehensively assess offenders' risk and needs?				
5. Does this information inform the development of a coordinated and holistic strategy to prepare offenders for success (i.e., comprehensive case plan)?				
6. Does this institutional case management team restructure itself to manage offenders' changing needs during the transitional phase (6-12 months prior to release)?				
7. Does the transition phase case management team include appropriate stakeholders from both the institution <i>and</i> the community who have, or will have, regular contact with offenders?				
8. Is the case management team during the transition phase equipped to link offenders to the necessary community-based resources?				
9. Does this team develop and formalize concrete plans with pro-social individuals who will serve as offenders' community support networks?				
10. During the community phase, does the case management team reorganize to meet the needs of offenders in the community setting?				
11. Are all critical partners a part of the community case management team (i.e., those who will assist in the provision of services, enhancement of accountability, etc.)?				
12. Are case management strategies (i.e., case plans) regularly reviewed and evaluated?				
13. Are strategies modified over time based on progress or the identification of new needs?				
14. Is a collaborative team in place at the policy level?				

## Section III: Action Planning Worksheet

<b>GOAL:</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 2:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 3:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

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# COACHING PACKET

## A Framework for Offender Reentry

One in a series of Coaching Packets designed  
to assist jurisdictions in the implementation  
of effective practices that will support  
successful offender outcomes

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### ***Coaching Packet Series 1: Creating a Blueprint for an Effective Offender Reentry System***

- A Framework for Offender Reentry
- Establishing a Rational Planning Process
- Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### ***Coaching Packet Series 2: Delivering Evidence-Based Services***

- Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
- Effective Case Management
- Shaping Offender Behavior
- Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry
- Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring
- Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

### ***Coaching Packet Series 3: Ensuring Meaningful Outcomes***

- Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts
- Continuous Quality Improvement



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## Introduction to the Coaching Packet Series

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) and its partners, The Urban Institute and The Carey Group, were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to the Fiscal Year 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees (hereafter “PRI grantees”). The project team served in this capacity from April 2008 to June 2010.

The Center is a nonprofit criminal justice consulting organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since the early 1980s, the Center has provided training and technical assistance to the criminal justice field on a wide array of topics, including transition and reentry, and has administered a number of national projects of this kind. The Urban Institute was established as a private, nonprofit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1968 and is a leader in prisoner reentry research, focusing on making best practice information accessible to practitioners and policymakers. The Carey Group is a justice consulting firm with extensive practitioner experience in evidence-based practices, strategic planning, community and restorative justice and corrections.

As a part of its technical assistance delivery to the PRI grantees, the Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work. The final products of this work include eleven Coaching Packets in three series. These Coaching Packets offer practical value beyond the jurisdictions involved in this initiative and are available to criminal justice professionals and their partners interested in enhancing their strategies for reducing recidivism and improving offender outcomes.

Each Coaching Packet provides an overview of a specific topic as it relates to successful offender reentry, and offers tools and resources for those interested in exploring the topic in greater depth.

- *Series 1* provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system. This series provides a conceptual framework for addressing prisoner reentry at the policy level; outlines a strategic planning process to support implementation efforts; and explores the establishment of successful collaborative partnerships at the policy and case management levels.
- *Series 2* addresses key issues related to the delivery of evidence-based services to offenders. This series summarizes the key literature with regard to implementing evidence-based practices; explores advances in approaches to case management; addresses the important role of staff in changing offender behavior; and summarizes research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- *Series 3* provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes. This series describes methods to assess the effectiveness of reentry efforts and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

## FY 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Grantees

The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) – intended to support the development and implementation of institutional and community corrections-based reentry programs to help returning offenders find employment and provide other critical services – is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grants were awarded to state and local corrections agencies by DOJ to provide pre-release and transition services to offenders and were “matched” by DOL grants to faith- and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to provide post-release services, focusing on employment assistance and mentoring.

Thirty-five states received grants in three cycles of the Initiative during Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 23 FY 2007 PRI grantees received assistance under this project. FY 2007 grants were awarded in the fall of 2007 and implemented from 2008 to 2010; however, some grantees will not complete their activities until 2011. The FY 2007 grantees provided technical assistance under this project included:

- ✓ ALASKA, Native Justice Center
- ✓ ARIZONA, Criminal Justice Commission/ Yuma County Sheriff’s Office
- ✓ CALIFORNIA, Department of Community Services and Development
- ✓ COLORADO, Division of Criminal Justice Services/City of Denver
- ✓ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Government
- ✓ FLORIDA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ HAWAII, Department of Public Safety
- ✓ INDIANA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ IOWA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ KANSAS, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MAINE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MICHIGAN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MINNESOTA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEVADA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEW JERSEY, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NORTH CAROLINA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ OHIO, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- ✓ PENNSYLVANIA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ RHODE ISLAND, Department of Corrections
- ✓ TENNESSEE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ VIRGINIA, Department of Criminal Justice Services
- ✓ WISCONSIN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ WYOMING, Department of Corrections

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<sup>1</sup> The PRI program will end when the FY 2008 grantees complete their activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

Becki Ney, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program Project Director. Ms. Ney conceptualized and oversaw the development of the Coaching Packet series.

Madeline M. Carter, Principal, and Rachelle Giguere, Program Associate, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the key editors for the Coaching Packet series. Ms. Giguere also provided extensive research support to the development of the series.

# **Introduction to A Framework for Offender Reentry Coaching Packet**

## *The Contents of this Packet*

This Coaching Packet provides:

- An introduction to a framework that serves as a blueprint for efforts to implement successful reentry processes;
- A review of the framework's four components: leadership and organizational change, rational planning, collaboration, and effective offender management strategies;
- References to other Coaching Packets that provide additional information on the individual components of the framework;
- A tool to help determine your jurisdiction's broad strengths and gaps in your offender reentry strategies;
- An aid to developing plans to address identified gap areas and prioritize targets of change; and
- References to additional resources on this topic.

## *The Intended Audience for this Packet*

This Coaching Packet was originally developed to assist grant teams that were established to manage local PRI initiatives. The teams were composed of representatives from institutional and community corrections and faith-based or community organizations involved in the delivery of pre- and post-release services to offenders transitioning from prison to the community. The content of these Coaching Packets has much broader application, however; the information and tools contained within this Coaching Packet can also be used by teams of criminal justice professionals and their partners to assess the status of their efforts in implementing evidence-based practices and effective reentry services to offenders.

This Coaching Packet is intended specifically for policy level and mid level management teams who have the authority to make policy decisions for their agencies. However, it may also be useful for mid-level managers who have the authority and responsibility to influence those above and below them, or to assume responsibility for policy changes themselves.

## *How to Use this Packet*

### **SECTION I: READ THE OVERVIEW OF A FRAMEWORK FOR OFFENDER REENTRY.**

This section of the Coaching Packet provides an overview of a framework that offers an effective structure and lays out a blueprint for implementing successful offender reentry policies and practices. Review its content, and if the information it contains is applicable to your work and addresses an area in which you feel you need to focus your efforts, use the tool in Section II to assess your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps with regard to implementing such an approach.

## **SECTION II: COMPLETE THE FRAMEWORK FOR OFFENDER REENTRY COACHING PACKET CHECKLIST.**

As a team, complete the Framework for Offender Reentry Coaching Packet Checklist. Based upon the information you read in Section I, consider who may need to be involved so that you are able to answer the questions thoroughly. Complete the checklist as a group and discuss your responses along the way.

- Rate each item listed in the checklist (yes, no, not clear).
- For items where your response is “not clear,” make note of the additional information the team needs to collect in order to be able to rate this item.
- Add additional items that may relate to your jurisdiction’s implementation of the framework that are not already included on the checklist.
- Develop a consensus-based response for each item on the checklist.
- Once the checklist is completed, consider your jurisdiction’s strengths in implementing such an approach. Make note of these.
- Next, consider your most significant gaps. Make note of these as well.

## **SECTION III: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN.**

If, after completing the checklist in Section II, your team determines that further work on this topic is necessary or would be helpful, follow the steps below to identify your goals, objectives, and action items, and any additional assistance or expertise needed.

Working as a team, review your findings from the Framework for Offender Reentry Coaching Packet Checklist. Specifically:

1. Determine whether, based upon what you have read and discussed, you desire to advance your jurisdiction’s work with regard to implementing this framework.
2. If you determine you have a desire to improve in this area, write a goal statement that reflects where you want to be with regard to improving your current efforts. Your goal might be to “Establish a common vision for offender reentry among our partners,” “Educate the policy team on evidence-based practices,” “Create a work plan for data collection,” or another goal. Using the Action Planning Worksheet in Section III, note the desired goal.
3. Identify your three most significant strengths in this area and discuss how you might build on those to overcome some of your gaps.
4. Identify your three most significant gaps. For each gap, write an objective. Your objectives might be, “To conduct a team retreat to discuss joint goals and objectives for reentry,” or “To conduct a gaps analysis to determine where our practices diverge from evidence-based principles,” or something else. Note your three objectives on the Action Planning Worksheet.
5. Add the following on the Action Planning Worksheet for each objective:
  - a. The specific sequential steps that must be taken to meet the objective.
  - b. The individual who will assume lead responsibility for this action item.
  - c. The completion date for this action item.
6. Discuss whether additional assistance or outside expertise is needed to successfully achieve any of your action items. For instance, explore whether additional literature, guidance from

another practitioner over the telephone, examples of work products from other jurisdictions, or on-site technical assistance would be helpful options.

- a. For each action item, identify those for which assistance/expertise is needed.
- b. Identify the type of assistance/expertise needed.
- c. Prioritize each of these need areas. If assistance/expertise will be limited, for which action items is assistance most needed?
- d. Begin exploring ways to secure the needed assistance/expertise.

### ***How to Seek Additional Information***

To download copies of the Coaching Packets, please visit the Center's website at <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>. To obtain further information on the use or content of this or any of the Coaching Packets, or on the 2007 PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program, please contact:

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## **Section I: A Framework for Offender Reentry**

### ***Introduction***

The growth in the number of offenders incarcerated and under community supervision, as well as the failure rate for offenders released from prison, has placed a tremendous burden on the criminal justice system. Approximately 700,000 offenders are released annually and more than half will return to prison within three years.<sup>2</sup> Many will be rearrested within the first six months after release. In the United States, the cost of incarceration has grown from \$9 billion to more than \$60 billion annually over the last twenty years,<sup>3</sup> a figure that does not include the added cost to the courts, prosecutor and public defender offices, or probation and parole. This ever growing burden on federal and state budgets has resulted in increased interest in the complex challenges of successful offender reentry, encouraging many jurisdictions to reexamine their current policies and practices in the light of escalating costs, limited resources, and particularly, emerging research on methods to reduce recidivism.

#### **PUBLIC OPINION ON OFFENDER REENTRY**

Even as correctional agencies are expressing a renewed interest in offender reentry strategies, recent surveys indicate that the public sentiment toward dealing with offenders is changing, creating new opportunities to explore methods of encouraging offender success. As with other areas of government responsibility, the public has expressed a desire for the criminal justice system to be “smarter” and use the knowledge about “what works” and “what doesn’t work” in changing offender behavior to inform public policy. A 2006 national opinion survey indicates that the public supports (by an almost 8:1 margin) rehabilitative services for offenders, as opposed to a punishment only approach to offender management.<sup>4</sup> Providing these services both during incarceration and following release is favored. A survey conducted in 2009 found that a majority of respondents (61%) agreed that criminal justice professionals should base their decisionmaking on research.<sup>5</sup>

#### **BARRIERS TO OFFENDER SUCCESS**

Research has made clear that punishment-driven approaches alone are not effective in reducing recidivism or preventing future crime.<sup>6</sup> To encourage successful offender reentry and prevent future crime, corrections professionals must address the reasons why offenders become involved in the criminal justice system. Without effective intervention, offenders will leave incarceration facing those same challenges and without the tools necessary to overcome them. Common obstacles to offenders’ success include:

- ✓ ***Education Barriers.*** More than one-third of offenders in prison have not earned a high school diploma or GED and 4 out of 5 have not received any postsecondary education.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Hughes & Wilson, 2005; Langan & Levin, 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Hughes, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Krisberg & Marchionna, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> NIC, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Andrews, 2007; Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006; Aos, Phipps, Barnoski, & Lieb, 2001; Gendreau, Goggin, & Cullen, 1999; Gendreau, Goggin, Cullen, & Andrews, 2001; Hughes, Wilson, & Beck, 2001; Langan & Levin, 2002; Smith, Goggin, & Gendreau, 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Brazzell et al., 2009.

While most prisons offer educational classes (e.g., Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education), only a portion of inmates receive these services. In fact, between 2000 and 2005, the number of prisons offering these services decreased.<sup>8</sup>

- ✓ **Employment Barriers.** Furthermore, the lack of job skills, the deterioration of skills while incarcerated (1/3 of offenders receive vocational training while they are incarcerated<sup>9</sup>), intermittent work histories, and the stigma of being in prison make finding legitimate and well-paying employment in the community difficult.<sup>10</sup>
- ✓ **Substance Abuse and Addiction.** Fifty-three percent (53%) of male state prisoners and 60% of female state prisoners meet the DSM-IV drug dependence or abuse criteria.<sup>11</sup> This is four times the rate of addiction experienced by the general population.<sup>12</sup> Yet only about one in every ten offenders participates in substance abuse programming prior to release.<sup>13</sup>
- ✓ **Mental Health Concerns.** Mental health problems affect the majority of both male (55%) and female (73%) adults in prison.<sup>14</sup> Women offenders often suffer from depression, anxiety disorders (e.g., PTSD), and eating disorders, while substance abuse and antisocial personality disorders are more prevalent among men.<sup>15</sup>
- ✓ **Homelessness.** For offenders who may have been homeless prior to incarceration and struggle to find sustainable, affordable housing after release,<sup>16</sup> fewer than ten percent will have the opportunity to live in a halfway house or other community release center.<sup>17</sup>
- ✓ **Caring for Children.** For the majority of offenders (55%) who have dependent children,<sup>18</sup> reentry brings an increased responsibility for the physical, emotional, and financial wellbeing of others.
- ✓ **Other Survival Concerns.** For offenders who are released from prison without the necessary identification (e.g., birth certificate, state issued identification) and transportation options (e.g., personal vehicle, a residence near public bus routes), obtaining appropriate housing, employment, and services can be quite challenging if not impossible.<sup>19</sup>

#### IMPROVING PUBLIC SAFETY THROUGH SUCCESSFUL OFFENDER REENTRY

Despite the challenges facing corrections, never have the conditions for change in correctional practice been as promising as they are today. Correctional agencies and their partners are embracing additional responsibilities and new approaches in order to improve public safety. At the same time, corrections officials are taking advantage of increased access to information on

<sup>8</sup> Brazzell et al., 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Harlow, 2003.

<sup>10</sup> Visher, Debus, & Yahner, 2008.

<sup>11</sup> Mumola & Karberg, 2006.

<sup>12</sup> NIJ, 2003.

<sup>13</sup> Hammett, 2000; Mumola, 1999; NIDA, 2006.

<sup>14</sup> James & Glaze, 2006.

<sup>15</sup> Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003; Kassebaum, 1999; WHO, 2010.

<sup>16</sup> Gouvis Roman & Travis, 2004.

<sup>17</sup> Petersillia, 2003.

<sup>18</sup> Travis, McBride & Solomon, 2003.

<sup>19</sup> Visher, LaVigne, & Travis, 2004.

risk reduction to make decisions about institutional management, reentry approaches, and post-release interventions, abandoning anecdotal information and historic approaches to crime for solutions based upon research evidence.

Armed with this knowledge, corrections officials and their partners are turning their focus to improving public safety by increasing the success of offenders returning to the community. The changes are complex and often require a realignment of policy and practice around an organizational and operational philosophy that promotes the success of offenders and makes strategic use of scarce resources.

To accomplish such large scale change, a structure is needed to guide their information gathering, decisionmaking, and implementation processes. Such a structure should address all of the key ingredients for successful change, and provide a blueprint for the necessary components of an effective reentry process. The framework presented here is intended to provide guidance in this pursuit.<sup>20</sup>

#### A FRAMEWORK FOR OFFENDER REENTRY

As jurisdictions across the nation have worked to improve the outcomes of offenders released into the community, key elements have been identified as essential components to the most successful efforts. These components include:

- ✓ Leadership and Organizational Change
- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ A Rational Planning Process
- ✓ Effective Offender Management Practices

Success is more likely when jurisdictions address key issues in a strategic way. The four elements of the reentry framework represent a holistic approach to the development of a strategic reentry effort.



<sup>20</sup> The framework and concepts presented in this document can be found in more detail in Increasing Public Safety Through Successful Offender Reentry: Evidence-Based and Emerging Practices in Corrections available at [http://www.cepp.com/documents/CEPP%20SVORI\\_final.pdf](http://www.cepp.com/documents/CEPP%20SVORI_final.pdf).

## *Leadership and Organizational Change*

To achieve significant change in offender reentry, agencies and collaborative policy teams working toward this goal require strong leadership. The leaders of such efforts must agree that the successful reentry of offenders into the community is a primary goal. Also, they must be willing to examine every aspect of the current system (i.e., initial assessment and case management upon entrance into the corrections system, the transition of offenders from institutions to the community, and post-release supervision and management practices) to determine whether current policies and practices reflect the philosophy of offender success. Achieving such large scale change is not an easy or quick process; longstanding routines, priorities, and relationships may need to be reconsidered and revised to support the new philosophy and vision. Leaders must be able to work collaboratively with others in order to develop and implement an action plan for change. Perhaps most importantly, leaders must have a vision for a new approach to their work, and the necessary qualities to inspire enthusiasm and commitment from others to align with and work toward that vision.

### **ADOPTING A VISION FOR OFFENDER REENTRY**

One of the necessary attributes of a successful leader is the ability to envision – and communicate – a vision for the future of the organization. Successful leaders are able to chart a course for moving the organization from the present to the desired future, one in which offenders are productive members of the community. Without an appreciation of the intended destination, even well-intentioned efforts can become fragmented or disconnected.

### **QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE LEADERS**

It is important to note that effective collaborative leaders are sometimes, but not always, those who occupy the positions of authority within an agency or community. Regardless of their position, it is the skills that leaders offer that make a difference in the success of their teams. Although the information in this Coaching Packet is intended for policy level and mid-management staff, it is important that policy teams recognize and take advantage of others in their agencies and organizations who demonstrate leadership qualities, as they can be important to organizational change efforts in their ability to influence their colleagues.

In addition to communicating a vision for successful reentry, leaders of collaborative teams should:<sup>21</sup>

- ✓ Be clear about their goals and committed to achieving them.
- ✓ Give their team members permission to excel, be creative, and push the envelope.
- ✓ Motivate their team members by providing direction, not criticism.

### **What is the emerging “vision” for offender reentry?**

There is growing consensus among many state and local agencies that their vision is to collaboratively develop strategies that will promote a greater likelihood of offender success following release.

This vision translates into a reduction of recidivism and enhanced public safety as a result of fewer crimes, fewer victims, and more offenders living productive lives in the community.

<sup>21</sup> Adapted from Carter, 2006.

- ✓ Understand the importance of collaboration and the need to bring diverse stakeholders to the table.
- ✓ Possess skills such as a willingness to take risks, listen well, and seek new information.
- ✓ Possess qualities such as a passion for reentry, optimism, and a desire to put the team's interests ahead of their own.
- ✓ Be able to manage the team process (e.g., establish a work process, facilitate meetings, develop goals and objectives to reach the team's vision).
- ✓ Exhibit excellent interpersonal skills (e.g., the ability to build consensus among team members, manage conflict, build trust, read other's needs).
- ✓ Offer political skills such as being able to negotiate relationships and garner support from outside the team.

Leadership alone, however, will not guarantee success. A thoughtful and strategic approach to organizational change is also necessary.

**"Leaders must promote overall objectives so that the direction of the [effort] can be fully understood and appreciated, yet they must also involve others in determining the most appropriate and effective means for reaching particular goals."**

-CEPP, 2007.

#### A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

In addition to strong leadership, a strategic approach to organizational change is necessary to overcome possible resistance and foster commitment. Leaders may consider the following strategies when preparing their teams, partners, and others within the jurisdiction to adopt a vision for public safety through successful offender reentry:<sup>22</sup>

- ✓ ***Recognize that change does not happen overnight.*** In many jurisdictions, corrections professionals and their partners have seen leadership establish and then change priorities with regard to organizational goals depending on the events of the moment. It is not unusual for these individuals to become resistant to change and develop their own values, norms, and beliefs. For these reasons, change can be slow; leaders must recognize that turning the tide will take consistent and continuous effort over a substantial period of time.
- ✓ ***Recognize your system's culture.*** Leaders should work to understand the current cultural environment by listening to others and collecting information (e.g., through the use of surveys, focus groups, or meetings). By gathering information on the behaviors, norms, and attitudes of the present system, leadership can understand the "starting place" for change and build from there.
- ✓ ***Examine your current policies and practices.*** Leaders and their collaborative teams should review existing policies and practices, and consider what messages these convey to both the professionals and offenders in the system. That is, do policies support offender reentry as a critical concern, or do they encourage activities and behavior that create barriers to offender success?

<sup>22</sup> Adapted from CEPP, 2007, Chapter 2: Preparing for Organizational Change.

- ✓ ***Review the research and share it with others.*** Leaders and their teams must become familiar with the empirical research on offender reentry, as well as relevant data from their own jurisdictions (e.g., reentry barriers, recidivism rates) to ensure that they develop goals and plans that are both grounded in “what works” and what is appropriate for their jurisdiction. Equally important is to create opportunities to share this information with others so that they can be included as part of the discussion on identifying targets for improvement and how best to accomplish these.
- ✓ ***Promote your new vision.*** For others to buy into a new (or revised) vision, they must receive consistent messages about the desired future, why it is important, and the role that they will play in it. Leaders and teams working to achieve successful outcomes with offenders must communicate this path to all those who influence or are effected by it. This can be accomplished through a variety of means including internal and external publications, presentations, and public speaking opportunities.

**Tips for Leaders:  
Reducing Resistance and Mobilizing Others to Undertake the Change Process**

- Communicate information about the change in an accurate and timely manner to avoid resistance.
- Clarify what the impact of the changes will be for each individual/agency involved.
- Ask for feedback and for participation in the plan for change.
- Investigate the reasons (e.g., loss of power, uncertainty of the future, need for new skills) for resistance before deciding on a strategy to address it.
- Identify and engage “informal leaders” – professionals at all levels of authority whom others respect or view as credible – to carry the message of reentry to others.
- Model the behaviors you wish to see in others.
- Target your persuasive efforts on those individuals who are “in the middle” or are on the fence of embracing change. Those who easily embrace change are unlikely to be resistant, and those that are very resistant are unlikely to be persuaded.
- Offer incentives and positive reinforcement to professionals who align with the desired change.

*Adapted from: CEPP, 2007, Chapter 3: Preparing Staff for Organizational Change.*

## **Collaboration**

Since many of the complex barriers offenders face are beyond the expertise (and resources) of most individual corrections agencies – including housing issues, employment barriers, educational needs, mental health problems, financial instability, social stigma, and family reunification – it is clear that a well-planned and collaborative response from a diverse set of agencies and individuals is necessary if successful offender reentry is to be achieved.

It is important to remember, however, that collaboration doesn't "just happen." Bringing various individuals together – sometimes with competing interests – to develop common goals and clear responsibilities for the offender reentry process can be difficult and time consuming. In return, however, teams will find that their collaborative efforts to address the challenges of reentry will benefit from the diverse experiences, different perspectives, and greater resources their team members bring to the table.

**Collaboration** is defined as:

*Working together to achieve a common goal that is difficult or impossible to reach without the assistance of another.*

### **BRINGING TOGETHER THE STAKEHOLDERS IN REENTRY**

In considering the multiple needs of returning offenders, there is the potential for a collaborative effort in virtually every jurisdiction. Collaborative teams working to achieve successful offender reentry should include individuals, agencies, and organizations that:

- ✓ Have a vested interest in community safety.
- ✓ Are directly or indirectly involved in offender management.
- ✓ Work with – or advocate for – victims.
- ✓ Can provide mentoring or positive social supports.
- ✓ Offer educational or vocational services.
- ✓ Can provide for appropriate and affordable housing.
- ✓ Deliver healthcare services.
- ✓ Provide mental health and counseling services.
- ✓ Have the ability to facilitate access to employment.
- ✓ Can provide support and assistance to children and families of returning offenders.

### **COLLABORATION AT THE POLICY LEVEL**

At the policy level, the individuals serving on a collaborative team often will be representing their own agencies and may come to the table with different missions and visions that, at least initially, may not compliment each other. It is very important that everyone involved contributes to the development of a shared vision that all team members can support and work toward. To be successful, team members must find a way to reconcile the goals and missions

of the agencies they represent with a shared, systemwide vision for offender reentry. Determining common values and desired outcomes can be a method to facilitate the development of a shared vision. Most team members can agree that offender success leads to greater public safety and reduced crime, fewer victims, and an improvement in the quality of life in a community.

Policy level collaborative teams should include those with the authority to make policy and resource allocation decisions for their agency or organization. Policy teams operate most effectively when there are equal levels of authority among those at the table. Common undertakings for policy level teams focused on offender reentry issues are to:<sup>23</sup>

- ✓ Examine critically the offender reentry process in the jurisdiction, including the policies, procedures, and practices of the various agencies that have a role in reentry;
- ✓ Identify specific needs and challenges related to current reentry efforts;
- ✓ Develop a strategic plan to address the needs and challenges that are surfaced; and
- ✓ Establish strategies to monitor over time the impact of the changes that were implemented, and to continue to make adjustments as necessary in order to maximize the likelihood of positive offender outcomes and increases in public safety.

Many jurisdictions have successfully implemented collaborative efforts at the policy level using a tiered system of collaboration.

- ✓ **Tier I.** A Tier I policy team is a decisionmaking body authorized to review and set policy for the state on reentry issues. Such a policy team is often established by the Governor, and includes state cabinet level executives (also appointed by the Governor) representing housing, labor, health, welfare, education, and economic development, among others. Community and faith-based leaders often are invited to participate as well.
- ✓ **Tier II.** The Tier II team (made up of policy level staff from multiple agencies or organizations) is charged with implementing the decisions of the Tier I policy team. The Tier II team first studies the decisions of the Tier I team (to determine the best methods for implementing those decisions) and then is responsible for providing oversight to the implementation of those policy decisions.

Together these policy teams create an infrastructure for the collaboration by developing policies, removing organizational barriers that inhibit collaboration, and making decisions that compliment the larger reentry effort.

#### CASE-LEVEL COLLABORATION ACROSS THE PHASES OF REENTRY

Collaboration at the case management level is also instrumental in achieving offender success. In practice, a seamless approach at the case management level requires collaboration across all phases of the reentry process.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> For more information regarding these steps and the critical work activities associated with each, please see the Coaching Packet on Establishing a Rational Planning Process. In addition, see CEPP, 2007 and Burke, 2008.

<sup>24</sup> For more information about collaborating at the case-level, see the Coaching Packet on Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry.

- ✓ **Institutional Phase:** During this phase the collaborative case management team (including institutional case managers, treatment providers, correctional staff and others) gather key information (e.g., data and information critical to risk/needs assessment) and develop a strategy for preparing offenders for release. Such a strategy might address those interventions that will be delivered while offenders are in custody and those that will be planned for post-release.
- ✓ **Transition Phase:** Approximately 6-12 months prior to offenders' anticipated release, the collaborative case management team reorganizes to include individuals who work both in the institution and those based in the community to prepare offenders for release. During this period, concrete plans are developed including housing arrangements, employment, enrollment in community-based programs and services, among others.
- ✓ **Community Phase:** Following release, the collaborative case management team once again is reconstituted to include those individuals involved in providing accountability and support services to offenders in the community. Those involved may include parole and probation officers, community-based treatment providers, community support networks, and others.

#### Steps to Successful Case-Level Collaboration

1. Share information about cases (and, if new to working together, one another).
2. Establish ground rules for working together.
3. Clarify team members' individual and collective roles and responsibilities.
4. Discuss expectations of one another.
5. Identify the strengths and assets of each team member.
6. Agree upon outcomes for cases overall and for individuals specifically.
7. Develop a strategy for monitoring these outcomes.

*For more information see the Coaching Packet:  
Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry.*

Collaborative teams working to improve the transition of offenders from institutions to the community should consider both the multiple policymakers and stakeholders involved with the offender at the case level. Professionals at both levels have an enormous impact on the way the present system operates and have a role to play in improving offender reentry through the collaborative policymaking and case management processes.

### ***A Rational Planning Process***

Given the significant increase in the number of offenders incarcerated and enhanced pressure from the public to achieve results with the resources available, the identification and utilization of a deliberate strategy with demonstrated results is essential to the success of the criminal justice system. Even with good intentions, it is not uncommon for jurisdictions to falter in the change process. Jurisdictions may, with the best of intentions:

- ✓ Act in a reactionary manner, or make large scale changes in response to a single or isolated situation.

- ✓ Succumb to various external pressures, resulting in changes that are inconsistent with the desired goals.
- ✓ Implement new or popular trends that may not be tested or consistent with evidence-based practices.
- ✓ Implement solutions before the actual problem is clearly identified, based solely on the suspicion that a particular problem, need, or gap exists.

Many of these approaches may, in fact, produce change. However, the problem then becomes that the change is unanticipated (i.e., individuals may not be ready for change and try to undermine it) or may not produce the desired results. Reasonable, effective, and lasting change is more likely to occur when a team understands and agrees upon:

- ✓ Precisely where it wants to be and what it wants to achieve.
- ✓ Where it is currently with respect to the vision that has been identified.
- ✓ Who should be at the table – the stakeholders who will bring the skills, expertise, and resources necessary to effectively plan for change.
- ✓ Existing strengths in the jurisdiction or system that can be the foundation for future efforts.
- ✓ A clear identification of the barriers and needs that must be addressed in order to achieve success.
- ✓ The most critical priorities (among what may be a long list of action items requiring attention).
- ✓ The strategies that will be most effective for the team to explore.

Teams working toward successful offender reentry need a system or method to determine where they are currently and how this compares to their desired future. By objectively identifying the gaps, problems, and opportunities available, jurisdictions can move constructively in their desired direction. This process is called rational planning.<sup>25</sup>

#### **THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EVIDENCE-BASED**

A key element in the rational planning process is for a team to develop an understanding of and the ability to apply evidence-based practices (EBP). Teams are less likely to succumb to external

#### **Steps in a Rational Planning Process**

1. Articulate a vision and mission.
2. Establish a team to undertake the process.
3. Understand the research on evidence-based practice.
4. Collect information on present circumstances.
5. Determine the strengths and gaps in current efforts.
6. Develop and prioritize goals.
7. Develop specific objectives for each goal.
8. Implement the strategic plan.
9. Monitor the impact of the strategic plan.
10. Maintain momentum.

*For more information see the Coaching Packet:  
Establishing a Rational Planning Process.*

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<sup>25</sup> For more information regarding the material covered in this section, see the Coaching Packet on Establishing a Rational Planning Process.

pressures or jump quickly to solutions when they have taken the time to educate themselves fully in this regard. Thorough knowledge will assist the team to determine what information should be gathered, how the information should be interpreted, and what action should emerge based on the resulting findings. In order to make sound decisions regarding changes to current systems, the team must not only understand how current policies and practices may or may not adhere to EBP, but also how to craft new intervention strategies based on the research. Taking the time to ensure the team is educated about current research findings is a necessary, preliminary step in the rational planning process.

### **GATHERING INFORMATION**

The success of the rational planning process rests heavily on the decisions made by the team about the information they will gather. Information should drive decisionmaking; therefore, it is important that the team consider carefully what information they need and how that information will be collected and analyzed. Comprehensive data on the offender population, the construction of a system "map" that will demonstrate the process of a case from intake through discharge from supervision, and similar information will assist the team in conducting a gaps analysis and lead to the eventual setting of priorities.

#### **Sample Questions for Identifying Barriers to and Gaining Input on an Effective Offender Reentry Strategy**

The following questions may be used in interviews, focus groups, or surveys to identify barriers to implementing change and to gain feedback from others on the change process.

- How would you explain the effort/team's vision/mission regarding offender reentry?
- Do you think that everyone (e.g., team members, administrators, managers, staff, policymakers, partners, the public) understands and agrees with the vision/mission? If not, why not? What else do they see the mission to be?
- What is your perception of how others view this effort/team?
- What resources and expertise do you bring to this effort/team? Have they been utilized? If not, why not?
- What are three of your greatest satisfactions with the effort/team's work to date? What are three of your greatest frustrations?
- What suggestions do you have to make the process more effective, rewarding, or inspiring?
- What are the most urgent or important concerns/challenges facing the effort/team over the next two years?
- What recommendations do you have about the effort/team's future direction and priorities? What obstacles do you anticipate? What resources will be necessary to implement these recommendations?

*Adapted from: Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates, 2007, p. 181.*

## **SETTING PRIORITIES**

It is likely that a team will develop a very long list of gaps, barriers, and needs as they compare their current practice to their desired future of implementing an evidence-based reentry strategy. Therefore, it is important that teams work through a process of identifying, and then prioritizing, the most important goals for immediate action. Teams have limited capacity in terms of the number of complicated issues that they can take on at any given time. Prioritizing their efforts will ensure that the issues most critical to success are addressed first, while making note of other issues for future action.

## **MEASURING PROGRESS**

Effective planning is an essential ingredient of offender reentry work; however, planning on the front end will not, by itself, ensure success. Throughout the implementation process, it is important that teams collect data in order to measure the impact of their efforts. The team must determine whether the correct steps have been taken to implement the strategic plan and whether the plan has achieved the reentry outcomes the team desired.<sup>26</sup> Monitoring outcomes allows for critical interim corrections to avoid derailment of the team's efforts due to a lack of performance or unintended consequences. This is accomplished by developing process and outcome measures that will help ensure that the work is progressing as intended and that desired outcomes are achieved.

## ***Effective Offender Management***

The final component of the framework is an evidence-based approach to offender management. Improving the outcomes of returning offenders requires that the jurisdiction adopt evidence-based principles and practices. By using research to guide and shape offender interventions it is possible to identify the approaches and programs that produce desired outcomes. Equally important, research makes it possible to identify the methods and programs that do not work in order to reposition resources to achieve greater efficiency. This section offers an overview of some offender management strategies for achieving successful reentry outcomes based on the empirical research.<sup>27</sup>

## **ASSESSMENT**

Research indicates that maximizing reentry outcomes requires early and ongoing assessments throughout the phases of reentry to identify offenders' levels of risk to reoffend and criminogenic needs.<sup>28</sup> By identifying the offenders who are medium to high risk, corrections professionals and their partners can target limited resources in a manner that will maximize results.

Assessments also help in determining those risk factors in individual offenders that must be addressed to reduce the likelihood of future criminal behavior. These are called criminogenic

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<sup>26</sup> For more information on performance measurement, see the Coaching Packet on Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts.

<sup>27</sup> This section includes information adapted from Section 6: Key Strategies in Effective Offender Management in CEPP, 2007.

<sup>28</sup> For a list of the Coaching Packets that address the topic of assessment, see Exhibit 2.

needs, which are indicated by the research to be specifically linked to recidivism, the most salient of which include:<sup>29</sup>

- ✓ History of antisocial behavior
- ✓ Antisocial personality pattern
- ✓ Antisocial attitudes, cognition
- ✓ Antisocial associates, peers
- ✓ Family and/or marital stressors
- ✓ Lack of employment stability, achievement/educational achievement
- ✓ Lack of prosocial leisure activities
- ✓ Substance abuse

Recent research suggests that women's criminogenic needs may look different from men's.

For more information see the Coaching Packet: Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders.

Research also suggests that it is possible to have a greater impact on changing offender behavior when the individual characteristics that impact how offenders respond to interventions are identified. These responsivity factors – which include a wide variety of traits like gender, mental health issues, culture, level of motivation, and functioning level – should be identified as part of the assessment process and considered when determining how best to tailor interventions to achieve maximum benefit.

#### PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Research has demonstrated that punishment and sanction-driven approaches like incarceration do not reduce recidivism when used in isolation;<sup>30</sup> however, there are correctional programs and services that have been found to be successful in reducing the likelihood that offenders will commit future crimes. A number of these programs are listed in Exhibit 1. Research indicates that effective programs and services share some common elements, such as:<sup>31</sup>

- ✓ Targeting multiple criminogenic needs in favor of non-criminogenic needs.
- ✓ Intervening with a duration and intensity appropriate to risk level (i.e., high risk offenders should receive higher dosages of interventions over longer periods of time).
- ✓ Responding to offenders in ways appropriate to their unique traits (i.e., responsivity).
- ✓ Implementing programming with integrity (i.e., based on sound theory such as cognitive-behavioral or social learning theories, ensuring services are delivered by staff who possess the appropriate traits and skills, etc.).

It is important that collaborative teams interested in improving offender reentry outcomes consider the extent to which the interventions available in their jurisdiction are consistent with the principles of effective interventions.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> These criminogenic needs are based on predominantly male samples (see Andrews, 2007; Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2006) and may look different for women. For more information on women offenders, see the Coaching Packet on Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders.

<sup>30</sup> Gendreau & Goggin, 1996; Gendreau, Goggin, & Cullen, 1999; Gendreau, Goggin, Cullen, & Andrews, 2001; Lipsey & Cullen, 2007; Smith, Goggin, & Gendreau, 2002.

<sup>31</sup> For a list of the Coaching Packets that address the topic of programs and services, see Exhibit 2.

<sup>32</sup> For more information on implementing efforts that achieve the outcomes we desire, see the Coaching Packet on Continuous Quality Improvement.

**Exhibit 1:**  
**Adult Programs that Reduce Recidivism**

- Vocational education in prison
- Intensive supervision: treatment-oriented programs
- General education in prison
- Cognitive-behavioral therapy in prison or the community
- Drug treatment in the community
- Correctional industries in prison
- Drug treatment in prison
- Adult drug courts
- Employment/job training in the community
- Sex offender treatment in prison with aftercare

**Adult Programs that Do Not Reduce Recidivism**

- Electronic monitoring to offset jail time
- Intensive supervision: surveillance only (no treatment)
- Adult boot camps
- Domestic violence education
- Jail diversion for mentally ill offenders
- Life skills education

*Source: Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006.*

### **EFFECTIVE INTERACTIONS WITH OFFENDERS**

As illustrated in Exhibit 1, intensive supervision that focuses exclusively on surveillance does not reduce recidivism but intensive supervision that is treatment focused does have a positive impact. This finding – that surveillance and sanctioning on their own do not reduce recidivism – when considered with the research available on what does work, has lead corrections professionals and their partners in jurisdictions across the country to consider new approaches to working with offenders. Two of these evidence-based approaches include “success-driven supervision”<sup>33</sup> and interacting with offenders in ways that promote positive behavior.<sup>34</sup> Both approaches place a responsibility on corrections professionals and their partners to take an active role in ensuring that offenders will be successful following their release into the community.

Success-driven supervision requires that community supervision officers combine monitoring and accountability activities with casework activities as part of a “balanced approach” to working with offenders. Officers continue to provide direction, structure, and limitations (i.e., placing external controls on offenders as appropriate for public safety), while engaging

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<sup>33</sup> See CEPP, 2007.

<sup>34</sup> For a list of all the Coaching Packets that cover the topics of success-driven supervision and effectively interacting with offenders, see Exhibit 2.

offenders in the change process (i.e., assisting offenders in developing their own internal controls for their behavior) and assisting them in meeting their criminogenic and transition needs (i.e., linking them to appropriate programs, services, and resources). A critical part of this approach includes responding to infractions and violations in consistent, timely, and proportional ways.<sup>35</sup>

**Corrections professionals and their partners who are successful understand that every interaction with an offender is an opportunity to positively influence their behavior.**

*For more information, see the Coaching Packet on Shaping Offender Behavior.*

While success-driven supervision focuses specifically on the role of corrections and supervision officers in successful offender reentry, many of the basic skills needed to conduct this approach are consistent with the research on how to deliver effective interventions with offenders. These skills can, and should, be used by any professional providing direct services to offenders so that all interactions with offenders are treated as opportunities to change their behavior. Research indicates that professionals with the following qualities and skills achieve better outcomes with offenders:<sup>36</sup>

- ✓ Adhering to the principles of risk, need, and responsibility.
- ✓ Developing relationships or building rapport with offenders (and their families as appropriate) to promote behavior change (i.e., being open, genuine, flexible, non-blaming).
- ✓ Applying motivational techniques to combat resistance and encourage engagement in making positive attitude and behavior changes.
- ✓ Role modeling prosocial attitudes and behaviors.
- ✓ Advocating for and brokering programs and services based on criminogenic needs.
- ✓ Providing incentives and reinforcers for prosocial behavior (ideally using four positive reinforcers for every negative to achieve maximum impact).
- ✓ Employing an effective use of authority with offenders (i.e., using a firm but fair approach, making rules clear, offering choices with consequences).
- ✓ Capitalizing on all contacts with offenders to ensure that goals are being met.
- ✓ Teaching concrete problem-solving skills.
- ✓ Encouraging offenders to practice the prosocial skills they have learned.
- ✓ Responding to violations consistently, in a timely fashion, and with proportionality to the behavior, in order to allow offenders – where public safety concerns are not present – the opportunity to correct their behaviors and complete supervision successfully.

<sup>35</sup> For more information, see Chapter 4: Success-Driven Supervision of CEPP, 2007.

<sup>36</sup> See the Coaching Packet: Shaping Offender Behavior for more information on these concepts.

## OFFENDER CASE MANAGEMENT

To ensure that offenders are managed effectively by the various agencies involved in their transition from prison to the community, jurisdictions across the country are developing and implementing a shared plan of action for each offender, a case management approach that spans the three phases of reentry.<sup>37</sup> Case management can be defined as the strategic use of resources at the case level to enhance the likelihood of success following institutional release and discharge from supervision and decrease the likelihood of offender recidivism. To be effective, case management approaches should:

- ✓ Begin with and be based upon an empirical assessment of risk and criminogenic needs.
- ✓ Be comprehensive, including addressing factors that interfere with offenders' abilities to address their criminogenic needs (i.e., stability factors).
- ✓ Start at sentencing (or before) and continue seamlessly until offenders are discharged from supervision.
- ✓ Be dynamic to accommodate changes in risk level, needs, and other conditions (e.g., changes in family life, job status, and ability to comply with supervision conditions).
- ✓ Include a team of individuals – including the offender – in the day-to-day management of the offender.
- ✓ Incorporate the targeting of interventions that are evidence-based.
- ✓ Include the use of engagement techniques (e.g., Motivational Interviewing).
- ✓ Be supported by automation.

### Steps to Effective Case Management

1. Assess risk, needs, and responsibility.
2. Determine offender' strengths, triggers, and stability factors.
3. Engage offenders; seek their active involvement.
4. Align strategies with criminogenic needs.
5. Match interventions with risk levels.
6. Balance control and treatment goals.
7. Establish a therapeutic alliance.
8. Have offenders practice their skills.
9. Use rewards, punishers, and incentives appropriately.
10. Make all contacts count.
11. Monitor dosage, intensity, and duration.
12. Involve others – a team of providers, families, and offenders themselves.

*For more information see the Coaching Packet:  
Effective Case Management.*

These activities should bridge the institutional, transition, and community phases of reentry to ensure that each offender has a single, individualized, dynamic case plan. When a case management team works collaboratively and armed with a shared plan of action, they are well positioned to successfully impact recidivism.

<sup>37</sup> For a list of all the Coaching Packets that cover case management, see Exhibit 2.

## Conclusion

The framework presented in this document is intended to assist corrections professionals and their partners in creating a structure for their efforts to implement an offender reentry process that will reduce recidivism, enhance public safety, and allow for better allocation of limited resources. This Coaching Packet reviews only the essentials of this organizing framework; there are a number of resources available for professionals interested in learning more, including the ten other Coaching Packets available in this series. For a summary of key topics covered, see Exhibit 2. For more information on offender reentry (including related topics), see the Section IV: References and Additional Resources.

Coaching Packet	Topics Covered by Other Coaching Packets											
	Assessment	Case Management	Programs/ Services	Success-Driven Supervision	Staff-Offender Interactions	Enhancing Motivation	Prosocial Supports	Collaboration/ Team Approach	A Vision for Reentry	Planning	Measuring Reentry Efforts	Quality Assurance
Effective Case Management	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Implementing Evidence-Based Practices	x			x	x	x	x	x			x	x
Shaping Offender Behavior	x		x	x	x	x	x	x				
Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Building Offenders' Community Assets Through Mentoring			x		x	x	x	x				
Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry		x						x	x	x	x	
Establishing A Rational Planning Process								x	x	x		
Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts								x	x	x		
Continuous Quality Improvement	x	x	x		x				x	x	x	

## Section II: A Framework for Offender Reentry Coaching Packet

### Checklist<sup>38</sup>

A Framework for Offender Reentry	YES	NO	NOT CLEAR	NOTES
1. Are collaborative teams for offender reentry established at the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy level?</li> <li>• Case level?</li> </ul>				
2. Does the team have a shared vision for reentry?				
3. Are the appropriate stakeholders involved in reentry efforts?				
4. Is there a shared commitment to work towards the vision and goals of reentry?				
5. Is there an effective leader(s) in place to guide your efforts?				
6. Does the leader of the effort: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clear direction (e.g., is clear regarding vision/goals)?</li> <li>• Motivate others?</li> <li>• Work in a collaborative manner?</li> </ul>				
7. Are all stakeholders knowledgeable about evidence-based practices in reentry?				
8. Has the jurisdiction's strengths and gaps been identified in regards to fulfilling its vision for offender reentry?				
9. Have strategies for reducing gaps/barriers been identified?				
10. Has the jurisdiction prioritized the most significant needs/gaps?				
11. Does the jurisdiction have a strategic plan for achieving its prioritized goals that is shared by all stakeholders?				
12. Has the jurisdiction developed outcome and process measures to monitor the impact of the strategic plan?				
13. Do case level collaborative efforts occur at the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional phase?</li> <li>• Transition phase?</li> <li>• Community phase?</li> </ul>				
14. Are offender assessments conducted to identify level of risk, criminogenic needs, and responsivity factors?				
15. Do the results of these assessments drive case management planning?				
16. Do the results of these assessments regarding risk level dictate the duration and intensity of interventions (i.e., programs/services)?				
17. Do the results of these assessments regarding criminogenic needs inform the types of programs/services received by offenders?				
18. Are the programs and services available in the jurisdiction demonstrated to be effective (i.e., are they proven to reduce recidivism)?				

<sup>38</sup> Readers are encouraged to utilize the checklists in the other Coaching Packets in this series for a more comprehensive assessment in these areas: collaboration, rational planning, and effective offender management practices.

## Section III: Action Planning Worksheet

<b>GOAL:</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 2:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 3:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

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# COACHING PACKET

## Establishing a Rational Planning Process

One in a series of Coaching Packets designed  
to assist jurisdictions in the implementation  
of effective practices that will support  
successful offender outcomes

Author: Richard Stroker, Center for Effective Public Policy  
Editor: Rachelle Giguere, Center for Effective Public Policy

2010



### ***Coaching Packet Series 1: Creating a Blueprint for an Effective Offender Reentry System***

- A Framework for Offender Reentry
- Establishing a Rational Planning Process
- Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### ***Coaching Packet Series 2: Delivering Evidence-Based Services***

- Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
- Effective Case Management
- Shaping Offender Behavior
- Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry
- Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring
- Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

### ***Coaching Packet Series 3: Ensuring Meaningful Outcomes***

- Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts
- Continuous Quality Improvement



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## Introduction to the Coaching Packet Series

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) and its partners, The Urban Institute and The Carey Group, were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to the Fiscal Year 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees (hereafter “PRI grantees”). The project team served in this capacity from April 2008 to June 2010.

The Center is a nonprofit criminal justice consulting organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since the early 1980s, the Center has provided training and technical assistance to the criminal justice field on a wide array of topics, including transition and reentry, and has administered a number of national projects of this kind. The Urban Institute was established as a private, nonprofit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1968 and is a leader in prisoner reentry research, focusing on making best practice information accessible to practitioners and policymakers. The Carey Group is a justice consulting firm with extensive practitioner experience in evidence-based practices, strategic planning, community and restorative justice and corrections.

As a part of its technical assistance delivery to the PRI grantees, the Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work. The final products of this work include eleven Coaching Packets in three series. These Coaching Packets offer practical value beyond the jurisdictions involved in this initiative and are available to criminal justice professionals and their partners interested in enhancing their strategies for reducing recidivism and improving offender outcomes.

Each Coaching Packet provides an overview of a specific topic as it relates to successful offender reentry, and offers tools and resources for those interested in exploring the topic in greater depth.

- *Series 1* provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system. This series provides a conceptual framework for addressing prisoner reentry at the policy level; outlines a strategic planning process to support implementation efforts; and explores the establishment of successful collaborative partnerships at the policy and case management levels.
- *Series 2* addresses key issues related to the delivery of evidence-based services to offenders. This series summarizes the key literature with regard to implementing evidence-based practices; explores advances in approaches to case management; addresses the important role of staff in changing offender behavior; and summarizes research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- *Series 3* provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes. This series describes methods to assess the effectiveness of reentry efforts and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

## FY 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Grantees

The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) – intended to support the development and implementation of institutional and community corrections-based reentry programs to help returning offenders find employment and provide other critical services – is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grants were awarded to state and local corrections agencies by DOJ to provide pre-release and transition services to offenders and were “matched” by DOL grants to faith- and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to provide post-release services, focusing on employment assistance and mentoring.

Thirty-five states received grants in three cycles of the Initiative during Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 23 FY 2007 PRI grantees received assistance under this project. FY 2007 grants were awarded in the fall of 2007 and implemented from 2008 to 2010; however, some grantees will not complete their activities until 2011. The FY 2007 grantees provided technical assistance under this project included:

- ✓ ALASKA, Native Justice Center
- ✓ ARIZONA, Criminal Justice Commission/ Yuma County Sheriff's Office
- ✓ CALIFORNIA, Department of Community Services and Development
- ✓ COLORADO, Division of Criminal Justice Services/City of Denver
- ✓ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Government
- ✓ FLORIDA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ HAWAII, Department of Public Safety
- ✓ INDIANA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ IOWA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ KANSAS, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MAINE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MICHIGAN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MINNESOTA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEVADA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEW JERSEY, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NORTH CAROLINA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ OHIO, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- ✓ PENNSYLVANIA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ RHODE ISLAND, Department of Corrections
- ✓ TENNESSEE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ VIRGINIA, Department of Criminal Justice Services
- ✓ WISCONSIN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ WYOMING, Department of Corrections

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<sup>1</sup> The PRI program will end when the FY 2008 grantees complete their activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

Becki Ney, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program Project Director. Ms. Ney conceptualized and oversaw the development of the Coaching Packet series.

Madeline M. Carter, Principal, and Rachelle Giguere, Program Associate, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the key editors for the Coaching Packet series. Ms. Giguere also provided extensive research support to the development of the series.

# **Introduction to the Establishing a Rational Planning Process Coaching Packet**

## ***The Contents of this Packet***

This Coaching Packet provides:

- An introduction to a rational planning process for achieving successful offender reentry;
- A review of the key elements of a rational planning process;
- The ten steps that teams can take to implement such a process to advance their offender reentry efforts;
- A tool to determine your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps in implementing a rational planning process;
- An aid to developing plans to address identified gap areas; and
- References to additional resources on this topic.

## ***The Intended Audience for this Packet***

This Coaching Packet was originally developed to assist grant teams that were established to manage local PRI initiatives. The teams were composed of representatives from institutional and community corrections and faith-based or community organizations involved in the delivery of pre- and post-release services to offenders transitioning from prison to the community. The content of these Coaching Packets has much broader application, however; the information and tools contained within this Coaching Packet can also be used by teams of criminal justice professionals and their partners to assess the status of their efforts in implementing evidence-based practices and effective reentry services to offenders.

This Coaching Packet is intended specifically for policy level and mid level management teams who have the authority to make policy decisions for their agencies. However, it may also be useful for mid-level managers who have the authority and responsibility to influence those above and below them, or to assume responsibility for policy changes themselves.

## ***How to Use this Packet***

### **SECTION I: READ THE OVERVIEW ON ESTABLISHING A RATIONAL PLANNING PROCESS.**

This section of the Coaching Packet provides an overview of using a rational planning process to achieve offender reentry objectives. Review its content, and if the information it contains is applicable to your work and addresses an area in which you feel you need to focus your efforts, use the tool in Section II to assess your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps with regard to implementing such a process.

**SECTION II: COMPLETE THE ESTABLISHING A RATIONAL PLANNING PROCESS COACHING PACKET CHECKLIST.**

As a team, complete the Establishing a Rational Planning Process Coaching Packet Checklist. (Based upon the information you read in Section I, consider who may need to be involved so that you are able to answer the questions thoroughly.) Complete the checklist as a group and discuss your responses along the way.

- Rate each item listed in the checklist (yes, no, not clear).
- For items where your response is “not clear,” make note of the additional information the team needs to collect in order to be able to rate this item.
- Add additional items that may relate to your jurisdiction’s implementation of a rational planning process that are not already included on the checklist.
- Develop a consensus-based response for each item on the checklist.
- Once the checklist is completed, consider your jurisdictions’ strengths in implementing a rational planning process. Make note of these.
- Next, consider your most significant gaps. Make note of these as well.

**SECTION III: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN.**

If, after completing the checklist in Section II, your team determines that further work on this topic is necessary or would be helpful, follow the steps below to identify your goals, objectives, and action items, and any additional assistance or expertise needed.

Working as a team, review your findings from the Establishing a Rational Planning Process Coaching Packet Checklist. Specifically:

1. Determine whether, based upon what you have read and discussed, you desire to advance your jurisdiction’s work with regard to engaging in a rational planning process.
2. If you determine you have a desire to improve in this area, write a goal statement that reflects where you want to be with regard to improving your current efforts. Your goal might be to “Revise our team’s vision and mission for offender reentry,” “Refine our team composition to ensure that all necessary stakeholders are at the table,” “Determine our data collection needs,” or another goal. Using the Action Planning Worksheet in Section III, note your goal in the area of engaging in a rational planning process.
3. Identify your three most significant strengths in this area and discuss how you might build on those to overcome some of your gaps.
4. Identify your three most significant gaps. For each gap, write an objective. Your objectives might be, “To determine a process by which the team can increase their knowledge of evidence-based practices in reentry,” or “To begin collecting information on the offender population targeted for this initiative,” or something else. Note your three objectives on the Action Planning Worksheet.
5. Add the following on the Action Planning Worksheet for each objective:
  - a. The specific sequential steps that must be taken to meet the objective.
  - b. The individual who will assume lead responsibility for this action item.
  - c. The completion date for this action item.

6. Discuss whether additional assistance or outside expertise is needed to successfully achieve any of your action items. For instance, explore whether additional literature, guidance from another practitioner over the telephone, examples of work products from other jurisdictions, or on-site technical assistance would be helpful options.
  - a. For each action item, identify those for which assistance/expertise is needed.
  - b. Identify the type of assistance/expertise needed.
  - c. Prioritize each of these need areas. If assistance/expertise will be limited, for which action items is assistance most needed?
  - d. Begin exploring ways to secure the needed assistance/expertise.

### ***How to Seek Additional Information***

To download copies of the Coaching Packets, please visit the Center's website at <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>. To obtain further information on the use or content of this or any of the Coaching Packets, or on the 2007 PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program, please contact:

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## Section I: Establishing a Rational Planning Process

### *What is Rational Planning?*

A rational planning process is an approach to problem-solving and decisionmaking that is deliberate and thorough, and provides a structure for the kind of critical self-assessment necessary when addressing a complex issue such as offender reentry. Experience has demonstrated that teams that are most successful in achieving identified goals or outcomes are those that invest the time and resources needed to engage in this kind of deliberate and objective process, and identify and strategically address targets of change in order to reach their objectives.

Engaging in a rational planning process can be an unfamiliar problem-solving process, particularly when engaged in by a multidisciplinary team not conversant with working together; however, utilizing this approach can help teams avoid the kind of stagnation and faulty decisionmaking that can otherwise occur. Even a team with the best intentions, commitment, and leadership can falter and fail to produce desired outcomes if the team lacks:

- ✓ A clear understanding of the reasons they came together (the desired outcome);
- ✓ The expectations of them (a clear set of goals and objectives);
- ✓ A structure or timeline for finishing their assignment; and
- ✓ Sufficient knowledge about the problem they are attempting to solve.

Some reasons why typical approaches might not solve complex offender reentry problems:

- A lack of true understanding of the nature of the problem;
- A failure to appreciate the individuals who may be impacted by the problem; and/or
- An inability to see the full range of possible solutions that might be employed to solve the problem.

In such a situation, the team may begin to meet only periodically, remain confused about their purpose, and face growing disinterest from team members. Consequently, decisions may be made and changes implemented based on recommendations from the team that ultimately do not address the problem or are difficult to implement.

As DOJ and DOL grant recipients contemplate moving forward in the offender reentry area, they must objectively consider their current practices, opportunities, and strengths, and – comparing these to their preferred outcomes – determine what must be addressed or modified in order to advance in their desired direction.

By looking at the issue at hand objectively, teams are better prepared to move forward in a constructive, and efficient, manner.

Providing a comprehensive map for teams to follow in conducting a rational planning process is beyond the scope of this Coaching Packet. Rather, what is provided here is a blueprint for the process, a guide that will highlight the essential elements and key steps. Teams interested in implementing a rational planning process to enhance their efforts to achieve successful offender reentry should consider consulting the following documents (as well as the other resources listed in Section IV: References and Additional Resources) for additional information.

- ✓ *Increasing Public Safety Through Successful Offender Reentry: Evidence-Based and Emerging Practices in Corrections* (Center for Effective Public Policy, 2007).
- ✓ *Getting It Right: Collaborative Problem Solving for Criminal Justice* (McGarry, P. & Ney, B., 2006)
- ✓ *TPC Reentry Handbook – Implementing the NIC Transition from Prison to the Community Model* (Burke, P., 2008)

## ***The Critical Elements of a Rational Planning Process***

### **A VISION FOR SUCCESSFUL OFFENDER REENTRY**

While it may seem easy to identify the problem to be solved (e.g., high recidivism rates, high numbers of violations or infractions, low numbers of offenders securing employment), identifying effective solutions to any problem requires a clear focus on the desired end result. Where does the team want to be with regard to this issue in the future? What are the results or outcomes that the team ultimately hopes to achieve? As organizational management author Stephen Covey<sup>2</sup> says, our problem solving should start by “keeping the end in mind.” If the current vision statement does not convey the true beliefs of the current team members then it should be amended. A rational planning process begins by being clear about what the team wants to see happen.

**A team will be most successful in reaching its vision for successful offender reentry if it knows where it is, where it wants to go, the obstacles in its way, and the best methods for overcoming those obstacles.**

*Adapted from: CEPP, 2007.*

### **INVOLVING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS**

Once the team knows where it wants to end up, the team then needs to consider whether all of the necessary partners to achieving that vision are at the table. When looking at the issues associated with complex matters such as offender reentry, it is clear that problem solving efforts must involve a variety of individuals with diverse skills, expertise, and resources. Often this includes individuals representing different agencies or organizations with a stake in the

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<sup>2</sup> Covey, 1989.

outcome.<sup>3</sup> Developing an appreciation of the potential breadth and depth of an offender reentry issue and involving key partners who can assist in its consideration is critical.

### A SOLID WORK STRUCTURE

Once a team knows where it wants to go and includes the right people in its process, a work structure is required to ensure that the team has productive discussions and implements evidence-based solutions. This requires teams to:

- ✓ Have clear instructions about the nature of their assignment or adopt a clear vision;
- ✓ Clearly understand the roles and responsibilities of team members;
- ✓ Analyze how work is currently done, gathering pertinent baseline data or flowcharts that describe work activities;
- ✓ Identify strengths and gaps in their current methods;
- ✓ Appreciate evidence-based practices in the criminal justice field;
- ✓ Adopt a structure that can identify and implement the most appropriate solutions; and
- ✓ Monitor the results and make further changes if needed.

A rational planning process assists teams to avoid implementing quick solutions to complex offender reentry problems, and instead take the time to create a vision, engage other important partners, and work in a structured manner to determine the best possible course of conduct.

## *Ten Key Steps to Establishing and Maintaining a Rational Planning Process*

### **1. ARTICULATE A VISION AND MISSION.**

For teams in many jurisdictions, the vision concerning improved public safety is integrally connected with the belief that, by applying appropriate practices and techniques, organizations can assist offenders to become “successful” during their time in the criminal justice system and beyond. The belief that offender attitudes, actions, and behaviors can positively change is supported by extensive research conducted over the past twenty years.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the critical link in many vision statements dealing with reentry is that criminal justice practitioners are embracing the idea that public safety can be enhanced by taking actions that promote more offender success.

A good test for a vision statement is to read the statement to an individual who does not work in your field or on your team.

**Does that person understand what you are striving to do, what you hope to accomplish or promote?**

If so, then you have a clear vision statement.

<sup>3</sup> See the Coaching Packet, Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry, for more information.

<sup>4</sup> See the Coaching Packet on Implementing Evidence-Based Practices for more information on this topic.

This idea is contained in the following vision statements:

- ✓ “We will promote public safety through collaborative partnerships, which reflect a seamless system that ensures all returning offenders are law abiding, productive citizens.” (Georgia Reentry Impact Project)
- ✓ “Reduce crime by implementing a seamless plan of services and supervision developed with each offender, delivered through state and local collaboration, from the time of their entry into prison through their transition, reintegration, and aftercare in the community.” (Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative)
- ✓ “We have to engage the offender in the change process and address the criminogenic needs of offenders that have been proven by research to impact recidivism. If we are successful in effecting a positive change in the criminal offender’s behavior, recidivism can be reduced thus making our communities safer.” (North Carolina Division of Community Corrections)

### ***Developing a Vision Statement***

While a vision statement does not have to be lengthy, it should include a statement of a *preferred future* for offender reentry. It is what the team hopes to achieve, or hopes to help achieve, in carrying out its work together. Consider a vision statement that:

- ✓ Identifies the team’s intended destination or direction;
- ✓ Reflects the values, ideals, and principles of the team (as a whole);
- ✓ Is optimistic;
- ✓ Is lofty and compelling (i.e., it creates momentum and energizes);
- ✓ Is broad and general in nature (i.e., it is not weighted down with specifics); and
- ✓ Can be easily understood.

It is not sufficient to create a vision statement and never look at it again. As the team’s work unfolds, as new members are added, and as new issues or opportunities are discovered, the vision statement should be revisited. The vision statement should be considered from time to:

- ✓ Determine if it needs to be revised in light of new information or developments;
- ✓ Allow new members to have the opportunity to provide input or feedback; and
- ✓ Keep team members properly focused on the purpose of the overall effort.

### ***Developing a Mission Statement***

A vision statement is different from a mission statement. A vision indicates, in broad terms, what the team believes in and where it wants to go. A mission statement, on the other hand, indicates what the team must do in order to move in the direction of the team’s intended outcomes (i.e., as indicated in the vision statement). It is likely that there are many activities associated with moving in the direction of a vision; these should be included in the mission statement.

A mission statement should:

- ✓ Be consistent with the vision statement;

- ✓ Have sufficient parameters (e.g., time frames) so that the team knows when they have accomplished their mission; and
- ✓ Express the intended destination of the team.

While the vision statement helps a team to understand *where* it wants to go, a mission statement can help a team to understand *what* they are expected to do to move in the direction of that vision.

To distinguish vision and mission statements, consider the following. In his inaugural address in 1961, President Kennedy indicated his vision:

*"Together let us explore the stars, conquer the deserts, eradicate disease, tap the ocean's depths, and encourage the arts and sciences."*

However, in 1963, President Kennedy offered a mission:

*"By the end of this decade we will land a man on the moon."*

Based on this mission statement, a team would know what is expected, when it is expected, and how they will know whether or not they have accomplished their mission.

## 2. ESTABLISH A TEAM TO UNDERTAKE THE PROCESS.

A rational planning process requires that the team set parameters for membership, so that the team can accomplish its mission most effectively. Two critical questions the team should address are who will participate and how many members should the team have?

### *Team Composition*

Teams should consider the preferred future that has been articulated. Who must be present on a team that can help solve problems, identify and resolve issues, and create solutions to help the team move in the direction of that future? Since offender reentry issues are so complex, it is likely that the team will want to include a number of partners in their efforts (as appropriate) including<sup>5</sup>:

- ✓ Courts
- ✓ Institutional corrections agencies
- ✓ Community corrections agencies
- ✓ Paroling authorities
- ✓ Mental health agencies
- ✓ Public health departments

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<sup>5</sup> For more information, see the Coaching Packet on Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry.

- ✓ Veteran's affairs officials
- ✓ Housing authorities
- ✓ Employment agencies
- ✓ Social services agencies
- ✓ Faith-based and community-based organizations

Teams must consider which of these agencies or organizations should be represented on the team, and within these agencies or organizations, which individuals are best positioned to join the team and contribute to its success.

### ***Team Size***

When setting the parameters for team membership, it is important to satisfy the need for wide representation without letting the team get too large. When a team has too many members (e.g., more than 12-14) it can become unmanageable, and possibly lose its identity and focus. When the inclusion of a large number of individuals is necessary, consider establishing subgroups to work on specific topics or problems. This may allow for numerous representatives from various agencies or organizations to participate in the effort, without allowing the core team to grow too large.

#### **Three Reasons to Invite Others to Join Your Team**

1. Multi-disciplinary offender reentry issues can touch upon a variety of sensitive topics; the more partners involved with you in exploring these issues, the more likely you will be able to successfully navigate difficult waters.
2. You need substantive experts from a variety of disciplines in order to adequately and accurately consider current reentry practices, as well as establish realistic and achievable goals for the team.
3. When it is time to implement changes, having other partners involved from the beginning will make it easier to identify and take the necessary steps to improve reentry practices.

### **3. UNDERSTAND THE RESEARCH ON EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE.**

One of the first key steps in a rational planning approach includes reviewing and understanding the research on what works regarding offender management and transition. Research over the past twenty years indicates that certain treatment and intervention strategies can reduce offender recidivism. Researchers have also found negative or negligible impacts on recidivism associated with punishment-oriented strategies.<sup>6</sup> The application of this research to practice is often referred to as *evidence-based practice*.

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<sup>6</sup> For a review of this literature, see the Coaching Packets on Implementing Evidence-Based Practices and Shaping Offender Behavior.

Teams working on any issue related to offender reentry will benefit from becoming familiar with the literature on evidence-based practice. Understanding this research on “what works” will assist the team in better analyzing their current strengths and gaps (i.e., how well is the jurisdiction doing in implementing what has been proven to work?). Furthermore, teams that strive to implement the principles of evidence-based practice are more effective in assisting offenders to become successful. Teams are encouraged to review a number of documents available to them to start this process.<sup>7</sup>

#### **Develop an Understanding of Evidence-Based Practice**

Teams focused on offender reentry issues should develop an understanding of the literature regarding what works in changing offender behavior and reducing recidivism. Consider the following eight principles of evidence-based practice:

1. Assess actuarial risk/needs.
2. Enhance intrinsic motivation.
3. Target Interventions.
  - a. *Risk Principle*: Prioritize supervision and treatment resources for higher risk offenders.
  - b. *Need Principle*: Target interventions to criminogenic needs.
  - c. *Responsivity Principle*: Be responsive to temperament, learning style, motivation, culture, and gender when assigning offenders to programs.
  - d. *Dosage*: Structure 40-70% of high-risk offenders' time for 3-9 months.
  - e. *Treatment*: Integrate treatment into sentence/sanction requirements.
4. Skill train with directed practice (use cognitive behavioral treatment methods).
5. Increase positive reinforcement.
6. Engage ongoing support in natural communities.
7. Measure relevant processes/practices.
8. Provide measurement feedback.

*Source: Bogue et al., 2004.*

#### **4. COLLECT INFORMATION ON THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES.**

It is not enough for a team to have a vision for where they want to go and a mission outlining what they will do to get there. A team must also understand *where they are now* before they can begin to move forward in a logical and purposeful fashion. This requires the objective collection of baseline data and information.

Consider the following in regards to where the team currently stands:

- ✓ **The Current Process.** Does everyone on the team understand how the current process operates? A flow chart could be designed that will aid the team in understanding how work

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<sup>7</sup> See Bogue et al., 2004; Burke, 2008; CEPP, 2007.

is currently done. The team should consider the key outcomes being sought (i.e., recidivism, employment) and where key decisions are made.

- ✓ **Offender Population.** The team should look closely at the offender population it is serving. That is, how many are currently being served, to what communities are they returning, what are their criminogenic needs, etc.? The information needed will depend on the particular issue taken on by the team. It might also be helpful to look at similar data over a period of time to get a sense of trends or changes that may impact the team's decisions (e.g., a change in risk levels or in the age of the offender population).
- ✓ **Policies and Practices.** Consider existing policies and practices, and what they mean for the focus, purpose, or direction of the team. Do these policies support the current direction of the team, or are there policies that could serve as a barrier to the team as it tries to reach its vision? The team also should consider current informal practices of the agencies involved in the effort and how these might help or hinder the work of the team.
- ✓ **Available Resources.** How well is the team equipped to provide the desired services to offenders? As the team gets to know more about the offender population and their needs, a comparison should be made to determine whether resources are available to meet those needs.
- ✓ **Staff Involved in the Effort.** In order for the team to employ evidence-based practices and provide the desired assistance to offenders returning from prison, the proper allotment of staff must be present. What is the current deployment of staff? What are their responsibilities in the area of offender reentry? What expectations of staff currently exist that may need to be revisited?

## 5. DETERMINE THE STRENGTHS AND GAPS IN CURRENT EFFORTS.

Once information is collected on the current circumstances, the team should consider it alongside the research on evidence-based practice. For example, to produce a list of strengths and gaps, a team might consider information about their current efforts against the following elements of an effective reentry process:

- ✓ Admission, intake assessment and the identification of risk and criminogenic needs factors;
- ✓ The development of appropriate case plans to address these factors;
- ✓ The provision of risk-reducing programs and services consistent with case plans;
- ✓ The identification of necessary transition needs and the provision of transition services;
- ✓ The release of the offender to the community at the appropriate time with necessary conditions;
- ✓ Community supervision that is driven by a success-oriented philosophy; and
- ✓ The provision of community services which address criminogenic needs.

If your team already knows where it wants to be regarding offender reentry, the question then becomes...

***Why aren't we there already?***

Asking this question might help to clarify what needs to be tackled in order to move forward.

Depending on the specific vision of the team regarding offender reentry, some of the above areas may or may not be relevant to their work or within their power of authority. For instance, a team focused on providing employment services to offenders may not be concerned with identifying changes to the timing of the release process or the setting of conditions. However, such a team may determine that they currently have no access to offender case plans, which might provide them with helpful information when assisting offenders with finding employment. Regardless of the team's focus, the team must make a deliberate effort to compare what *currently is* to the *ideal*, in order to determine how best to move forward.

## **6. DEVELOP AND PRIORITIZE GOALS.**

In light of the strengths and gaps identified, the team should develop specific goals that lead them toward achieving their mission.

- ✓ Identified gaps should be “filled.” That is, goals should address directly the mismatches between what is currently happening (and preventing the team from reaching its vision) and what should be happening.
- ✓ Teams should reflect on their strengths while developing goals. This ensures that team assets are maximized and that processes or activities that are currently working are not mistakenly changed.

Once goals are established, they should be prioritized so that the team can clarify its focus and determine where to invest the most time and energy. In prioritizing goals, consider the following questions:

- ✓ Which goals, once reached, will have the greatest impact on the achievement of our mission?
- ✓ Which goals will be the easiest (i.e., in terms of time and effort) to achieve?
- ✓ Which goals will be the least expensive to implement?

Based on the answers to these questions – and perhaps other considerations specific to the team (e.g., grant requirements, funding barriers, level of authority) – the team should prioritize its goals so that a sequence for action is clear.

**Goal:** Ensure that 60% of the offender population is employed within 12 months.

**Objective:** Meet with local employers to provide education on the tax benefits available to those who employ ex-prisoners.

## **7. DEVELOP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR EACH GOAL.**

The next step is to develop specific objectives that must be met to accomplish the team's identified goals. These objectives should:

- ✓ Indicate specific actions that should be taken to achieve the desired goal;
- ✓ Identify particular individuals who will be responsible for overseeing the actions indicated; and
- ✓ Specify timelines by which each objective should be completed.

## *Finalizing a Strategic Plan*

By identifying and articulating a vision and mission, specifying the critical goals that should be accomplished, and determining the essential objectives that must be met in order to achieve these goals, the team has created a strategic plan for its work.

This strategic plan should:

- ✓ Represent appropriate outcomes to strive for in light of the team's vision for reentry;
- ✓ Contain sufficient information and justification to support the actions suggested (i.e., the mission);
- ✓ Include goals that are appropriate and can be embraced by the team; and
- ✓ Outline objectives, timelines, and steps that are properly prioritized.

Before beginning to implement the strategic plan, the team should consider the following:

- ✓ Are there team members that must be added in light of the goals and objectives contained in the strategic plan?
- ✓ What process measures should be established to determine whether the team is taking the steps it agreed to take (e.g., did we conduct assessments as outlined in the strategic plan)?
- ✓ What outcome measures should be established so that the team will know when it has accomplished its vision (e.g., are offenders recidivating less)?

### **8. IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGIC PLAN.**

Once the team is satisfied with its strategic plan for reaching its vision, the team will move from contemplation to action. The team should proceed with its defined work, focusing first on goals deemed highest priority. Individuals responsible for certain objectives should begin their work and report regularly to the team concerning their progress, noting any problems or issues that may require assistance from other team members.

From time to time, the strategic plan should be considered alongside the team's progress, to determine whether changes in course are necessary. Remember that the strategic plan is a dynamic document that can and should be changed to serve the needs of the team.

Despite a team's best efforts, some indicators may show results significantly below expectations. Perhaps fewer offenders than anticipated are reporting for or completing services. However, it is important to remember that...

**It is often possible to learn as much or more from failure as from success. View less-than-expected results as opportunities for improvement, rather than as failures.**

*For more information, see the Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts Coaching Packet.*

## **9. MONITOR THE IMPACT OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN.**

Once the team has completed its work, effort must be taken to understand the impact of what has occurred, to document outcomes, and to determine whether the team's effort has resulted in movement towards their preferred destination.<sup>8</sup> Winston Churchill once noted that, "however beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results."

As a result of this information, teams should consider:

- ✓ Are we making progress in achieving our desired goals?
- ✓ Are we moving forward at a satisfactory pace or to a satisfactory degree?
- ✓ Have new problems or issues emerged that were not anticipated? And do these issues require further attention?
- ✓ What changes should we now undertake to improve our results, speed up our actions, or overcome additional challenges?

## **10. MAINTAIN MOMENTUM.**

For many teams getting started may be difficult. But maintaining momentum, commitment, and energy for an ongoing effort can prove even harder. Undergoing a rational planning process – and then implementing the plan – can take a significant amount of time. In order to keep team members enthusiastic and focused in the reentry effort, consider some of the following strategies.

- ✓ Develop minutes or a record of meetings and distribute this information to ensure that roles, responsibilities, and next steps are clear to everyone.
- ✓ Identify key timeframes or benchmarks for the work being done. As progress is made on issues – even minor progress – the team should reflect on its meaning and celebrate positive results.
- ✓ Share responsibilities. Rotate undesired responsibilities amongst all team members. Avoid having only a few people doing the bulk of the work for the team.
- ✓ Hold each other accountable for attending meetings and completing assignments. If individuals fail to follow through, the team must discuss the issue and take steps to resolve it.
- ✓ Regularly consider the vision statement, mission statement, and goals established by the team. Consider whether the team is moving in the proper direction or if it has gotten off track.
- ✓ Find ways to enjoy both the discussion and the work of the team. Meet in different locations to make meetings more pleasant. Bring food to meetings.
- ✓ Consider ways that team members can be recognized for their efforts. Use positive reinforcements to stimulate continued commitment and effort from everyone involved.

The rational planning process assists teams in identifying their desired outcomes and focusing on the critical activities needed to achieve success. By knowing where the team wants to go in

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<sup>8</sup> See the Coaching Packet, Measuring the Impacts of Reentry Efforts, for more information.

regards to offender reentry, where it currently stands, and what it needs to accomplish, the team is better positioned to assist offenders in successfully transitioning to the community.

## ***Conclusion***

The rational planning process presented in this document is intended to assist corrections professionals and their partners in their efforts to engage in a deliberate and thorough problem-solving and decisionmaking process, one that will support critical self-assessment of present circumstances and assist the team to identify, prioritize, and measure the effectiveness of change strategies in order to reach objectives. This Coaching Packet provides only an overview of the ten key steps in rational planning; there are a number of resources available for professionals interested in learning more, including the Coaching Packets on "Implementing Evidence-Based Practices" and "Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts." For a summary of the key topics covered in the other Coaching Packets, see Exhibit 1. For more information on rational planning efforts generally and offender reentry specifically, see Section IV: References and Additional Resources.

**Exhibit 1:**  
**Topics Covered by Other Coaching Packets**

Coaching Packet	Assessment	Case Management	Programs/ Services	Success-Driven Supervision	Staff-Offender Interactions	Enhancing Motivation	Prosocial Supports	Collaboration/ Team Approach	A Vision for Reentry	Planning	Measuring Reentry Efforts	Quality Assurance
<b>Effective Case Management</b>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
<b>Implementing Evidence-Based Practices</b>	x		x		x	x	x				x	x
<b>Shaping Offender Behavior</b>	x		x	x	x	x	x					
<b>Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry</b>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
<b>Building Offenders' Community Assets Through Mentoring</b>			x		x	x	x					
<b>Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders</b>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
<b>Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry</b>		x						x	x	x	x	
<b>A Framework for Offender Reentry</b>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
<b>Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts</b>									x	x	x	
<b>Continuous Quality Improvement</b>	x	x	x		x					x	x	x

## Section II: Establishing a Rational Planning Process Coaching Packet Checklist

Rational Planning	YES	NO	NOT CLEAR	NOTES
1. Does your team have a vision statement for offender reentry?				
2. Has a mission statement been developed that outlines the general activities the team must accomplish to reach their vision?				
3. Are all the necessary stakeholders on the team that are needed to accomplish its reentry goals?				
4. Has effort been made to understand the research on effective offender management and reentry (i.e., evidence-based practices)?				
5. Do team members adhere to the principles of evidence-based practices (where possible)?				
6. Has the team collected information on the current process, including policy, practice, and resource considerations that may play a role in the team's success?				
7. Has the team collected information on the offender population it is serving?				
8. Has the team's current efforts been compared and contrasted to evidence-based practice to determine strengths and gaps?				
9. Have goals been developed to fill in these gaps?				
10. Has the team agreed on the order in which these goals will be addressed (i.e., prioritization)?				
11. For each goal, have objectives been developed indicating who is responsible for achieving it and by when?				
12. Has the team combined their vision, mission, goals, and objectives into a coherent strategic plan for their work together?				
13. Has the team developed outcome and process measures based on its vision and strategic plan?				
14. Do team member check in regularly to report progress in achieving goals and objectives?				
15. Does the team revisit the strategic plan from time to time to determine whether any changes are needed?				
16. Are team meetings and decisions recorded and shared with all team members?				
17. Are all team members contributing equally?				
18. Do team members hold each other accountable for completing assignments?				
19. Does the team celebrate its successes – even small ones?				
20. Has the team reviewed the results (i.e., outcome and process measures) to determine whether goals have been achieved?				

## Section III: Action Planning Worksheet

<b>GOAL:</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 2:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 3:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

## Section IV: References and Additional Resources

### *References*

Bogue, B., Campbell, N., Carey, M., Clawson, E., Faust, D., Florio, K., Joplin, L., Keiser, G., Wasson, B., & Woodward, W. (2004). *Implementing Evidence-Based Practice in Community Corrections: The Principles of Effective Intervention*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections.

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McGarry, P. & Ney, B. (2006). *Getting It Right: Collaborative Problem Solving for Criminal Justice*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections.

### *Additional Resources*

Burke, P. (2008). *TPC Reentry Handbook – Implementing the NIC Transition from Prison to the Community Model*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections.

Burke, P. (2004). *Parole Violations Revisited – A Handbook on Strengthening Parole Practices for Public Safety and Successful Transition to the Community*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections.

# COACHING PACKET

## Effective Case Management

One in a series of Coaching Packets designed to assist jurisdictions in the implementation of effective practices that will support successful offender outcomes

Author: Mark Carey, The Carey Group

Editor: Madeline M. Carter, Center for Effective Public Policy

2010



### ***Coaching Packet Series 1: Creating a Blueprint for an Effective Offender Reentry System***

- A Framework for Offender Reentry
- Establishing a Rational Planning Process
- Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### ***Coaching Packet Series 2: Delivering Evidence-Based Services***

- Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
- Effective Case Management
- Shaping Offender Behavior
- Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry
- Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring
- Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

### ***Coaching Packet Series 3: Ensuring Meaningful Outcomes***

- Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts
- Continuous Quality Improvement



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## Introduction to the Coaching Packet Series

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) and its partners, The Urban Institute and The Carey Group, were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to the Fiscal Year 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees (hereafter “PRI grantees”). The project team served in this capacity from April 2008 to June 2010.

The Center is a nonprofit criminal justice consulting organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since the early 1980s, the Center has provided training and technical assistance to the criminal justice field on a wide array of topics, including transition and reentry, and has administered a number of national projects of this kind. The Urban Institute was established as a private, nonprofit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1968 and is a leader in prisoner reentry research, focusing on making best practice information accessible to practitioners and policymakers. The Carey Group is a justice consulting firm with extensive practitioner experience in evidence-based practices, strategic planning, community and restorative justice and corrections.

As a part of its technical assistance delivery to the PRI grantees, the Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work. The final products of this work include eleven Coaching Packets in three series. These Coaching Packets offer practical value beyond the jurisdictions involved in this initiative and are available to criminal justice professionals and their partners interested in enhancing their strategies for reducing recidivism and improving offender outcomes.

Each Coaching Packet provides an overview of a specific topic as it relates to successful offender reentry, and offers tools and resources for those interested in exploring the topic in greater depth.

- *Series 1* provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system. This series provides a conceptual framework for addressing prisoner reentry at the policy level; outlines a strategic planning process to support implementation efforts; and explores the establishment of successful collaborative partnerships at the policy and case management levels.
- *Series 2* addresses key issues related to the delivery of evidence-based services to offenders. This series summarizes the key literature with regard to implementing evidence-based practices; explores advances in approaches to case management; addresses the important role of staff in changing offender behavior; and summarizes research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- *Series 3* provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes. This series describes methods to assess the effectiveness of reentry efforts and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

## FY 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Grantees

The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) – intended to support the development and implementation of institutional and community corrections-based reentry programs to help returning offenders find employment and provide other critical services – is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grants were awarded to state and local corrections agencies by DOJ to provide pre-release and transition services to offenders and were “matched” by DOL grants to faith- and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to provide post-release services, focusing on employment assistance and mentoring.

Thirty-five states received grants in three cycles of the Initiative during Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 23 FY 2007 PRI grantees received assistance under this project. FY 2007 grants were awarded in the fall of 2007 and implemented from 2008 to 2010; however, some grantees will not complete their activities until 2011. The FY 2007 grantees provided technical assistance under this project included:

- ✓ ALASKA, Native Justice Center
- ✓ ARIZONA, Criminal Justice Commission/ Yuma County Sheriff’s Office
- ✓ CALIFORNIA, Department of Community Services and Development
- ✓ COLORADO, Division of Criminal Justice Services/City of Denver
- ✓ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Government
- ✓ FLORIDA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ HAWAII, Department of Public Safety
- ✓ INDIANA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ IOWA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ KANSAS, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MAINE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MICHIGAN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MINNESOTA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEVADA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEW JERSEY, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NORTH CAROLINA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ OHIO, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- ✓ PENNSYLVANIA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ RHODE ISLAND, Department of Corrections
- ✓ TENNESSEE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ VIRGINIA, Department of Criminal Justice Services
- ✓ WISCONSIN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ WYOMING, Department of Corrections

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<sup>1</sup> The PRI program will end when the FY 2008 grantees complete their activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

Becki Ney, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program Project Director. Ms. Ney conceptualized and oversaw the development of the Coaching Packet series.

Madeline M. Carter, Principal, and Rachelle Giguere, Program Associate, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the key editors for the Coaching Packet series. Ms. Giguere also provided extensive research support to the development of the series.

Special thanks are extended to Peggy B. Burke, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy for her significant contributions to the early development of this Coaching Packet.

# **Introduction to the Effective Case Management Coaching Packet**

## *The Contents of this Packet*

This Coaching Packet provides:

- A definition of case management;
- A description of the key components of an effective case management approach as well as their most salient features;
- Illustrations of some of these features;
- A tool to determine your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps in the area of case management;
- An aid to developing plans to address identified gap areas; and
- References to additional resources on this topic.

## *The Intended Audience for this Packet*

This Coaching Packet was originally developed to assist grant teams that were established to manage local PRI initiatives. The teams were composed of representatives from institutional and community corrections and faith-based or community organizations involved in the delivery of pre- and post-release services to offenders transitioning from prison to the community. The content of these Coaching Packets has much broader application, however; the information and tools contained within this Coaching Packet can also be used by teams of criminal justice professionals and their partners to assess the status of their efforts in implementing evidence-based practices and effective reentry services to offenders.

This Coaching Packet may also serve as a resource for professionals at all levels who are interested in learning more about this topic.

## *How to Use this Packet*

### **SECTION I: READ THE OVERVIEW ON EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT.**

This section of the Coaching Packet provides an overview of the principles leading to effective case management; and the features of preparing for the development of the case plan, the creation of a plan, supervising the case, and managing the case plan as the needs of the offender and circumstances dictate. Review its content and, if the information it contains is applicable to your work and addresses an area in which you feel you need to focus your efforts, use the tool in Section II to assess your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps in your case management efforts.

### **SECTION II: COMPLETE THE EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT COACHING PACKET CHECKLIST.**

As a team, complete the Effective Case Management Coaching Packet Checklist. (Based upon the information you read in Section I, consider who may need to be involved so that you are able to answer the questions thoroughly.) Complete the checklist as a group and discuss your responses along the way.

- Rate each item listed in the checklist (yes, no, not clear).

- For items where your response is “not clear,” make note of the additional information the team needs to collect in order to be able to rate this item.
- Add additional items that may relate to your jurisdiction’s case management efforts that are not already included on the checklist.
- Develop a consensus-based response for each item on the checklist.
- Once the checklist is completed, consider your jurisdictions’ strengths in the area of case management. Make note of these.
- Next, consider your most significant gaps. Make note of these as well.

### **SECTION III: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN.**

If, after completing the checklist in Section II, your team determines that further work on this topic is necessary or would be helpful, follow the steps below to identify your goals, objectives, and action items, and identify any additional assistance or expertise needed.

Working as a team, review your findings from the Effective Case Management Coaching Packet Checklist. Specifically:

1. Determine whether, based upon what you have read and discussed, you desire to advance your jurisdiction’s approach to case management.
2. If you determine you have a desire to improve in this area, write a goal statement that reflects where you want to be with regard to improving your current efforts. Your goal might be to “Establish a single, dynamic case management process that supports successful outcomes with offenders,” or another goal. Using the Action Planning Worksheet in Section III, note your goal in the area of case management.
3. Identify your three most significant strengths in this area and discuss how you might build on those to overcome some of your gaps.
4. Identify your three most significant gaps. For each gap, write an objective. Your objectives might be, “To establish a team-based approach to case management,” or “To establish a routine re-assessment and case management update process,” or “To develop a standard case management plan protocol and template,” or something else. Note your three objectives on the Action Planning Worksheet.
5. Add the following on the Action Planning Worksheet for each objective:
  - a. The specific sequential steps that must be taken to meet the objective.
  - b. The individual who will assume lead responsibility for this action item.
  - c. The completion date for this action item.
6. Discuss whether additional assistance or outside expertise is needed to successfully achieve any of your action items. For instance, explore whether additional literature, guidance from another practitioner over the telephone, examples of work products from other jurisdictions, or on-site technical assistance would be helpful options.
  - a. For each action item, identify those for which assistance/expertise is needed.
  - b. Identify the type of assistance/expertise needed.
  - c. Prioritize each of these need areas. If assistance/expertise will be limited, for which action items is assistance most needed?

- d. Begin exploring ways to secure the needed assistance/expertise.

### ***How to Seek Additional Information***

To download copies of the Coaching Packets, please visit the Center's website at <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>. To obtain further information on the use or content of this or any of the Coaching Packets, or on the 2007 PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program, please contact:

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## Section I: Overview of Effective Case Management

A growing body of research on evidence-based practices has provided corrections professionals with the knowledge to develop interventions that are effective in changing offender behavior and reducing the likelihood of reoffense. Case management – which is gaining empirical support as an effective model for use with offenders<sup>2</sup> – is a key strategy in the application of these evidence-based practices.

The definition of case management used in this document is the:

*Strategic use of resources – including staff time, correctional programs, and other types of resources – at the case level to enhance the likelihood of success following institutional release and discharge from supervision, decreasing the likelihood of offender recidivism.*

### *The Characteristics of Effective Case Management<sup>3</sup>*

Effective case management is characterized by a number of features.

#### **EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT BEGINS WITH, AND IS BASED UPON, AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT OF RISK AND CRIMINOGENIC NEEDS.**

Case management begins with an empirically-based assessment of offenders' risk to reoffend,<sup>4,5,6</sup> and their criminogenic needs.

- ✓ Research demonstrates that matching the intensity of interventions to the assessed level of risk (i.e., more intensive strategies for higher risk offenders) results in better offender outcomes.<sup>7</sup>
- ✓ Empirically-based tools should also be used to assess offenders' dynamic risk factors (commonly referred to as criminogenic needs). Research demonstrates that offender

<sup>2</sup> See Lipsey, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> For additional information on effective case management, readers are referred to the Transition from Prison to Community (TPC) resources provided on page 28.

<sup>4</sup> See the Implementing Evidence-Based Practices Coaching Packet for a primer on evidence-based practices, including the risk and need principles and other foundational concepts.

<sup>5</sup> Risk/need assessments are distinguished from classification assessments conducted within institutions.

Classification assessments are used to determine security levels and housing placement, and typically focus on offenders' safety concerns, likelihood for institutional misconduct and/or escape. Because classification assessments are important to maintaining safe and secure institutions, they should be conducted in addition to risk/need assessments.

<sup>6</sup> Risk/need assessments are often supplemented with other assessments that explore in greater depth specific areas of concern (e.g., substance abuse, mental health).

<sup>7</sup> Andrews & Bonta, 2007a.

outcomes are improved when intervention strategies address criminogenic (rather than non-criminogenic) factors.<sup>8</sup>

**EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT IS COMPREHENSIVE.**

In addition to addressing offenders' criminogenic needs, case management plans should also address offenders' stability factors.

- ✓ Stability factors are those conditions that can interfere with offenders' abilities to address their criminogenic needs (e.g., housing, medication, transportation).

**EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT IS ONGOING.**

Case management is a process that can begin as early as sentencing (or before) and should continue seamlessly until offenders are discharged from supervision.

**EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT IS DYNAMIC.**

As offenders' conditions change significantly either positively or negatively (e.g., successful completion of programs, compliance violations, loss of employment, family conflict), and as re-assessments reflect changes in risk levels or risk factors, case management plans are reshaped, reflecting updated goals and strategies.

**EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT IS TEAM-BASED AND INCLUDES THE OFFENDER AS PART OF THAT TEAM.**

Typically, several individuals – correctional counselors, reentry specialists, treatment providers, security staff and probation/parole officers, employment counselors, mentors, to name only a few – are involved in the day-to-day management of the offenders under their care or supervision. Establishing a team approach to case management provides a forum for these professionals to work together collaboratively – sharing information and perspectives, and working in parallel with one another rather than duplicating efforts or working in opposition to one another. The case management team might be led by an institutional staff person while the offender is incarcerated and by a community supervision officer while the offender is in the community (depending on the jurisdiction, institutional or community staff may or may not be titled as case managers, reentry specialists, etc.).<sup>9</sup> The offender is always a member of the team. The composition of the case management team will change over time, depending upon the offenders' location (i.e., changes of institutional housing assignments, or transition from institutions to the community) and the progression of activities (i.e., changes in treatment plans, job assignments, etc.). The case management team's responsibilities include:

- ✓ Engaging offenders in the process of assessment, goal identification, and in developing a behavioral contract (the case plan) that outlines the steps offenders and others will take to attain those goals; and
- ✓ Identifying and facilitating access to interventions and strategies that will address criminogenic needs and stability factors.

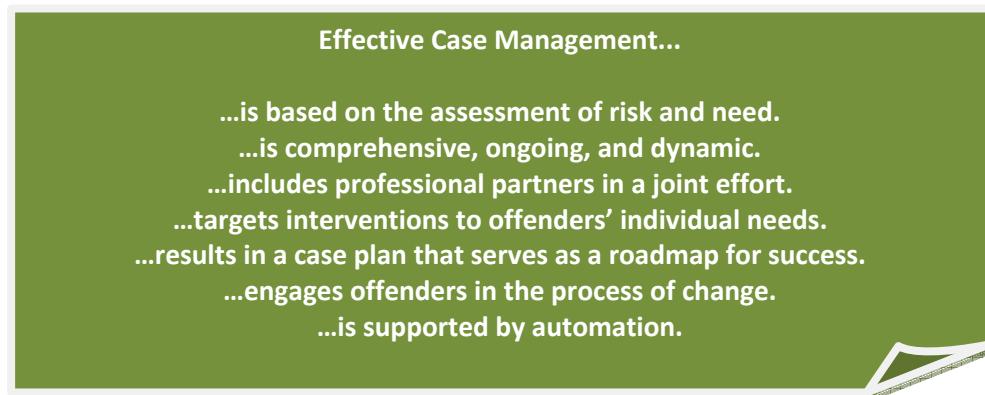
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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Because titles and duties vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, throughout this document the term "case manager" is used to refer to corrections professionals in the institution or in the community who have responsibility for managing offenders' cases. The concepts provided in this Coaching Packet apply to a wide range of individuals involved in offenders' successful transition from prison to the community.

#### **EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT RELIES ON THE APPROPRIATE TARGETING OF INTERVENTIONS.**

An effective case management approach requires that the interventions delivered to offenders are evidence-based (i.e., that they adhere to the risk, need and responsivity principles; are delivered in the proper dosage and intensity; are skill-based; etc.) and that programs and services are available and accessible to offenders when and where they are needed. Through the assessment process, key targets for intervention are identified; the case plan documents a roadmap – or strategy – that defines the sequencing of these targets and the specific action steps that will result in their achievement.



#### **EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT UTILIZES OFFENDER ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES AS A TOOL IN THE CASE MANAGEMENT PROCESS.**

Offenders' cooperation and likelihood of successful completion of their case plans will increase to the extent that they are involved in developing their own plans – as opposed to being “told” what their plans will contain. To this end, an effective case management approach implies not only that a process for case management is in place but also that members of the case management team understand the important influence they can have on offenders' motivation<sup>10</sup> and have the skills to effectively engage offenders in the change process (e.g., common techniques include Motivational Interviewing and cognitive reflective communication).

#### **EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT IS SUPPORTED BY AUTOMATION.**

In most corrections agencies today, case management information – including the assessments themselves or the data from the assessments, and case management plans – is stored electronically. Automating this information enables practitioners to:

- ✓ Input real-time information so that the case plan is current;
- ✓ Share assessment data and case management plans as offenders move between institutions and between institutions and the field;
- ✓ Share assessment data and case management plans among members of a case management team who may not be co-located;
- ✓ Aggregate assessment data and case plan information across the offender population to analyze trends, resource needs, etc.; and
- ✓ Analyze case information for purposes of measurement feedback.

<sup>10</sup> See the Coaching Packet on Shaping Offender Behavior.

## The Components of Effective Case Management

There are four central components to effective case management.

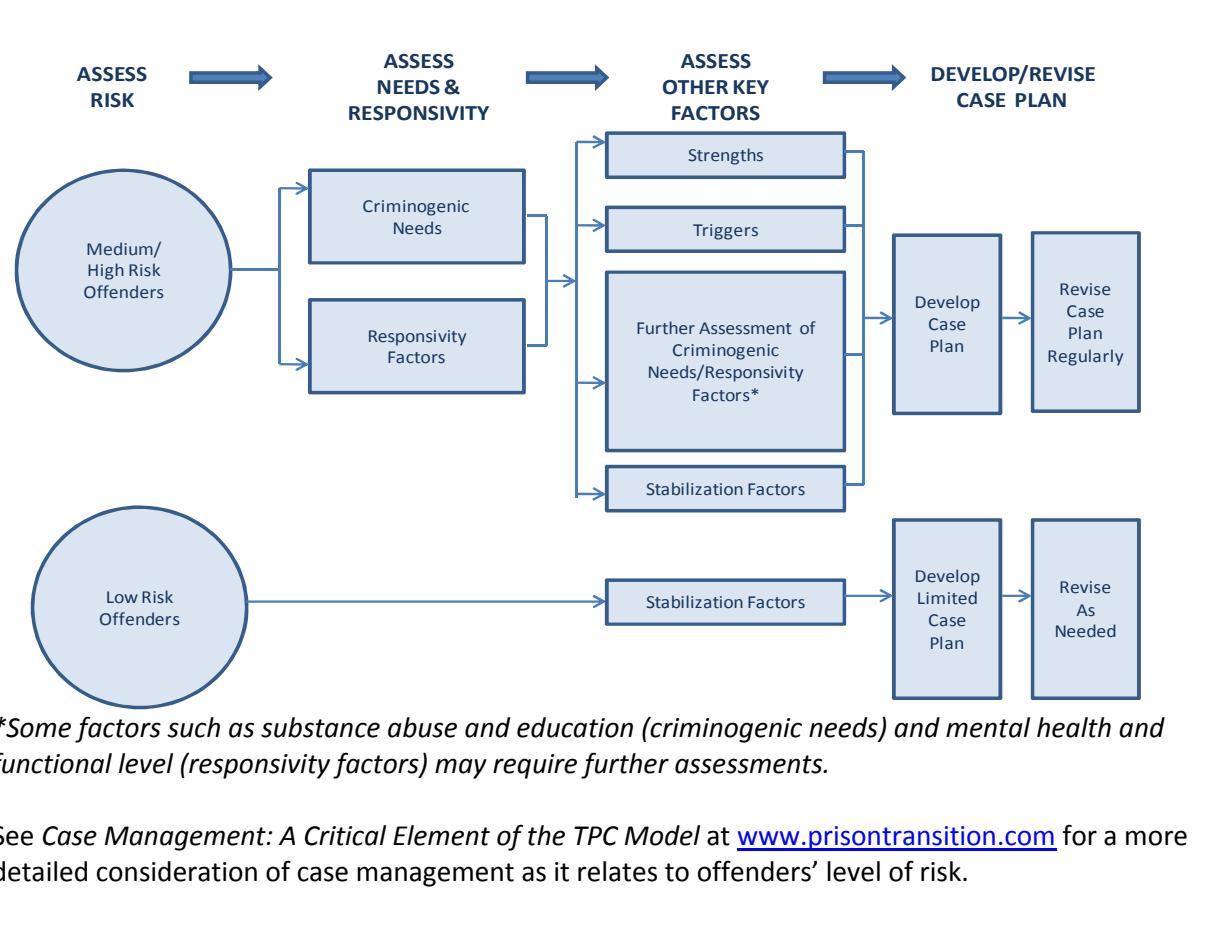
- ✓ Preparing for Case Planning
- ✓ Developing the Case Plan
- ✓ Delivering Effective Services
- ✓ Managing the Case

### PREPARING FOR THE CASE PLANNING PROCESS

Case planning is not an event, it is a process. There are three reasons for this, each of which will be discussed in greater detail later in this document:

- ✓ The information that is needed to develop a thorough case plan typically becomes available over time. Rare is the case when risk/need and other assessment data, background reports, etc., is available immediately.
- ✓ It takes time to develop rapport and to fully understand offenders' circumstances, strengths, supports, and areas of concern.
- ✓ Case plans will necessarily change over time as offenders' conditions change.

**Exhibit 1: Preparing for the Case Planning Process**



Therefore, the initial period of contact – whether in an institution or in the community – should be focused on preparing for the case planning process by gathering foundational information, building relationships with offenders, and establishing expectations with them about the importance of developing and then following their case plans.

#### *A. Assessing Risk, Needs, and Responsivity*<sup>11</sup>

**Risk.** Actuarial risk assessments – in combination with other assessment data – forms the basis of the case plan in much the same way that a battery of medical tests is used to assist doctors in prescribing courses of treatment. Risk assessment information should dictate the degree of intervention (e.g., intensity of supervision, intensity and duration of programming) based upon assessed level of risk to reoffend (i.e., highest levels of intervention matched to highest levels of risk).

**Need.** Criminogenic needs is the term used to describe the factors that have been demonstrated through research to be associated with and predictive of future criminal behavior. This information, also derived from administering actuarial assessments, is critically important to case planning as it identifies the specific conditions for individual offenders that, if successfully addressed, will decrease the probability of future crime. There are several important principles case managers should take into consideration in their case planning work:

- ✓ Because all criminogenic needs are not created equal – that is, some have greater influence on reoffense than others – case managers should rely heavily on this assessment data to determine which to focus on first (i.e., the “drivers”). For example, the most significant among the dynamic criminogenic needs (i.e., anti-social behavior, personality, attitudes, and peers)<sup>12</sup> have the greatest influence on criminal behavior and therefore should be prioritized for intervention. If, however, offenders also have addictions that interfere with their ability to cooperate with their case managers, attend and actively participate in cognitive-behavioral programs designed to address anti-social thinking and peers, or otherwise successfully manage their supervision, the addiction may have to be addressed prior to approaching other more salient criminogenic needs. On the other hand, offenders whose assessments indicate high scores on anti-social behavior, personality and attitude that also have employment concerns may not be successful in the workplace before these more predominant criminogenic needs are addressed.
- ✓ Research demonstrates that the dosage and intensity with which criminogenic needs are addressed are also relevant to successful outcomes. This issue will be explored in greater detail later in this Coaching Packet.
- ✓ In addition, research shows that addressing 4-6 criminogenic needs results in significantly better outcomes than does addressing 1-3.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, case managers should plan to address at least four to six of the most influential criminogenic needs over the course of offenders’ involvement with the criminal justice system.

<sup>11</sup> A more thorough discussion of these and other evidence-based practices is included in the Implementing Evidence-Based Practices Coaching Packet. Therefore, readers are encouraged to review the Implementing Evidence-Based Practices Coaching Packet prior to further review of this Coaching Packet.

<sup>12</sup> Andrews, 2007; Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2006, p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> Andrews & Bonta, 2007a.

Beyond prioritizing “drivers,” targeting 4-6 of the most significant criminogenic needs through the use of evidence-based intervention strategies, and following the dosage and intensity principles, there is no “magic formula” for how many criminogenic needs are addressed at any one time or how best to sequence interventions. These are critically important decisions that must be considered carefully by the case manager, in collaboration with the offender and the case management team, and in light of resource availability and other individual case factors. This is the “art” of applying science to case management.

**Responsivity.** Because all people are not the same, when it comes to programming, “one size does not fit all.” Among other things, individuals differ with regard to their level of intelligence and functional abilities; their gender, developmental age and cultural backgrounds; and their mental health conditions. These differences have been demonstrated through research to have relevance to the effectiveness of interventions.<sup>14</sup> This need for individualization is referred to as the responsivity principle, and is a key component to determining the best way to approach programming for offenders. For example, most offenders with anti-social thinking and deficits in problem solving skills can benefit from cognitive behavioral programs. However, if these offenders also have an anxiety disorder and low functional levels, they may be overwhelmed by the dynamic interaction of a group setting and/or may not be able to follow the discussion or complete assignments due to slower processing skills. For these reasons, case plans should be developed with sensitivity to the responsivity principle.

### ***B. Knowing Offenders’ Strengths***

Most high risk offenders have a variety of skill deficits – such as managing their emotions or learning how to develop new, prosocial friendships – that require attention. In addition, many also have a long history of failing at school, work, or in relationships. They may even be skeptical that yet another program will result in an improved lifestyle.

It is neither easy nor comfortable to learn new attitudes, skills, and behaviors. This is why people tend to gravitate toward behaviors and activities with which they have developed a level of comfort, and shy away from those they perceive themselves to be deficient in.

By identifying and drawing upon offenders’ strengths, case managers can reduce discomfort and resistance. For example, an offender who is skilled in watercolor may find it easier to develop prosocial friendships by attending an art class where she feels comfortable with the skill. In fact, she might be able to help fellow students with their artwork, paving the way for the establishment of new prosocial relationships.

For these reasons, case managers should explore offenders’ strengths and interests and use these as building blocks for action steps that will facilitate progress on addressing criminogenic needs.

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<sup>14</sup> Andrews & Bonta, 2007a; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000.

### *C. Identifying Offenders' Triggers*

Criminal offenses are often preceded by triggering events. A man might get involved in a bar-room fight at the local pub as a result of ruminating over an angry encounter with his business partner. A husband might go to his brother's house and drive home drunk after getting into a fight with his wife. A woman might shoplift when she is feeling badly about herself.

Being able to understand and identify these triggers can help offenders to avoid encountering the events that begin these negative behavior cycles, and develop proactive plans to address these circumstances when they arise. For example, if an offender has a habit of using cocaine with his buddies with whom he plays basketball at the recreation center on Friday nights, a case plan strategy might be to find an alternative sport and a Friday night activity.

### *D. Addressing Stability Factors*

Although not directly related to recidivism, other conditions in offenders' lives can interfere with their ability to be successful in the community. These "stability factors" include:

- ✓ Reliable public or private transportation (to facilitate access to employment, counseling, and probation/parole office visits);
- ✓ Sufficient financial support (to support basic human needs);
- ✓ Prosocial and sustainable housing;
- ✓ Government-issued identification (which is necessary to secure employment or sign a lease on an apartment); and
- ✓ Medical care to address chronic illness and/or maintain a supply of prescribed medications.

Case managers should assess offenders' stability factors prior to release from custody and while in the community and include action steps in the case plan that address any concerns that may be an impediment to offenders' ability to lead stable lives in the community.

### *E. Using Other Assessment Data*

Actuarial risk/need assessment instruments are, in some cases, only the beginning of the assessment path. Depending upon the risk factors that are identified through the use of these tools, or the type of offender (e.g., sex offenders), further assessment(s) may be needed. For instance, tools are available to understand more fully the nature and extent of offenders' substance abuse or mental health conditions. Specific assessment tools have been developed for offenders who have committed sex offenses or those with a history of violence. These specialized assessments – as well as other reports and background information – add additional data about risk factors and intervention strategies that are also important considerations in the case planning process.

## **DEVELOPING THE CASE PLAN**

For offenders, case plans are a roadmap to success. Like mapping out a journey from one location to another, case plan goals should be rooted in a clear understanding of the final destination offenders intend to reach; include specific steps to reaching these goals; and be accompanied by realistic timelines.

For the case manager, case plans represent a deliberate strategy for addressing the issues that will lead offenders toward success. At a minimum, what a case plan *is* is a written document that describes offenders' goals for the period of time they are incarcerated or on community supervision. What a case plan is *not* is a list of conditions or mandated actions the offender must follow.

**In combination with other effective supervision practices, the use of individualized case plans has been shown to reduce new arrests and technical violations of offenders under community supervision.**

*Source: Taxman, 2008.*

There are at least three strategies case managers should use in the development of case plans. These include involving offenders in constructing their plans; aligning case plan activities with interventions that address offenders' specific criminogenic needs; and crafting plans that are specific, concrete and easy to follow.

#### ***A. Engaging Offenders and Seeking their Active Involvement***

Offenders who are involved in the development of their case plans are more likely to be motivated to work on the goals that they helped to develop. And, offenders who are more motivated are more likely to follow through on their commitments to complete the activities in their plans. One way to engage offenders is to share with them the results of their assessments; this will help them to see the connections between their behaviors, risk factors, and the interventions that support positive change.

Plans imposed upon offenders without their input or understanding of their rationale are often outwardly rejected or rejected passively through inaction or non-compliance.

Case managers should use Motivational Interviewing techniques throughout the case management process to engage offenders initially and keep them motivated over the course of time.

#### ***B. Aligning Strategies with Criminogenic Needs***

The key to risk reduction for medium/high risk offenders is identifying and focusing evidence-based interventions on criminogenic needs.<sup>15</sup> In fact, *research suggests that the more time corrections professionals spend with offenders on non-criminogenic needs, the higher the rate of recidivism.*<sup>16</sup> The case plan should therefore directly address criminogenic needs and, as discussed earlier, those factors that are critical to offenders' stability in the community.

Checklists, automated drop down menus, and intervention directories are some of the ways agencies are assisting corrections professionals with the difficult job of matching interventions to criminogenic needs. Exhibit 2 is an example of the kind of guidance an agency might develop

<sup>15</sup> Andrews, 2007; Andrews et al., 1990.

<sup>16</sup> Dowden, 1998, in Andrews & Bonta, 2007b.

for staff to assist in this matching process. It represents both the kinds of programmatic guidance agencies might provide, as well as ideas about the ways case managers can use their one-on-one sessions with offenders productively.

**Exhibit 2: Interventions Designed to Address Criminogenic Needs<sup>17</sup>**

CRIMINOGENIC NEEDS	EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE PROGRAMMATIC INTERVENTIONS	EXAMPLES OF ADDITIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT INTERVENTIONS
<b>Anti-social values and thinking</b>	Cognitive behavioral programs: - Thinking for a Change (T4C) - Moving On - Cognitive Self Change (CSC) - Corrective Thinking/Truthought	Use of thinking reports
<b>Companions</b>	Cognitive behavioral programs: - Thinking for a Change (T4C) - Moving On - A New Freedom: Phoenix (gangs)	Referral to mentoring services
<b>Emotional/skill building</b>	Cognitive behavioral programs: - Aggression Replacement Therapy (ART) - Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage It (CALM) - Cognitive Self Change (CSC)	Skill building exercises and role plays during one-on-one sessions
<b>Family/marital</b>	- Domestic violence program (either 26 or 52 week class) - Teaching Family Model (NIMH)	Referral to counseling
<b>Alcohol/drugs</b>	- Local mental health program for three levels of substance abuse treatment - Strategies for Self Improvement and Change (SSC) - Drug Abuse Treatment Program (FBOP)	Aftercare (including AA)
<b>Education</b>	- Adult Basic Education (ABE) vocational program - GED class	Tutor and ESL in-house volunteers
<b>Employment</b>	- Careerlink - Occupational therapy	Referral to one-stop centers and workforce development offices
<b>Leisure</b>	- YMCA/YWCA ex-offender LIFE program	Referral to faith-based organizations; local recreational department activity directories

<sup>17</sup> This exhibit is provided as an illustration and is not intended to be an endorsement of a specific intervention or set of strategies. For more information on each of these interventions, see the Additional Resources Section for a list of websites.

### C. Adopting SMART<sup>18</sup> Goals

Case plans that are concrete and short are likely to be most effective. The SMART guideline is a practical tool case managers can use to monitor their case planning techniques. Case plan goals should be:

- ✓ **Specific**, and linked directly to offenders' assessed criminogenic needs.
- ✓ **Measureable**, so offenders, case managers and others can easily assess progress, reward forward movement, or otherwise address impediments to success.
- ✓ **Attainable**, so that offenders are able to have confidence and success in reaching them. Goals that are outside the reach of an offender will heighten frustration and potentially reinforce past failures. Even small steps – setting an appointment, obtaining an application form – can represent a significant achievement for some offenders who have not experienced much success in the past.
- ✓ **Realistic**, in light of what is possible for offenders to accomplish given their abilities and the realities of the context in which they are operating. Securing a minimum-wage paying job may be a realistic step toward securing a position that offers greater professional advancement and salary potential once a positive work history is established or the economy improves.
- ✓ **Time-bound**, meaning that clear timelines are established for the accomplishment of each step and each goal. Deadlines should be established in consideration of that which can be realistically accomplished within a given period of time, but at the same time create a reasonable amount of pressure to move forward quickly.



Exhibit 3 illustrates an example of a case plan that uses SMART goals. In this case, Jane's assessments revealed that she has three high priority criminogenic needs and three strengths. She identifies her drivers as anti-social attitudes and peers. The plan focuses on addressing this issue as the initial, primary goal. The case plan also includes triggers, the use of one of her strengths in her strategies, and ways to celebrate success.

<sup>18</sup> This is an adaptation of Doran, 1981 and Miller & Cunningham, 1981 wherein in the original model, "A" represents goals that are "assignable" and "T" represents goals that are "timely."

**Exhibit 3: Example of a Case Plan**  
**Risk Factor and Strengths Analysis: Jane**

Assessment Area	High Priority Criminogenic Needs	Areas in Need of Improvement	Areas of Strength
Attitudes/Beliefs	X		
Peers	X		
Temperament/Self Regulation		X	
Family			X
Substance Abuse			X
Employment	X		
Education			X
Leisure		X	

**Sample Case Plan Goal: Jane**

<b>My goal is to:</b>	<b>This goal addresses the following assessment need:</b>	<b>The specific steps I will take to meet my goal are:</b>	<b>I will complete this step by:</b>
Develop the skills that will keep me from making decisions that land me back in the court system (i.e., problem solving skills).	Attitudes/ Beliefs	1.Sign up for the cognitive behavioral class, Thinking for a Change	March 6
		2. Attend the treatment readiness class	April 15
		3.Develop a payment and transportation plan for the class	April 30
		4.Attend and complete the class	September 20
<b>My primary triggers are:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Depression and boredom lead me to hang out with people I often end up getting in trouble with.</li> <li>-When I have difficulty at work I tend to develop a negative, "I don't care" attitude.</li> </ul>			
<b>I will celebrate the completion of this goal by:</b>			
Treating myself and my husband to a steak dinner at the Kingston Grill.			
<b>Strength(s) that can assist me in meeting my goals:</b>			
My positive, supportive relationship with my husband is one of my strengths. I will involve him in the things I learn in class by practicing my new skills with him at home.			

## **DELIVERING EFFECTIVE SERVICES**

Effective case management is not a passive activity in which case managers assist offenders in designing plans and then sit back and watches to see what unfolds. Instead, it is a dynamic process that requires active and ongoing engagement of both offenders and case managers. Effective case management includes the following six components.

### **A. Matching Interventions and Other Requirements with Risk Levels**

No agency has sufficient resources to provide all offenders with all services. Even if they did, research suggests that this would be unwise. Matching the level of intervention to offenders' risk level (i.e., low intervention with the low risk, high intervention with the high risk) is one of the keys to reducing recidivism.<sup>19</sup> As a result, corrections agencies around the country are developing formulas for staff to follow in the assignment of supervision requirements (e.g., contact standards), caseload sizes, and programming. Exhibit 4 shows an example of how one agency in Cook County, Illinois, has defined their supervision standards based on offender risk level.

**Exhibit 4: Cook County Adult Probation Supervision Standards and Caseload Sizes**

	<b>Low Risk</b>	<b>Low-Med Risk</b>	<b>Med Risk</b>	<b>High-Med Risk</b>	<b>High Risk</b>
<b>Supervision Standards</b>	Report by mail; in person every 3-6 months	Rotate monthly reporting: one in person and one by mail	Monthly in person; field visit every 6 months	Twice in person per month; field visit every 3 months	Weekly in person, 2 field visits per month; increase as needed
<b>Expectations</b>	Monitor court conditions using the least amount of resources	Monitor court conditions using the least amount of resources	Facilitate behavioral change with case plan addressing criminogenic needs, cog, MI, life skills	Facilitate behavioral change with case plan addressing criminogenic needs, cog, MI, life skills	Surveillance with treatment used sparingly if at all; enforcement and accountability is top priority
<b>Preferred Caseload Size</b>	400	240	80	40	40

*Source: Circuit Court of Cook County Adult Probation Department Policy 09.16, Standard, Non-Specialized Supervision Offenders*

<sup>19</sup> Andrews, 2007; Andrews & Bonta, 2007a; Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2006; Andrews & Dowden, 2007; Andrews, Dowden, & Gendreau, 1999; Bonta, 2007.

Other strategies agencies are beginning to employ include avoiding mixing low and high risk offenders – in treatment groups and even in supervision office waiting rooms. The rationale behind this is the fact that research suggests that mixing low and high risk offenders can have an iatrogenic, or contamination, effect. Case management strategies should therefore also take risk level into consideration in terms of the assignment to specific treatment groups (i.e., substance abuse for moderate versus high risk offenders) and office reporting days (e.g., Monday evenings are established as reporting days for low risk offenders).

### ***B. Balance Control and Treatment Goals***

Case managers fill multiple roles in their work with offenders. At times case managers must monitor adherence to established conditions, conduct home searches, or arrest offenders who have committed serious acts of non-compliance. At other times – indeed perhaps most of the time – case managers are working with offenders to address the risk and stability factors that, if addressed effectively, will result in reductions in technical violations and new offenses. While these roles may appear to be in conflict with one another, the most effective case managers are those who are flexible; are able to exercise their authority firmly but with fairness; build rapport with those with whom they are working; serve as good role models; are able to reinforce prosocial skills; and broker assistance for offenders.<sup>20</sup>

Research shows that those with a “balanced” approach to supervision yield better results than those who adopt only one approach (i.e., strictly enforcement or strictly social work approach). In a study of parole officers in New Jersey, researchers found that officers with a social work orientation had higher rates of parolee revocation and reconviction than those with a balanced approach. And, previous research reveals that when an officer adopts only a monitoring and sanctioning approach recidivism rates are unaffected.

*Sources: Paparozzi & Gendreau, 2005; Petersilia & Turner, 1993.*

As a general rule, case managers should apply external controls when offenders cannot or will not control their behavior. In these circumstances, case managers should work with offenders to internalize prosocial attitudes, increase motivation, and build problem solving skills so that these external controls become unnecessary.

### ***C. Establish a Therapeutic Alliance***

Just as these roles can be difficult for case managers to balance at times, they can be difficult for offenders to understand. One thing all offenders have in common is their understanding that their case manager wields a great deal of power when it comes to judging their performance and level of compliance, and reporting this to others who can have significant influence on their lives (i.e., judges, paroling authorities). For this reason, case managers must be skilled in establishing a therapeutic alliance with offenders, and helping them to understand

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<sup>20</sup> CEPP, 2009; see the Shaping Offender Behavior Coaching Packet for more information.

that they can monitor and, where need be, address offenders' lack of success while at the same time having their best interests in mind.<sup>21</sup>

#### **D. Practicing Skills and Giving Homework**

While some treatment interventions are strictly cognitive – that is, they address offenders' thinking – research demonstrates that cognitive *behavioral* interventions – those that address thinking *and* employ behavior change techniques – are most effective.<sup>22</sup> The reason for this is probably quite clear. It is one thing to think about and understand the reasons for changing; it is quite another to practice the skills that will *result in* behavior change. While practicing the skills in a classroom is an excellent way to begin to master a skill, it is only when that skill is used in the offender's day-to-day life where it is likely to take hold on a more permanent basis.

Once developed, offenders need to be able to transfer newly acquired skills to different situations in order to deepen the learning process and increase their ability to exercise these skills under different circumstances. For example, many offenders lack the simple skill of asking for help. This is a skill that can and should be practiced in a small group setting where demonstration and feedback can be provided in a structured and emotionally safe environment. But being able to ask for help only under these circumstances is insufficient. Therefore, offenders will need to practice this skill in increasingly difficult situations – perhaps first at home, then with a friend, and finally on the job – and receive feedback (and where needed, correction) on their use of the new skill. As their comfort level with the skill increases, so too can the degree of discomfort of the situation in which they will apply it. This is how behavior change is learned – through repetition, feedback and evaluation, and increasing levels of difficulty.

While some skills will be learned and practiced within cognitive behavioral program settings, case managers can reinforce these learnings by also identifying and practicing skills with offenders, and giving homework assignments that follow the skill development pattern described above. These homework assignments can be included as action steps on their case plans.

#### **E. Make Effective Use of Rewards, Punishers, and Incentives**

Effective case management must also include methods to keep offenders focused on their goals, and encourage to continue moving forward. Traditionally, corrections agencies have relied on sanctioning as the primary means for accomplishing this, however research suggests that the use of rewards/incentives is more powerful than the use of punishers.<sup>23</sup> Increasingly,

A **therapeutic alliance** can be described as:

- A positive working relationship
- Incorporating offender preferences and goals into treatment
- Listening without being judgmental or giving unwanted advice
- Communicating in an open, warm, and enthusiastic fashion
- A mutual respect and liking between the offender and correctional staff member

*Adapted from: AMHD, 2009;  
Dowden & Andrews, 2004.*

<sup>21</sup> For more information on therapeutic style, see the Coaching Packet, Shaping Offender Behavior.

<sup>22</sup> Bonta et al., 2008.

<sup>23</sup> Andrews & Bonta, 2007b; Gendreau & Goggin, 1996; Gendreau, Little, & Goggin, 1996.

**Exhibit 5: California Division of Adult Parole Operations Behavioral Incentive Chart**

BEHAVIORS	INCENTIVES
<b>LEVEL A</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Positive attitude during office/field visit</li> <li>▪ 30 days drug/alcohol free</li> <li>▪ Positive report from collateral contacts</li> <li>▪ Timely enrollment/reporting/attendance (STAR, Lit Lab, POC, Agent, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Search for gainful employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Verbal recognition by Parole Agent</li> <li>▪ Laudatory comments to family, peers, support systems</li> </ul>
<b>LEVEL B</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 60 days drug/alcohol free</li> <li>▪ 60 days without missing appointments</li> <li>▪ Obtained verifiable gainful employment</li> <li>▪ Volunteer duty in the community or parole office</li> <li>▪ Positive report from teacher/employer/therapist</li> <li>▪ Prosocial behavior (positive parenting, conflict resolution, stable family relationships, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Residential stability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Verbal recognition by Parole Agent and/or Unit Supervisor</li> <li>▪ Certificate of accomplishment presented by Parole Agent</li> <li>▪ Clothing voucher/referral</li> <li>▪ Travel pass</li> </ul>
<b>LEVEL C</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 90 days violation free</li> <li>▪ 90 days of employment</li> <li>▪ Six months stable residence</li> <li>▪ Completion of program related to criminogenic needs</li> <li>▪ Complete compliance with Case Plans</li> <li>▪ Completed a school quarter/semester or 30 days regular GED attendance</li> <li>▪ Complete GED or obtain high school diploma</li> <li>▪ Satisfy restitution order</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Letter to parent/significant other</li> <li>▪ Reduce reporting requirements</li> <li>▪ Modify special conditions of parole</li> <li>▪ Vouchers or gift certificates upon availability</li> <li>▪ Gift items obtained through gift drive presented to parolee child (upon availability)</li> <li>▪ Early discharge consideration</li> <li>▪ Community celebration</li> </ul>
<b>LEVEL D</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Successful Discharge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community celebration/recognition</li> <li>▪ Certificate presentation</li> </ul>

corrections agencies are codifying through policy their intent to encourage offenders through the structured use of incentives. For example, California's Division of Adult Parole Operations developed an incentives system to formally acknowledge and reward offenders for their accomplishments.

#### *F. Make the Contact Count*

The importance of one-on-one time between case managers and offenders cannot be underestimated. How that time is used is critically important. It can be used primarily to monitor compliance with conditions or, alternatively, to address or increase offenders' motivation to work on criminogenic needs. Recent research has focused on the content of

these one-on-one sessions. According to James Bonta and his colleagues<sup>24</sup>, probation/parole officers' contacts generally have a disappointing (i.e., neutral or negative) effect on offender behavior. "On the whole, community supervision does not appear to work very well, showing a two percent reduction in general recidivism and no impact on violent recidivism." However, this same study determined that when the corrections professional spends at least fifteen minutes with offenders employing behavioral techniques<sup>25</sup> and focusing on criminogenic needs, recidivism rates drop significantly. *The amount of time case managers spend with offenders in one-on-one sessions, how they choose to use that time, and their skills in employing behavioral techniques, make a considerable difference on offender outcomes.*

## **MANAGING THE CASE**

It has already been stated that case plans cannot be thought of as one-time events but rather, as dynamic strategies that require constant review and updating. Case plans are the focal point of case managers' face-to-face time with offenders. In this way, they help case managers "make the contact count" by focusing discussions on risk reducing issues. Once case plans are used in this way, the dialogue between offenders and case managers shifts dramatically. For example, when an offender wants to stop attending a class, start attending college, or find a new job, the case manager might suggest, "Let's take a look at the goals and strategies in your case plan, and see whether your proposal supports the direction you've set for yourself." In addition, effective management of these cases will also require the involvement of others, and the exercise of specific skills on the part of case managers.

### **A. Be Flexible**

Despite the best of intentions, rarely is a plan that is cast to paper followed to the letter. Anyone who has ever prepared a monthly budget knows how true this is. No sooner is a carefully planned budget put into place than an unexpected expense (for the unfortunate) or a raise or windfall (for the more fortunate) requires a new set of calculations. Case plans are no different: steps will be accomplished, goals achieved, and progress will be made. And stumbles, set-backs and other unexpected barriers will also inevitably occur. As case managers and offenders work together in their one-on-one sessions, each of these circumstances should be considered and mid-course corrections made.

Managing the case requires a great deal of flexibility on the part of case managers. One of the major advantages of having written case plans is that it focuses the attention on the matters that are most important. However, offenders often live chaotic lives, making it is easy for the "urgent to get in the way of the important." They may suddenly experience homelessness, lose a job, or find themselves in a dangerous situation with a gang member or peer. Case managers must be prepared to attend to these urgent matters which may temporarily detract from focusing on the important (i.e., the achievement of case plan goals). But the urgent should be managed as quickly as possible so that the focus on the important can be resumed.

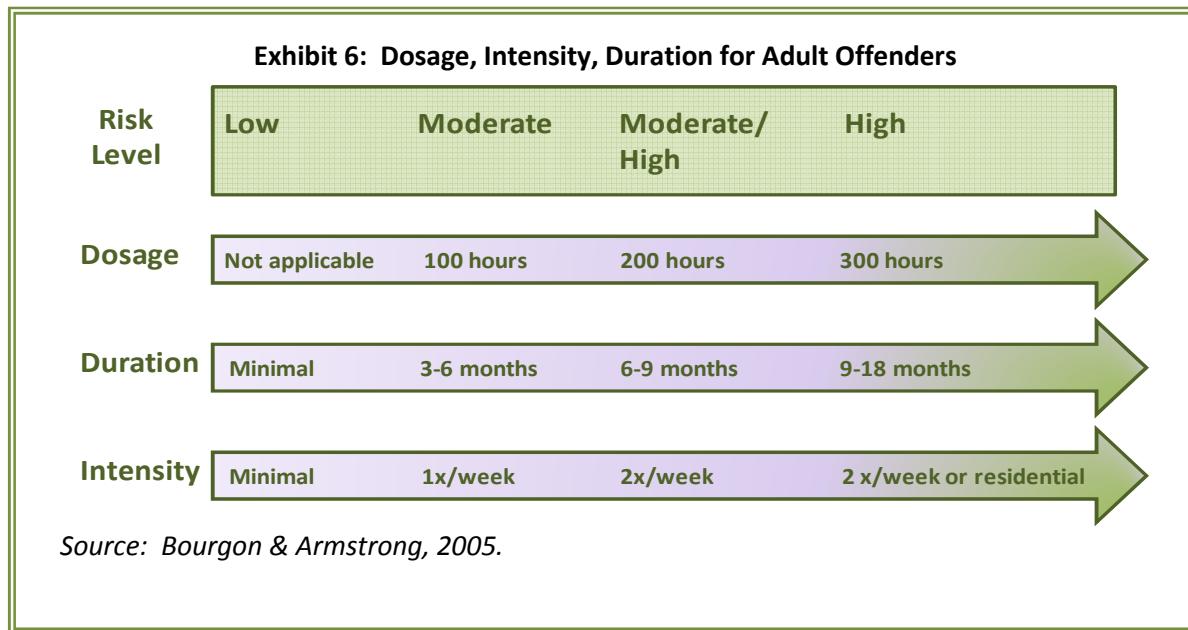
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<sup>24</sup> Bonta et al., 2008.

<sup>25</sup> The behavioral approach included the components of prosocial modeling, practice, prosocial reinforcement, antisocial discouragement, relapse prevention, and the use of homework assignments.

## B. Monitor Dosage, Intensity, and Duration

Another feature of effective case plans is that they meet dosage, intensity and treatment duration requirements in order to maximize the treatment affect. As the risk level of offenders increases, the dosage (number of programming hours), intensity (number of sessions per week), and duration (length of time in programming) should increase as well. Exhibit 6 provides a guideline for case managers with regard to each of these issues.<sup>26</sup>



## C. Recognize Relapse as a Part of the Change Process

Few people take a straight line course to behavior change; those who have tried to lose weight or quit smoking know this all too well. Set backs are unfortunately quite common. Most chronic offenders have developed habits and behavior patterns that make relapse nearly inevitable. Relapse should therefore not be judged overly harshly but rather, acknowledged as a normal part of the change process. This is not to suggest that relapse should be condoned or ignored. To be sure, sanctions for certain kinds of relapses (e.g., increased drug testing for a positive urine test, establishment of curfew requirements for inappropriate behavior in the evening hours) are important behavior control methods and effectively demonstrate to offenders that their actions matter and have been met with disapproval. But when it comes to relapse, the goal should be to increase the length of the time between relapses and to turn them into learning experiences so they are less likely to occur in the future, rather than to establish unrealistic expectations that they will never occur in the first place, let alone be repeated a second time. In this way, relapses should be considered “teaching moments,” opportunities to reinforce rules and learn better skills for the future.

<sup>26</sup> This exhibit does not apply to sex offenders who have higher dosage requirements; see Beech, Fisher, & Beckett, 1998.

#### **D. Use a Team Approach**

Typically, multiple professionals work with a single offender simultaneously. For instance, offenders might be assigned to a probation/parole officer<sup>27</sup>, one or more treatment providers or health care professionals, a professional mentor, and perhaps a social worker from another agency who is working on family reunification. It was once the case that each of these individuals would establish their own goals for working with the offender. At best, these goals were not coordinated and perhaps duplicated one another. At worst, they were in conflict with one another or left important areas unattended. By identifying all of the professionals involved in offenders' lives; bringing them together for joint case planning; opening lines of communication; and agreeing on the most important targets of change, incentives that will be used, and methods for ongoing progress monitoring, a seamless case management strategy can be established.

#### **E. Involve Families**

New research demonstrates that strategies targeting stronger relationships between offenders and their families correlate with better offender outcomes.<sup>28</sup> For this reason, corrections agencies and their partners are becoming increasingly interested in the role that families can play in promoting successful reentry. When case managers involve offenders' families in the case planning process there is a greater likelihood that the reentry effort will be successful.<sup>29</sup>

This involvement will depend, however, on offenders' circumstances and on family members' abilities and willingness to participate. Oftentimes, family members experience significant hardships of their own and they simply cannot take on the additional responsibilities that come with having a family member incarcerated or under community supervision. In other cases, trust has eroded to a point that involvement in offenders' lives, regardless of how positively focused, simply isn't possible.

Fortunately, in most cases, offenders have prosocial individuals in their lives that are willing to support and encourage positive change. In these instances, these individuals should be identified and relationships nurtured. Involving families and other prosocial supports in case planning is an excellent way to reinforce the important influence they have on offenders' actions and to assure that they are working to support the same goals as offenders and the professionals with whom they are working.

#### **F. Increase Offender Self-Efficacy**

At some point, offenders are likely to become discouraged over set backs or a lack of progress in accomplishing their goals. They may encounter potential employers who do not want to hire ex-offenders, financial constraints that prevent them from living where they want, treatment program waiting lists, or peer pressure – or they may experience frustration over how hard it is to change. Even highly motivated

**Self-efficacy is the belief that we can achieve what we set out to accomplish**

<sup>27</sup> Referred to throughout this Coaching Packet as a case manager.

<sup>28</sup> See the Coaching Packet, Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry, for more information.

<sup>29</sup> Niven & Stewart, 2005.

individuals will likely experience these setbacks multiple times. It is common to want to give up when this occurs, in much the same way that one may give up on a diet when weight loss comes too slowly.

Offenders often have low levels of self-efficacy and yet it is self-efficacy that provides us all with the resiliency to overcome barriers to success. Case managers can assist offenders in this regard by helping to manage expectations (i.e., things often don't work out as we expect, setbacks should be anticipated), and most importantly, to keep them focused and motivated to work on their case plans despite the occasional setback.

**For corrections professionals and their partners in the reentry process, effective case management as described herein is perhaps among the most important of all activities, because it is through the ongoing, seamless and dynamic case management process that evidence-based practices are deliberately and strategically employed in an effort to reduce risk among those returning to the community.**

## Section II: Effective Case Management Coaching Packet Checklist

Case Management	YES	NO	NOT CLEAR	NOTES
1. Assessments of risk and criminogenic need are conducted early and form the basis of the case management plan.				
2. Assessments of risk and criminogenic need are repeated at appropriate intervals.				
3. The case management process is seamless from intake to post-supervision discharge.				
4. Offender strengths are assessed and used to develop case plan activities.				
5. Triggers are identified and relapse prevention strategies are identified.				
6. Offenders are active participants in the case planning process.				
7. Case plan goals/activities adhere to the SMART guidelines (i.e., specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely).				
8. For moderate to high risk offenders, priority criminogenic needs are matched to evidence-based interventions.				
9. Case plans address stability factors – regardless of offenders' level of risk.				
10. Case managers are skilled in communication techniques designed to enhance motivation and engage the offender in the process of change.				
11. Case managers balance their roles of assisting offenders in addressing their criminogenic needs, while using sanctions when necessary.				
12. Case managers reinforce and assist offenders in practicing new prosocial skills.				
13. Case managers use incentives to encourage offender progress.				
14. Case management teams are established and led by identified case managers.				
15. Case management teams include a diverse group of professionals who are involved in the day-to-day care of offenders.				
16. Families/significant others are involved in offenders' case plans where appropriate.				
17. Case management plans are automated.				
18. Case managers use case plans as dynamic tools, referring to them during the majority of their sessions with offenders.				
19. Case managers modify case plans routinely as progress is made or new concerns arise.				

## Section III: Action Planning Worksheet

<b>GOAL:</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 2:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 3:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

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Burke, P. (2008). *The TPC Reentry Handbook: Implementing the NIC Transition from Prison to the Community Model*. Washington, DC: U.S Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections. Available at: [www.prisontransition.com](http://www.prisontransition.com) and <http://nicic.gov/Library/022669> (In particular, see *Chapter 5: Case Management: A Critical Element of the TPC Model.*)

Center for Effective Public Policy (CEPP) (2007). *Increasing Public Safety Through Successful Offender Reentry: Evidence-Based and Emerging Practices in Corrections*. Silver Spring, MD: Author. (In particular, see *Section Six: Key Strategies in Effective Offender Management.*)

### ***Resources for Interventions Listed in Exhibit 2***

Thinking for a Change: <http://www.nicic.org/T4C>

Moving On: <http://www.orbispartners.com/index.php/programs/girls-moving-on/>

Cognitive Self Change: <http://www.nicic.org/Library/021558>

Corrective Thinking/Truthought: <http://www.truthought.com/>

New Freedom: Phoenix (gangs): <http://www.newfreedomprograms.com/> & <http://www.gangprograms.com/index.php>

ART: <http://artgang0.tripod.com/ggconsultantsllc/index.html>

CALM: <http://www.mhs.com/product.aspx?gr=saf&prod=calm&id=overview> & <http://www.orbispartners.com/index.php/programs/calm/>

Domestic violence program (either 26 or 52 week class): Conduct an internet search of "domestic violence batterer intervention" to find resources within your state.

Teaching Family Model (NIMH): <http://www.teaching-family.org/programs.htm>

Local mental health program: Conduct an internet search to find resources within your state. See for example, [http://www.norfolkcsb.org/substance\\_abuse.htm](http://www.norfolkcsb.org/substance_abuse.htm) & <http://doc.delaware.gov/Programs/treatmentprograms.shtml>

Strategies for Self Discovery and Change: <http://www.sagepub.com/satreatments/tsadults.sp>

Drug Abuse Treatment Program (FBOP): [http://www.bop.gov/inmate\\_programs/substance.jsp](http://www.bop.gov/inmate_programs/substance.jsp)

ABE vocational program: Conduct an internet search of “Adult Basic Education” to find resources within your state.

GED class: <http://www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ged/index.htm>

Careerlink: <http://www.terra.edu/support/advising/ExOffenderasst.asp> and  
[http://careerlinkpittsburgh.com/index\\_flash.html](http://careerlinkpittsburgh.com/index_flash.html)

Occupational therapy: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15707129>

YMCA/YWCA ex-offender LIFE program: Conduct an internet search of “YMCA” or “YWCA” to find resources within your state.

# COACHING PACKET

## Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring

One in a series of Coaching Packets designed  
to assist jurisdictions in the implementation  
of effective practices that will support  
successful offender outcomes

Author: Rachelle Giguere, Center for Effective Public Policy  
Editor: Madeline M. Carter, Center for Effective Public Policy

2009



### ***Coaching Packet Series 1: Creating a Blueprint for an Effective Offender Reentry System***

- A Framework for Offender Reentry
- Establishing a Rational Planning Process
- Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### ***Coaching Packet Series 2: Delivering Evidence-Based Services***

- Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
- Effective Case Management
- Shaping Offender Behavior
- Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry
- Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring
- Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

### ***Coaching Packet Series 3: Ensuring Meaningful Outcomes***

- Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts
- Continuous Quality Improvement



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## Introduction to the Coaching Packet Series

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) and its partners, The Urban Institute and The Carey Group, were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to the Fiscal Year 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees (hereafter “PRI grantees”). The project team served in this capacity from April 2008 to June 2010.

The Center is a nonprofit criminal justice consulting organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since the early 1980s, the Center has provided training and technical assistance to the criminal justice field on a wide array of topics, including transition and reentry, and has administered a number of national projects of this kind. The Urban Institute was established as a private, nonprofit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1968 and is a leader in prisoner reentry research, focusing on making best practice information accessible to practitioners and policymakers. The Carey Group is a justice consulting firm with extensive practitioner experience in evidence-based practices, strategic planning, community and restorative justice and corrections.

As a part of its technical assistance delivery to the PRI grantees, the Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work. The final products of this work include eleven Coaching Packets in three series. These Coaching Packets offer practical value beyond the jurisdictions involved in this initiative and are available to criminal justice professionals and their partners interested in enhancing their strategies for reducing recidivism and improving offender outcomes.

Each Coaching Packet provides an overview of a specific topic as it relates to successful offender reentry, and offers tools and resources for those interested in exploring the topic in greater depth.

- *Series 1* provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system. This series provides a conceptual framework for addressing prisoner reentry at the policy level; outlines a strategic planning process to support implementation efforts; and explores the establishment of successful collaborative partnerships at the policy and case management levels.
- *Series 2* addresses key issues related to the delivery of evidence-based services to offenders. This series summarizes the key literature with regard to implementing evidence-based practices; explores advances in approaches to case management; addresses the important role of staff in changing offender behavior; and summarizes research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- *Series 3* provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes. This series describes methods to assess the effectiveness of reentry efforts and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

## FY 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Grantees

The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) – intended to support the development and implementation of institutional and community corrections-based reentry programs to help returning offenders find employment and provide other critical services – is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grants were awarded to state and local corrections agencies by DOJ to provide pre-release and transition services to offenders and were “matched” by DOL grants to faith- and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to provide post-release services, focusing on employment assistance and mentoring.

Thirty-five states received grants in three cycles of the Initiative during Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 23 FY 2007 PRI grantees received assistance under this project. FY 2007 grants were awarded in the fall of 2007 and implemented from 2008 to 2010; however, some grantees will not complete their activities until 2011. The FY 2007 grantees provided technical assistance under this project included:

- ✓ ALASKA, Native Justice Center
- ✓ ARIZONA, Criminal Justice Commission/ Yuma County Sheriff’s Office
- ✓ CALIFORNIA, Department of Community Services and Development
- ✓ COLORADO, Division of Criminal Justice Services/City of Denver
- ✓ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Government
- ✓ FLORIDA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ HAWAII, Department of Public Safety
- ✓ INDIANA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ IOWA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ KANSAS, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MAINE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MICHIGAN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MINNESOTA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEVADA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEW JERSEY, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NORTH CAROLINA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ OHIO, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- ✓ PENNSYLVANIA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ RHODE ISLAND, Department of Corrections
- ✓ TENNESSEE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ VIRGINIA, Department of Criminal Justice Services
- ✓ WISCONSIN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ WYOMING, Department of Corrections

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<sup>1</sup> The PRI program will end when the FY 2008 grantees complete their activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

Becki Ney, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program Project Director. Ms. Ney conceptualized and oversaw the development of the Coaching Packet series.

Madeline M. Carter, Principal, and Rachelle Giguere, Program Associate, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the key editors for the Coaching Packet series. Ms. Giguere also provided extensive research support to the development of the series.

# **Introduction to the Building Offenders' Assets Through Mentoring Coaching Packet**

## ***The Contents of this Packet***

This Coaching Packet provides:

- An overview of the use of mentoring programs with adult offenders to assist in their transition from prison to the community;
- A discussion of best practices in implementing mentoring programs with offenders;
- Some strategies to address common challenges facing jurisdictions on implementing mentoring programs and services;
- A discussion of the importance of collaborative partnerships;
- A tool to determine your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps in implementing effective mentoring services;
- An aid to developing plans to address identified gap areas; and
- References to additional resources on this topic.

## ***The Intended Audience for this Packet***

This Coaching Packet was originally developed to assist grant teams that were established to manage local PRI initiatives. The teams were composed of representatives from institutional and community corrections and faith-based or community organizations involved in the delivery of pre- and post-release services to offenders transitioning from prison to the community. The content of these Coaching Packets has much broader application, however; the information and tools contained within this Coaching Packet can also be used by teams of criminal justice professionals and their partners to assess the status of their efforts in implementing evidence-based practices and effective reentry services to offenders.

This Coaching Packet may also serve as a resource for professionals at all levels who are interested in learning more about this topic.

## ***How to Use this Packet***

### **SECTION I: READ THE OVERVIEW ON BUILDING OFFENDERS' COMMUNITY ASSETS THROUGH MENTORING.**

This section of the Coaching Packet provides an overview of the use of mentoring programs with offenders. Review its content and, if the information it contains is applicable to your work and addresses an area in which you feel you need to focus your efforts, use the tool in Section II to assess your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps with regard to implementing an effective mentoring program.

## **SECTION II: COMPLETE THE BUILDING OFFENDERS' COMMUNITY ASSETS THROUGH MENTORING COACHING PACKET CHECKLIST.**

As a team, complete the Building Offenders' Community Assets Through Mentoring Coaching Packet Checklist. (Based upon the information you read in Section I, consider who may need to be involved so that you are able to answer the questions thoroughly.) Complete the checklist as a group and discuss your responses along the way.

- Rate each item listed in the checklist (yes, no, not clear).
- For items where your response is “not clear,” make note of the additional information the team needs to collect in order to be able to rate this item.
- Add additional items that may relate to your jurisdiction’s implementation of an offender mentoring program that are not already included on the checklist.
- Develop a consensus-based response for each item on the checklist.
- Once the checklist is completed, consider your jurisdictions’ strengths in implementing an offender mentoring program. Make note of these.
- Next, consider your most significant gaps. Make note of these as well.

## **SECTION III: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN.**

If, after completing the checklist in Section II, your team determines that further work on this topic is necessary or would be helpful, follow the steps below to identify your goals, objectives, and action items, and identify any additional assistance or expertise needed.

Working as a team, review your findings from the Building Offenders' Community Assets Through Mentoring Coaching Packet Checklist. Specifically:

1. Determine whether, based upon what you have read and discussed, you desire to advance your jurisdiction’s work with regard to mentoring offenders.
2. If you determine you have a desire to improve in this area, write a goal statement that reflects where you want to be with regard to improving your current efforts. Your goal might be to “Establish a new offender mentoring program for offenders ages 18-30 being released from prison,” “Refine our current mentoring program for offenders to ensure that we are following best practices,” “Develop new strategies for recruiting qualified mentors who better match the offender population,” or another goal. Using the Action Planning Worksheet in Section III, note your goal in the area of building offenders’ community assets through mentoring.
3. Identify your three most significant strengths in this area and discuss how you might build on those to overcome some of your gaps.
4. Identify your three most significant gaps. For each gap, write an objective. Your objectives might be, “To develop eligibility requirements for mentors and mentees,” or “To establish a mentor coordinator position to oversee daily operations of the program,” or something else. Note your three objectives on the Action Planning Worksheet.
5. Add the following on the Action Planning Worksheet for each objective:
  - a. The specific sequential steps that must be taken to meet the objective.
  - b. The individual who will assume lead responsibility for this action item.
  - c. The completion date for this action item.

6. Discuss whether additional assistance or outside expertise is needed to successfully achieve any of your action items. For instance, explore whether additional literature, guidance from another practitioner over the telephone, examples of work products from other jurisdictions, or on-site technical assistance would be helpful options.
  - a. For each action item, identify those for which assistance/expertise is needed.
  - b. Identify the type of assistance/expertise needed.
  - c. Prioritize each of these need areas. If assistance/expertise will be limited, for which action items is assistance most needed?
  - d. Begin exploring ways to secure the needed assistance/expertise.

### ***How to Seek Additional Information***

To download copies of the Coaching Packets, please visit the Center's website at <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>. To obtain further information on the use or content of this or any of the Coaching Packets, or on the 2007 PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program, please contact:

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## **Section I: Building Offenders' Community Assets Through Mentoring**

Mentoring is a primary program element of the Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI)<sup>2</sup> and one strategy being implemented in many jurisdictions throughout the country to support offenders who are lacking in the supports and services necessary for successful reentry. Mentoring is a pro-social support option for offenders who need additional assistance in finding employment and housing, reconnecting with their families, and navigating other challenges they may confront as they adjust to life outside of prison.

### ***Mentoring as Part of a Multifaceted Approach to Successful Transition***

More than 700,000 offenders return to the community each year from prison,<sup>3</sup> many of whom struggle with one or more challenges – including the need to find steady employment, a lack of appropriate housing options, health and mental health issues (including drug or alcohol addictions), and broken or strained bonds with family and friends.<sup>4</sup> Given that 67% of released prisoners are rearrested within three years,<sup>5</sup> there is a clear need for a multi-faceted strategy to address the many contributors to failure. Mentoring can serve as one among an array of interventions to assist offenders in transitioning successfully back to the community.

As current PRI grantees, readers are encouraged to consider the research and strategies presented in this Coaching Packet, and implement mentoring programs for offenders that build upon the work of previous PRI and Ready4Work grantees.

### ***Research on Mentoring Outcomes and Implications for the Establishment of Successful Programs for Adult Offenders***

Mentoring is a relatively new strategy for assisting adult offenders to transition successfully from prison to the community. It has been more commonly used with school-aged youth and children of incarcerated parents. Given the positive outcomes of improved relationships and reduced delinquency with youth, interest in mentoring as an intervention for adult offenders is growing.

#### **MENTORING FOR CHILDREN AND AT-RISK YOUTH**

Mentoring programs were first introduced into the criminal justice arena for children of incarcerated parents<sup>6</sup> and at-risk youth (i.e., those at risk of delinquency, gang affiliation, school drop out, etc.), given the preliminary research on the positive outcomes achieved through

<sup>2</sup> A primary goal of the PRI Initiative is to “strengthen urban communities through employment-centered programs that incorporate **mentoring**, [emphasis added] job training, and other comprehensive transitional services.” See <http://www.doleta.gov/PRI/>.

<sup>3</sup> Sabol & Couture, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Bauldry et al., 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Hughes & Wilson, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> For example, see the AMACHI program in Philadelphia (Jucovy, 2003).

**Exhibit 1:**  
**Department of Labor (DOL) PRI Grant Program Mentoring Definition and Expectations**

**Definition:**

“Mentoring is defined as a relationship over a prolonged period of time between two or more people where caring volunteer mentors assist ex-prisoners in successfully and permanently reentering their communities by providing consistent support as needed, guidance, and encouragement that impacts PRI participants in developing positive social relationships and achieving program outcomes such as job retention, family reunification, reduced recidivism, etc.”

**Other Expectations and Requirements:**

- Programs should attempt to maintain mentor/mentee relationships (in both the one-to-one and group models) for a minimum of six months.
- Matches must meet, or group mentoring sessions must be held, at a minimum of once every two weeks.
- Mentoring should be performed by “volunteer mentors” rather than by paid program staff.
- Typically, job training classes or other life skills classes offered by PRI site staff are not considered mentoring. However, they may be counted as mentoring if one-to-one mentors or group mentors are consistently present and they are able to have discussions and develop relationships with the same mentees over a prolonged period of time.

*Adapted from: Coffey Consulting, 2009.*

mentoring youth. For example, at-risk youth participating in Big Brother/Big Sisters mentoring efforts across the country were 46% less likely to use drugs, 27% less likely to use alcohol, 30% less likely to physically strike someone, and did better in school than youth who did not participate in the mentoring program.<sup>7</sup> An evaluation of OJJDP’s Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) sites reported that the mentoring relationship assisted mentees in staying away from drugs and alcohol, not starting fights, and keeping away from gangs.<sup>8</sup> Research on the Indiana through Mentoring (AIM) project – an aftercare program providing incarcerated youth with life skills and mentoring services – shows that, after four years of follow-up, youth receiving both services (life skills and mentoring services) were less likely to recidivate (43%) than those who received only life skills services (50%) and those who did not receive any services (62%).<sup>9</sup>

**MENTORING FOR ADULTS INVOLVED IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

Generally, mentoring programs for adult offenders include the use of community volunteers or previously incarcerated individuals to provide guidance and support to offenders leaving prison either in a group setting or through one-on-one activities. While many current efforts pair mentoring with assistance in obtaining and sustaining employment, the goal of mentoring is broadly focused on addressing offenders’ needs for pro-social relationships and engaging them in the community.

<sup>7</sup> Grossman & Garry, 1997; Herrera et al., 2007; Tierney & Grossman, 1995.

<sup>8</sup> Novotney et al., 2000.

<sup>9</sup> AIM, 2004; Jarjoura, 2003.

Preliminary research indicates there are positive outcomes associated with adult offender mentoring programs:

- ✓ Misdemeanor courts utilizing volunteer mentors found that only 15% of probationers recidivated within 5 years (as opposed to 50% of the probationers supervised by other courts).<sup>10</sup>
- ✓ Offenders who received mentoring services in the Ready4Work Initiative<sup>11</sup> were more likely to find a job and stay employed, and recidivated at a lesser rate than expected (see Exhibit 2).<sup>12</sup>
- ✓ Interviews with Generation 1 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) sites<sup>13</sup> indicate that mentors positively impact offenders in readjusting to society and dealing with the many challenges associated with the transition.<sup>14</sup>
- ✓ In Canada, programs such as Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) employ groups of community volunteers to provide daily support to high-risk sex offenders transitioning from prison. These efforts to increase offenders' pro-social ties to the community have shown positive results – as much as a 70% reduction in sexual recidivism.<sup>15</sup>

Despite these promising data, a clear link between mentoring and recidivism reduction has yet to be established. The current research is limited in two ways. First, it does not separate the effects of the mentoring intervention on recidivism from other interventions concurrently provided to the offender. Since most offenders receive multiple kinds of transition services (case management, employment services, etc.) at the same time, it is unclear which intervention(s) impacted their recidivism. Secondly, where programs are voluntary (i.e., offenders are not randomly selected to participate), the current research does not distinguish the degree to which offender motivation plays a role in the positive outcomes exhibited by mentoring participants. That is, if the offenders who receive mentoring services are naturally more motivated to be successful than offenders who do not receive services, the mentoring program alone can not be credited for the outcomes. In the meantime, the experiences of multiple jurisdictions from across the country serve to inform others on the implications of effective offender mentoring programs and demonstrate their promise.

Since the goal of mentoring is to help offenders build positive relationships, mentors and mentees should be encouraged to engage in informal, social interactions... even if mentoring sessions still include structured activities.

<sup>10</sup> Leenhouts, 2003.

<sup>11</sup> The Ready4Work Initiative was a three-year demonstration effort conducted by Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia, PA designed to address the needs of ex-offenders and test the capacity of faith and community-based organizations to meet those needs. Mentoring was a primary component of the Ready4Work program.

<sup>12</sup> Bauldry et al., 2009; Farley & Hackman, 2006; McClanahan, 2007.

<sup>13</sup> Throughout this document, PRI sites are referenced by their grantee name provided in Appendix A on page 228 of Coffey Consulting, 2009.

<sup>14</sup> Results are based on interviews with case managers and participants about their experiences with the mentoring program. See Coffey Consulting, 2009.

<sup>15</sup> See CSOM, 2008.

**Exhibit 2:**  
**The Ready4Work Initiative**

The Ready4Work Initiative was launched in 2003 in 11 sites. Led mostly by local faith-based and community based organizations, its purpose was to provide services to ex-offenders in order to decrease recidivism by addressing the barriers they faced while transitioning to the community. While the Ready4Work initiative focused on increasing rates of employment by providing wrap-around services and case management to ex-offenders, a critical piece was the mentoring component, which was intended to strengthen the social networks and supports for offenders reentering communities from prison.

The goals of the program were “**to provide ex-prisoners with support and to offer positive role models [in order to] help participants reestablish their lives and deal with the challenges of returning to their communities.**”

About half of the Ready4Work Initiative participants (2,203 individuals) chose to participate in the mentoring component. Some key ***program and participant characteristics*** include:

- Most mentees were African American males, aged 22-34 with long criminal histories.
- Females, older offenders, those without children, and spiritually-involved offenders were more likely to participate in the mentoring component of the initiative.
- On average, participants worked with mentors for 3.5 hours a month for 3 months.
- Most program sites required that mentors be 18 or older, have no violent offenses, and be out of prison and violation free for 3 years or more.

Most sites found it difficult to engage offenders in the mentoring component. Some ***barriers to participation*** were that ex-offenders:

- Believed that mentoring is geared toward youth rather than adults.
- Saw the mentoring activity as “one more requirement.”
- Wanted to instead prioritize activities related to finding employment.
- Thought they did not have enough time to participate given work, family, and other responsibilities.
- Did not want to discuss their personal issues with strangers.
- Questioned the motivation of the faith-based organizations providing the mentoring services.

***Outcomes*** from this initiative include:

- The mentoring component increased retention in the initiative as a whole.
- Ex-offenders who participated in one-on-one mentoring were more than twice as likely to find a job than those who did not have a mentor.
- Participants who were mentored were more likely to stay employed than those who did not meet with a mentor.
- An additional month of mentoring increased an ex-offender’s chances of finding a job by 7%, and for others who had a job, an additional month made them 24% more likely to stay employed.
- Recidivism was reduced: 6.9% of the participants in the mentoring program recidivated within one year, which was lower than the national average of 10.4%.

Sources: Bauldry et al., 2009 ([http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/265\\_publication.pdf](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/265_publication.pdf)); Farley & Hackman, 2006; Farley & McLanahan, 2007; McLanahan, 2007.

## **What Does Mentoring Look Like?**

Mentoring activities might include one-on-one mentoring or group mentoring, and can take place pre-release, once the offender is living in the community, or both. Oftentimes, mentoring programs offer both one-on-one and group mentoring options. At the present time, there is no evidence to suggest that one type achieves better outcomes than the other. Similarly, it remains unclear whether pre-release or post-release mentoring services are more effective. While most Generation 1 PRI sites provided mentoring services to offenders in the community following their release from prison, the majority of Ready4Work sites provided services pre-release.

### **A Mentor is a...**

Guide  
Listener  
Source of support

### **A Mentor is not a:**

Savior  
Probation or parole officer  
Counselor or social worker

*Source: Secretariat for Evangelization, 2009.*

### **ONE-ON-ONE MENTORING**

One-on-one mentoring matches one offender with one volunteer in order for them to develop a supportive relationship through regular interaction. Common activities in one-on-one mentoring include meeting in public locations to talk (e.g., restaurants) or attending church and church events, sport events, or other recreational events.

### **GROUP MENTORING**

While group mentoring might not offer the same benefits as a one-on-one relationship, it offers a viable solution to mentor recruitment challenges and can be less expensive to administer. Furthermore, it capitalizes on the “peer dynamic”<sup>16</sup> and offers offenders who are uncomfortable with one-on-one mentoring with an alternative. Experience suggests that groups stay consistent throughout the program, with at least two mentors working with about 4-6 mentees. Intensity also matters: programs recommend that sessions last for about 2 hours and occur at least every two weeks.

While some programs may follow a curriculum for each meeting, others conduct unstructured meetings. For structured meetings, elements might include:

- A presentation on new information/topics each week (oftentimes identified by mentees) followed by a discussion period,
- Sharing exercises for mentees to talk about what has been happening in their life since the last session, and/or
- Refreshments and/or other incentives (e.g., other program services, gift cards) to keep participants interested in continued attendance.

<sup>16</sup> Public/Private Ventures, 2007b, page 41.

In San Diego, the PRI grantee – Metro United Methodist Urban Ministry – prefers to conduct less structured group mentoring meetings.<sup>17</sup> The first 20 minutes of each meeting is spent socializing over refreshments and then the group is assembled for a round table discussion. Mentors are encouraged to “keep the spotlight on participants and their current struggles or aspirations” and to let discussions start spontaneously based on what the mentees want to talk about.<sup>18</sup>

**Exhibit 3:**  
**Supporting the Mentoring Relationship**

Aside from training and monitoring mentors, programs must be able to allow the mentoring relationship to take root, while providing support where needed. At a minimum, programs should support the mentoring relationship by:

- Offering meeting location(s)
- Providing necessary resources/materials
- Offering ideas for appropriate activities
- Providing assistance in determining the mentee’s goals
- Being accessible for questions or concerns
- Stepping in when a relationship is not working
- Sponsoring events
- Providing recognition to both mentors and mentees for their contributions

Sources: Bauldry et al. 2009 ([http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/265\\_publication.pdf](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/265_publication.pdf)); MENTOR, 2005; Public/Private Ventures, 2007b.

### ***Best Practices for the Establishment of Effective Mentoring Programs***

The literature on the Ready4Work Initiative, lessons from Generation 1 PRI sites, and other youth mentoring programs identifies a number of lessons learned and “best practices” that can inform the efforts of agencies as they plan and implement mentoring programs for ex-offenders. For example, the conduct of a careful and comprehensive planning process was found to be a critical step in assuring the successful implementation of mentoring programs (whether this included one-on-one mentoring, group mentoring, or a combination). Two other lessons learned were the importance of clarifying the target population for mentoring (e.g., prisoners who are nearing the end of their incarceration or ex-offenders already living in the community), and the necessity of establishing effective partnerships with faith and community-based organizations (FBCO’s) to provide mentoring services.

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<sup>17</sup> Public/Private Ventures consultants conducted site visits and phone interviews with PRI sites in 2007. The experiences of PRI sites shared in this document are the result of their research and can be found in Public/Private Ventures, 2007b.

<sup>18</sup> Public/Private Ventures 2007b, page 47.

Following are some of the emerging practices gleaned from these efforts and an outline of the key steps in designing and implementing successful offender mentoring programs.<sup>19</sup>

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND PROGRAM DESIGN**

Before the implementation of any successful program, substantial planning is critical. There are a number of key questions that should be answered before getting started:

- How does mentoring fit within the larger vision, mission and goals of reentry?
- What are the goals (and outcomes) desired for a mentoring program?
- What kind of mentoring will occur (one-on-one, group, etc.)?
- What is the target offender population?
- Who will manage the mentors and provide program oversight?
- How will mentors be identified, recruited, and trained?
- What process will be used to match offenders and mentors?
- What stakeholders need to be included at the planning and design phases of the program?
- What monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be in place?

Experience suggests that mentoring programs be designed so that mentors and offenders can meet regularly for at least a year in order to ensure that enough time is provided to form bonds and produce benefits.

#### **Sample Mission**

Our mentoring program provides stable and caring mentors who will guide and support mentees to develop the skills and abilities to help them to become successful community members.

#### **Sample Goals**

- Decrease the likelihood that participants will be rearrested or returned to prison.
- Provide a social network of caring relationships and increase the support system of offenders reentering the community.

#### **Sample Objectives**

- Provide mentoring services to 150 mentees over 12 months.
- Recruit and train 100 mentors by June 30, 2010.

*Adapted from: Public/Private Ventures, 2007a.*

*For more examples, see Public/Private Ventures, 2009 ([http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/316\\_publication.pdf](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/316_publication.pdf)).*

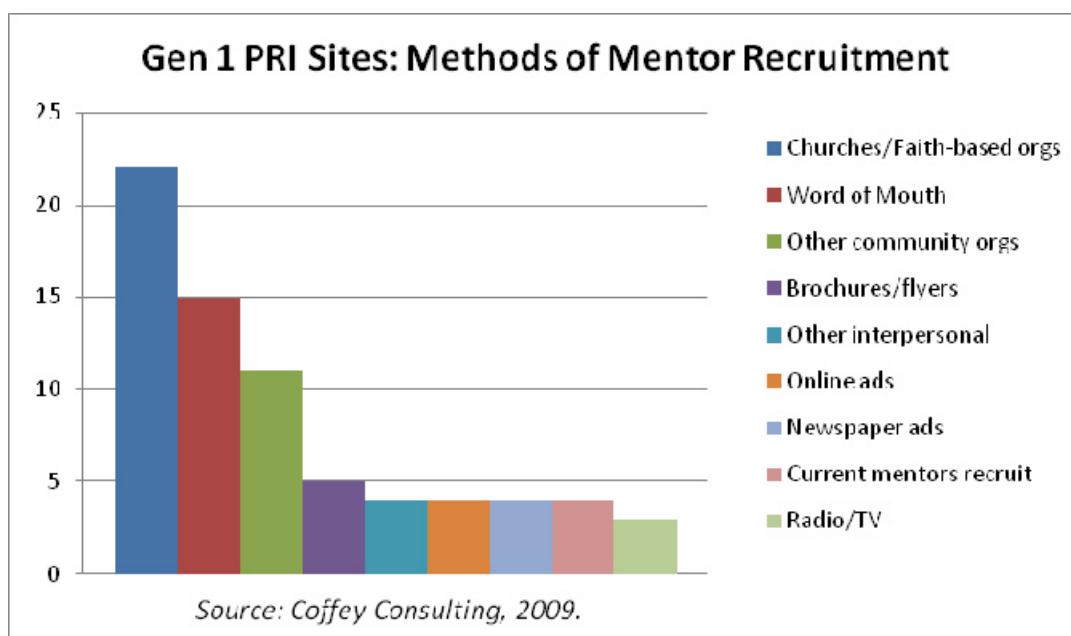
<sup>19</sup> This section contains best practices as identified for youth mentoring programs in MENTOR, 2005, and a number of publications on mentoring adult offenders from Public/Private Ventures: Bauldry et al., 2009; Cobbs Fletcher, 2007; Public/Private Ventures, 2009; Public/Private Ventures, 2007b.

## MENTOR AND MENTEE RECRUITMENT

Once the planning process has been completed and goals for recruiting both mentors and mentees have been established, the creation of a marketing plan and marketing tools will be needed to assist in promoting the program.

### *Mentors*

There are several approaches that have been used to recruit mentors. One method is to reach out to numerous stakeholders – advisory committee members, staff, and community members – as they can assist in marketing the program and the recruiting process. In San Diego, the PRI grantee Metro United Methodist Urban Ministry used “mentoring buddies” to work with mentors.<sup>20</sup> Mentoring buddies are volunteers who may be interested in mentoring but do not have the time to commit to becoming a full-fledged mentor. Instead, they provide support to mentors in the program for only as much time as they are able. This approach allows the program to engage the interest of the volunteer, increasing the likelihood that he or she becomes a formal mentor at a later time.



Consideration should be given as to whether the program will use ex-offenders as mentors, commonly called “peer mentors.” Some believe that ex-offenders make excellent mentors because they understand the issues facing participants, have more credibility in that they have “walked in the offender’s shoes,” and often put more effort and passion into the mentoring role. Many departments of corrections, however, have policies that may restrict or prohibit ex-offenders from entering secure facilities or policies prohibiting anyone with a past criminal record from having active involvement in offender programs. Despite these challenges, many of the Generation 1 PRI sites report using ex-offenders as part of their mentoring programs.<sup>21</sup>

Lastly, another issue to consider is whether mentors will be paid for their time and/or reimbursed for costs associated with mentoring (e.g., travel expenses, mentoring activities).

<sup>20</sup> Public/Private Ventures 2007b.

<sup>21</sup> 20 out of 27 sites used ex-offenders as mentors in their programs. See Coffey Consulting, 2009.

Most mentoring programs are clearly volunteer programs (only a few pay a nominal fee of some kind); and there is no evidence to suggest that either method – paid or volunteer – is more effective than the other in terms of recruiting mentors or providing mentoring services.

### **Mentees**

Participation in mentoring programs is often not mandatory, therefore some strategies for engaging offenders in a mentoring program include:

- Engaging offenders while they are still in prison by providing informational sessions on the benefits of becoming a mentee (i.e., that participants are more likely to find a job and are less likely to go back to prison),
- Allowing interested offenders to attend group mentoring sessions to see if the program services resonate with them before formally committing themselves to participation,
- Offering incentives and other services at group mentoring sessions to encourage offender attendance (e.g., stipends, job training classes, gift cards for grocery stores).

### **MENTOR AND MENTEE ORIENTATION**

Both potential mentors and mentees are typically provided an orientation to the program as part of the recruitment process. This orientation would provide detailed information about the program, the time commitment required, and the benefits and challenges of mentoring – *before* mentors and mentees officially enroll. Orientations might include the use of vignettes, videos, question and answer sessions, or guest speakers in order to provide information about what mentors and mentees should expect. For example, during the recruitment process in Chicago’s PRI site, The Safer Foundation staff were clear with volunteers, before they agreed to sign up as mentors for the program, that a one-year time commitment was critical.<sup>22</sup> The Safer Foundation found that volunteers were more likely to follow-through with their time commitment to the program when they realized that leaving early could be damaging to their mentees’ success.

While more in-depth training comes later, some key material to provide during an orientation for potential mentors and mentees might include:

- Program overview and mission
- Level/length of time commitment and training requirements
- Expectations of mentees and mentors
- Description of eligibility requirements and the screening process
- Potential benefits for mentees and mentors
- Barriers facing ex-offenders
- Program rules around religion/faith (if applicable)

### **MENTEE ENGAGEMENT**

While efforts to engage mentees in the program should occur throughout the life of the program, it is particularly critical during the early stages. Typically, offenders do not immediately see the benefits of having a mentor. Agencies should consider ways in which they can demonstrate to ex-offenders that joining the mentoring program may assist them in

<sup>22</sup> Public/Private Ventures 2007b.

making their transition to the community a success. Talbert House (Cincinnati's PRI grantee) does not mandate that offenders participate in the mentoring program, but they do require that participants meet with mentoring program staff at the same time they meet with job training and placement staff.<sup>23</sup> The Safer Foundation program staff stress with participants that joining the mentoring component will assist them in all areas of transition and reentry.<sup>24</sup> The better offenders understand how to use the program to their advantage, the more engaged they are likely to be.

#### **MENTOR AND MENTEE SCREENING**

Once commitment from mentors and mentees is secured, the use of a screening process determines who is eligible for the program and ensures that safety issues are addressed. Some common screening activities include requiring written applications, conducting reference/background checks of potential mentors, and having in-person interviews with mentors and mentees. Completion of the orientation and training sessions might also be considered requirements of the screening process.

#### **Possible Eligibility Criteria**

##### **For Mentors:**

Age  
Language  
Career interests  
Skills  
Motivation for volunteering  
Time available to commit to program

##### **For Mentees:**

Age  
Timing of release  
Severity of offenses committed  
Drug and/or alcohol problems  
Mental illness  
Motivation for participating

*Adapted from: Public/Private Ventures, 2007b*

*For more information, see Public/Private Ventures, 2009 ([http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/316\\_publication.pdf](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/316_publication.pdf)).*

#### **MENTOR TRAINING**

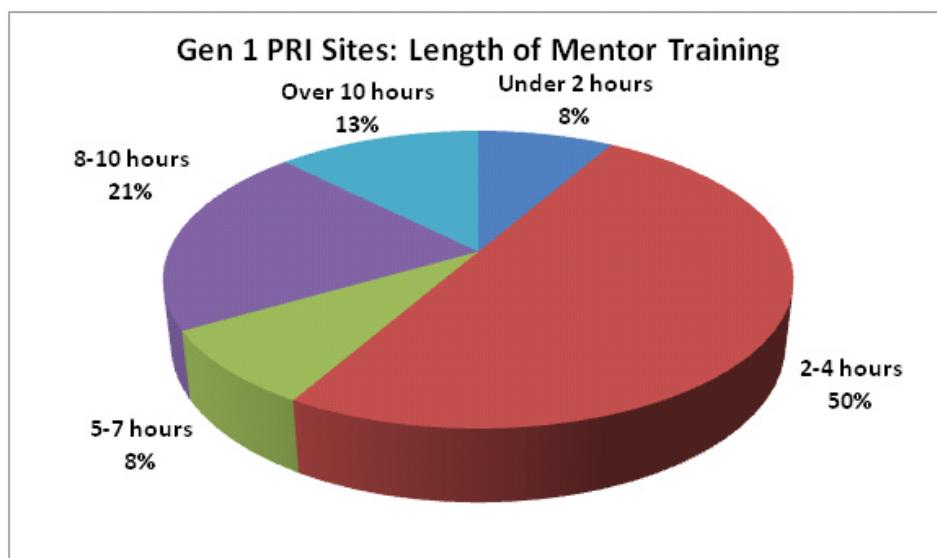
Once mentors and mentees are recruited, screened, and enrolled in the program, training mentors is the next critical step. While mentors receive an introduction to the program during the recruitment process (i.e., an orientation session), a comprehensive training session provides them with more detailed information about the program's rules and guidelines (including, for example, policies regarding confidentiality and safety issues), emphasize the commitments necessary to be a mentor, enhance their understanding of the barriers facing ex-offenders as they transition from prison to the community, and provide them with the skills necessary for

<sup>23</sup> Public/Private Ventures 2007b.

<sup>24</sup> Public/Private Ventures 2007b.

effective mentoring (i.e., communication skills, how to build relationships, Motivational Interviewing, problem solving skills, etc.).<sup>25</sup>

At the conclusion of the initial training (or at the latest, prior to being matched with a mentee), mentors should be asked to sign a participation contract that expresses their commitment to the program.<sup>26</sup> Ongoing “booster” training and support for mentors allows for peer-to-peer interaction and problem solving opportunities. As highlighted in the chart below, about half of the Generation 1 PRI sites provided at least 5 hours of formal training to mentors, while almost all provided at least 2 hours of training.<sup>27</sup>



## MATCHING

In order to ensure that mentee-mentor relationships are successful (in both one-on-one and group mentoring settings), mentoring programs need a strategy to match compatible individuals. Matching considerations include things like hobbies, interests, available schedule, geography, religiosity, and/or gender. For one-on-one mentoring, program staff might arrange for a more controlled first introduction – by phone or in the program office. For group mentoring, staff might allow pairs of mentors and mentees to form on their own naturally. Career Opportunity Development, Inc., a PRI grantee in New Jersey, holds an open house immediately before group mentoring sessions twice a month allowing all past and current clients to mix with mentors.<sup>28</sup> New mentees can then get to know mentors in a less structured setting, which facilitates a more natural matching process.

## PROGRAM MONITORING

Monitoring, which is another critical component of a mentoring program, promotes accountability and increases the likelihood of success. By supervising matches, a program can

<sup>25</sup> Public/Private Ventures provides PRI sites with template language suggestions regarding confidentiality issues, communication skills, and problem solving skills in their *Ex-Prisoner Mentoring Program: Mentor Training Manual Template*. See Public/Private Ventures, 2007a.

<sup>26</sup> For examples of both mentee and mentor agreements, see Public/Private Ventures, 2007a, pages 13-15.

<sup>27</sup> Coffey Consulting, 2009.

<sup>28</sup> Public/Private Ventures 2007b.

monitor that rules are being followed, that matches are meeting regularly, and that both mentors and mentees are satisfied with the program. This also facilitates the evaluation process, as the information collected during monitoring activities informs the evaluation of outcomes (e.g., attendance in the program, job outcomes, mentors/mentees satisfaction with the program).

#### **Monitoring Mentoring Sessions:**

While mentor coordinators or program staff can monitor group mentoring sessions by sitting in on them, many PRI sites ask mentors to fill out “logs” following each group and one-on-one mentoring session. These logs typically contain:

- Name(s) of the mentor(s) and mentee(s) present and absent
- Activities engaged in and whether the mentor thought they were successful
- Positive and/or negative changes observed in mentee
- Any problems or disruptions in the session
- Suggestions for future activities or improvements in the program
- Whether the coordinator should contact the mentor

*Adapted from: Public/Private Ventures, 2007b.*

#### **MENTOR AND MENTEE RETENTION**

One lesson learned from the Ready4Work Initiative was the importance of focusing on the retention of mentors and mentees. When mentees drop out of a program, they not only increase their own risk of failure, but also impact the mentors’ commitment to the program. Mentors whose mentees quit might feel disappointed and frustrated by the failure. By being clear with mentees and mentors about the work involved and the possibilities for failure (and what happens when a mentee drops out of the program), all parties can have realistic expectations for the program. In addition to clear expectations, mentoring programs should also utilize supervision, recognition, and incentives to keep mentees and mentors motivated to stay in the program. Career Opportunity Development, Inc. holds an open house every two weeks before group mentoring sessions.<sup>29</sup> These open houses include meals, engaging activities, and interesting presentations. To retain mentees, The Safer Foundation staff follow the motto “we will not give up on you” – whether this means meeting mentees at home or changing the meeting times to accommodate busy schedules.<sup>30</sup>

#### **MATCH CLOSURE**

Attention must also be paid to the termination process – when mentees and mentors come to the successful end of the program. Since the end of the program might be a difficult time for both parties emotionally (e.g., both feel they have created a bond, mentees might experience feelings of abandonment), program staff should regularly remind both the mentor and the mentee of the time left in the program, and should be clear about the program’s policy on

<sup>29</sup> Public/Private Ventures 2007b.

<sup>30</sup> Public/Private Ventures 2007b.

continuing the relationship after termination. At this time, mentors and mentees might be asked to sign a termination contract, which indicates that they understand how their relationship will change post-program. Exit interviews might also be conducted to collect feedback on how the program could be improved.

### **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

To determine the effectiveness of the program, an evaluation process should be established that seeks to determine whether the mission, goals, and objectives of the program were met. Information on the mentoring process, mentee outcomes, and level of program satisfaction should be collected and analyzed. Determining how to identify, collect, and measure intermediate and program outcomes are all important considerations.<sup>31</sup>

While the experiences of mentoring programs offer the best practices discussed in this document, further research on implementing mentoring programs and their benefits for offenders is needed. The evaluation of current and future mentoring programs is critical to determine the essential elements of effective mentoring programs; for example, the length of the program, program components, attributes of effective mentors, and the types of offenders who may benefit most from mentoring.

#### **Evaluation Considerations**

With respect to establishing an evaluation process, consider the following:

- What specific outcomes do you seek through this mentoring program (e.g., job attainment, decreased recidivism)?
- How might these outcomes be measured?
- How will you collect the data that speak to these outcomes (e.g., interviews with mentees, official DOC records, follow-up surveys)?
- What other data might you collect that serve as indicators of the program's achievement (e.g., training hours, meeting frequency, length of relationship)?
- Where would this data come from (e.g., mentor logs, interviews, questionnaires, surveys)?
- Are tracking systems currently in place? What other systems might be set up to assist in data collection and tracking?
- What will be required in order to make data collection routine?
- Who will analyze the collected data?
- How will findings be disseminated to appropriate stakeholders?
- How will refinements to the program be made based upon findings?

<sup>31</sup> For more information on evaluating program outcomes, see the Coaching Packet on Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts.

## ***Additional Recommendations for Addressing Common Implementation Barriers***

The experiences of a number of sites revealed some common barriers to implementing effective mentoring programs.<sup>32</sup> This section offers a number of recommendations for addressing these obstacles.

### **BE CREATIVE IN MENTOR RECRUITMENT EFFORTS**

- Provide group mentoring opportunities to decrease the number of mentors who need to be recruited.
- Expand the pool from which mentors are drawn – mentors do not need to have previous mentoring experience, mentors can be formerly incarcerated individuals (with some parameters).
- Play to potential mentor motivations – ex-offenders express the desire to help and serve as role models because they've had the same experiences; non-offenders express interest in mentoring ex-offenders because their relatives or friends have been incarcerated.
- Reach out to pastors of minority congregations to recruit mentors for minority populations.
- Recruit mentoring buddies – individuals who are willing to help out occasionally without becoming a full-time mentor; such individuals may become more invested in the program to become an official mentor.

### **BE DELIBERATE AND CLEAR WITH MENTORS ABOUT EXPECTATIONS**

- Inform and reiterate with mentors the importance of their committing to the program for an extended period of time (i.e., one year or more), and that this will result in better outcomes for their mentees.
- Provide clear policy on what is and is not permitted (e.g., mentors are only allowed to discuss religious issues in response to a question from the mentee and attending church as an activity is only permitted when the desire is expressed by the mentee).
- Provide guidance to mentors on confidentiality procedures, including when it is and when it is not acceptable to share information they learn about their mentee.

### **CONSIDER WHAT APPEALS TO OFFENDERS TRANSITIONING TO THE COMMUNITY**

- Consider other descriptive terms for mentors like “life coach,” “career coach,” or “transition coach” to appeal to an adult offender population.
- Emphasize that the benefits of becoming a mentee address offenders’ top concerns around reentry – that participants are more likely to find a job, stay employed, and not recidivate.

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<sup>32</sup> This list is compiled from a number of Public/Private Ventures publications: Bauldry et al., 2009; Cobbs Fletcher, 2007; Public/Private Ventures, 2007b.

- Share success stories of previous participants whose mentoring relationships assisted in their transition to the community.

#### **MAKE IT EASY AND ENJOYABLE FOR MENTEES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MENTORING PROGRAM**

- Offer mentoring sessions at various times of the day to accommodate mentees' work schedules and various other appointments.
- Provide reminders to mentees of upcoming meetings and activities.
- Offer refreshments at group mentoring sessions.
- Offer additional services (e.g., resume-building workshops) to mentees who attend group sessions.
- Allow offenders to participate in group mentoring sessions in lieu of one-on-one mentoring if that is their preference.

#### **KEEP MENTEES ENGAGED IN MENTORING ACTIVITIES**

- Ensure that everyone is a participant in group mentoring activities, including mentors.
- Discuss topics that mentees suggest or ask mentees to create the topics/agenda for group meetings.
- Provide opportunities for outside activities (e.g., eating at restaurants, going to sporting events).
- Bring in guest speakers.
- Encourage mentors to socially interact with mentees one-on-one before and after meetings, and over the phone in between meetings.

### ***Building Collaborative Partnerships Between Corrections and Faith-Based Community Organizations***

Faith-based community organizations are uniquely positioned to successfully recruit volunteers to serve as mentors, while corrections entities supervise an offender population in need of mentoring services. Therefore, implementing successful mentoring programs requires an effective working relationship between corrections and faith-based community organizations. Both benefit from the establishment of mentoring programs that facilitate successful offender reentry and increased community safety. Once these joint goals are recognized, an effective working relationship can be established.

The following lists some steps that FBCOs and departments of corrections can take to help facilitate a partnership to provide mentoring services to offenders.

#### **STEPS FOR FBCO's**

Some steps for FBCO's interested in forming a collaborative partnership with departments of corrections to provide mentoring services include:

- Reach out to prison chaplains or other faith-based leaders with previous experience working with corrections entities in similar settings.

- Enlist corrections staff to jointly plan the mentoring program to ensure that both partners are equally invested in the program's success.
- Sign memoranda of agreement with departments of corrections to formalize the agreements made and to ensure that roles and responsibilities of each partner organization is clear.
- Determine what kind of information the FBCO staff will need to collect on offenders participating in the program from the department of corrections.
- Solicit information on prison regulations and/or supervision conditions and requirements so that mentors better understand the unique challenges facing offenders leaving prison.
- Ask whether mentors might participate in the training available for department staff that is applicable to their work as mentors (e.g., communications skills, Motivational Interviewing) to assist with training efforts.

### PRI Initiative Faith-Based Grantees

If a mentoring program provided by a faith-based organization is publicly funded, FBO's must take care to ensure that participation is voluntary, the religiosity of all participants is respected, and that mentors understand that they are not to force their religious views on mentees.

For guidelines on faith-based organizations providing mentoring services under the PRI initiative, see the Addendum on page 62 of Public/Private Ventures, 2007b.

### STEPS FOR CORRECTIONS STAFF

Some steps for corrections staff interested in working with FBCO's to provide mentoring services include:<sup>33</sup>

- Gather contact information from interested FBCO's; create an open system of communication to foster new relationships.
- Demonstrate how partnering to offer a mentoring program is consistent with their mission.
- Partner with FBCO staff to assist in the creation of programs, instead of just asking them to join later as volunteers.
- Provide training and information to ensure that FBCO staff have the skills to work effectively with offenders.
- Discuss with faith-based organization partners how they will balance religious and secular demands in providing mentoring services.

Both FBCO and corrections entities interested in establishing a mentoring program might facilitate such a partnership by enlisting a "champion" – a leader with credibility in both the secular and faith-based communities who can engage all in the effort. For example, the program director and "champion" Reverend Dr. Goode, previously the mayor of Philadelphia,

<sup>33</sup> Jucovy, 2003; Public/Private Ventures, 2009; Public/Private Ventures, 2007b.

successfully mobilized partnerships between faith-based and secular organizations and developed the Amachi program, a mentoring program for the children of prisoners.<sup>34</sup>

One key lesson from the Gen 1 PRI Initiative was that joint planning is critical to a successful partnership. Without equal buy-in from both parties, partnerships suffered. Furthermore, establishing clear and open lines of communication are also critical. Reports on program progress, questions or concerns about policy or procedures, and changes in staff should be shared regularly between the partner organizations. While collaborating to create successful mentoring programs continues to be challenging,<sup>35</sup> these lessons provide guidance to departments of corrections and FBCOs interested in working together to provide a critical support to offenders entering the community.

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<sup>34</sup> See Jucovy, 2003. While this program did not mentor ex-offenders, strategies for reaching out to congregations are relevant.

<sup>35</sup> Coffey Consulting, 2009.

## Section II: Building Offenders' Community Assets Through Mentoring

### Coaching Packet Checklist<sup>36</sup>

MENTORING PROGRAMS: BEST PRACTICES	YES	NO	NOT CLEAR	NOTES
1. Have specific mission, goals, and objectives for the program been identified?				
2. Have recruitment goals been established (i.e., how many mentors are needed, how many mentees will be served)?				
3. Has a description of the program and other tools been created for marketing purposes (e.g., flyers, brochures)?				
4. Do mentors and mentees receive an orientation as part of the recruitment process?				
5. Are mentors and mentees provided accurate information about the program (e.g., time commitment, expectations, and challenges)?				
6. Are mentors and mentees fully screened to ensure that they meet established criteria?				
7. Has a training plan and curricula been developed for mentors?				
8. Are mentors trained on the skills necessary to work with offenders?				
9. Do mentors and mentees receive ongoing training sessions to discuss with their peers challenges and successes, and receive peer support?				
10. Has a matching plan been constructed to assist in successfully pairing mentors and mentees based on established criteria?				
11. Are group sessions led by at least two mentors and limited in size (i.e., 4-6 mentees)?				
12. Are mentoring activities occurring on a frequent basis (i.e., a minimum of 1-2 hours every two weeks)?				
13. Does the monitoring process include regular communication between staff and mentors, and staff and mentees?				
14. Are key aspects of the mentoring program monitored such as attendance, adherence to rules, and level of satisfaction?				
15. Do staff continue to try to engage/meet with mentees who have poor attendance or those who have dropped out?				
16. Do mentees and mentors know how to voice their concerns/problems to program staff?				
17. Are mentors and mentees provided with incentives to stay in the program?				
18. Are exit interviews conducted between mentors and staff; and between mentees and staff?				
19. Are mentors and mentees informed about the policy on continuing their relationship after program termination?				
20. Is an evaluation plan in place?				
21. Is the evaluation process based on the mission, goals, and objectives of the program?				
22. Are refinements made to the program based on these findings?				

<sup>36</sup> Adapted from Public/Private Ventures, 2009; Public/Private Ventures, 2007b. A more comprehensive version of this checklist is available for interested jurisdictions upon request.

## Section III: Action Planning Worksheet

<b>GOAL:</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 2:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 3:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

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# COACHING PACKET

## Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts

One in a series of Coaching Packets designed  
to assist jurisdictions in the implementation  
of effective practices that will support  
successful offender outcomes

Authors: Shelli B. Rossman, The Urban Institute  
*and* Laura Winterfield, The Urban Institute

Editor: Madeline M. Carter, Center for Effective Public Policy

2009



### ***Coaching Packet Series 1: Creating a Blueprint for an Effective Offender Reentry System***

- A Framework for Offender Reentry
- Establishing a Rational Planning Process
- Engaging in Collaborative Partnerships to Support Reentry

### ***Coaching Packet Series 2: Delivering Evidence-Based Services***

- Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
- Effective Case Management
- Shaping Offender Behavior
- Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry
- Building Offenders' Community Assets through Mentoring
- Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders

### ***Coaching Packet Series 3: Ensuring Meaningful Outcomes***

- Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts
- Continuous Quality Improvement



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## Introduction to the Coaching Packet Series

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) and its partners, The Urban Institute and The Carey Group, were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to the Fiscal Year 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees (hereafter “PRI grantees”). The project team served in this capacity from April 2008 to June 2010.

The Center is a nonprofit criminal justice consulting organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since the early 1980s, the Center has provided training and technical assistance to the criminal justice field on a wide array of topics, including transition and reentry, and has administered a number of national projects of this kind. The Urban Institute was established as a private, nonprofit corporation in Washington, D.C. in 1968 and is a leader in prisoner reentry research, focusing on making best practice information accessible to practitioners and policymakers. The Carey Group is a justice consulting firm with extensive practitioner experience in evidence-based practices, strategic planning, community and restorative justice and corrections.

As a part of its technical assistance delivery to the PRI grantees, the Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work. The final products of this work include eleven Coaching Packets in three series. These Coaching Packets offer practical value beyond the jurisdictions involved in this initiative and are available to criminal justice professionals and their partners interested in enhancing their strategies for reducing recidivism and improving offender outcomes.

Each Coaching Packet provides an overview of a specific topic as it relates to successful offender reentry, and offers tools and resources for those interested in exploring the topic in greater depth.

- *Series 1* provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system. This series provides a conceptual framework for addressing prisoner reentry at the policy level; outlines a strategic planning process to support implementation efforts; and explores the establishment of successful collaborative partnerships at the policy and case management levels.
- *Series 2* addresses key issues related to the delivery of evidence-based services to offenders. This series summarizes the key literature with regard to implementing evidence-based practices; explores advances in approaches to case management; addresses the important role of staff in changing offender behavior; and summarizes research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- *Series 3* provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes. This series describes methods to assess the effectiveness of reentry efforts and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

## FY 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Grantees

The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) – intended to support the development and implementation of institutional and community corrections-based reentry programs to help returning offenders find employment and provide other critical services – is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grants were awarded to state and local corrections agencies by DOJ to provide pre-release and transition services to offenders and were “matched” by DOL grants to faith- and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to provide post-release services, focusing on employment assistance and mentoring.

Thirty-five states received grants in three cycles of the Initiative during Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 23 FY 2007 PRI grantees received assistance under this project. FY 2007 grants were awarded in the fall of 2007 and implemented from 2008 to 2010; however, some grantees will not complete their activities until 2011. The FY 2007 grantees provided technical assistance under this project included:

- ✓ ALASKA, Native Justice Center
- ✓ ARIZONA, Criminal Justice Commission/ Yuma County Sheriff’s Office
- ✓ CALIFORNIA, Department of Community Services and Development
- ✓ COLORADO, Division of Criminal Justice Services/City of Denver
- ✓ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Government
- ✓ FLORIDA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ HAWAII, Department of Public Safety
- ✓ INDIANA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ IOWA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ KANSAS, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MAINE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MICHIGAN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ MINNESOTA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEVADA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NEW JERSEY, Department of Corrections
- ✓ NORTH CAROLINA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ OHIO, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- ✓ PENNSYLVANIA, Department of Corrections
- ✓ RHODE ISLAND, Department of Corrections
- ✓ TENNESSEE, Department of Corrections
- ✓ VIRGINIA, Department of Criminal Justice Services
- ✓ WISCONSIN, Department of Corrections
- ✓ WYOMING, Department of Corrections

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<sup>1</sup> The PRI program will end when the FY 2008 grantees complete their activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

Becki Ney, Principal, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program Project Director. Ms. Ney conceptualized and oversaw the development of the Coaching Packet series.

Madeline M. Carter, Principal, and Rachelle Giguere, Program Associate, Center for Effective Public Policy, served as the key editors for the Coaching Packet series. Ms. Giguere also provided extensive research support to the development of the series.

# **Introduction to the Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts Coaching Packet**

## *The Contents of this Packet*

This Coaching Packet provides:

- An overview of performance management principles and practices;
- A discussion of the ways in which performance data can be useful to agencies and jurisdictions engaged in reentry efforts;
- A list of the key processes and outcomes that should be tracked, used internally to guide program improvements, and reported to stakeholders and other interested parties;
- Methods and key steps in performance management, including the development of logic models;
- A tool to determine your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps in the area of measuring the impact of reentry efforts;
- An aid to developing plans to address identified gap areas; and
- References to additional resources on this topic.

## *The Intended Audience for this Packet*

This Coaching Packet was originally developed to assist grant teams that were established to manage local PRI initiatives. The teams were composed of representatives from institutional and community corrections and faith-based or community organizations involved in the delivery of pre- and post-release services to offenders transitioning from prison to the community. The content of these Coaching Packets has much broader application, however; the information and tools contained within this Coaching Packet can also be used by teams of criminal justice professionals and their partners to assess the status of their efforts in implementing evidence-based practices and effective reentry services to offenders.

This Coaching Packet may also serve as a resource for professionals at all levels who are interested in learning more about this topic.

## *How to Use this Packet*

### **SECTION I: READ THE OVERVIEW ON MEASURING THE IMPACT OF REENTRY EFFORTS.**

This section of the Coaching Packet provides an overview of performance management. Review its content and, if the information it contains is applicable to your work and addresses an area in which you feel you need to focus your efforts, use the tool in Section II to assess your jurisdiction's strengths and gaps with regard to measuring reentry efforts.

## **SECTION II: COMPLETE THE MEASURING THE IMPACT OF REENTRY EFFORTS COACHING PACKET CHECKLIST.**

As a team, complete the Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts Coaching Packet Checklist. (Based upon the information you read in Section I, consider who may need to be involved so that you are able to answer the questions thoroughly.) Complete the checklist as a group and discuss your responses along the way.

- Rate each item listed in the checklist (yes, no, unclear).
- For items where your response is “unclear,” make note of the additional information the team needs to collect in order to be able to rate this item.
- Add additional items that may relate to your jurisdiction’s implementation of a performance management system that are not already included on the checklist.
- Develop a consensus-based response for each item on the checklist.
- Once the checklist is completed, consider your jurisdictions’ strengths in implementing a performance management system. Make note of these.
- Next, consider your most significant gaps. Make note of these as well.

## **SECTION III: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN.**

If, after completing the checklist in Section II, your team determines that further work on this topic is necessary or would be helpful, follow the steps below to identify your goals, objectives, and action items, and identify any additional assistance or expertise needed.

Working as a team, review your findings from the Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts Coaching Packet Checklist. Specifically:

1. Determine whether, based upon what you have read and discussed, you desire to improve your jurisdiction’s approach to measuring the impact of your reentry efforts.
2. If you determine you have a need to improve in this area, write a goal statement that reflects where you want to be with regard to improving your measurement system. Your goal might be to “Develop a logic model for our initiative,” “Create a regular reporting process to share performance management results with internal and external stakeholders,” “Establish a data management quality assurance plan,” or another goal. Using the Action Planning Worksheet in Section III, note your goal in the area of measuring the impact of reentry efforts.
3. Identify your three most significant strengths in this area and discuss how you might build on those to overcome some of your gaps.
4. Identify your three most significant gaps. For each gap, write an objective. Your objectives might be, “To establish a team to collaboratively identify written and verbal methods to communicate the results of the data management system,” or “To establish a quality assurance manager position to oversee data collection across agencies,” or something else. Note your three objectives on the Action Planning Worksheet.
5. Add the following on the Action Planning Worksheet for each objective:
  - a. The specific sequential steps that must be taken to meet the objective.
  - b. The individual who will assume lead responsibility for this action item.
  - c. The completion date for this action item.

6. Discuss whether additional assistance or outside expertise is needed to successfully achieve any of your action items. For instance, explore whether additional literature, guidance from another practitioner over the telephone, examples of work products from other jurisdictions, or on-site technical assistance would be helpful options.
  - a. For each action item, identify those for which assistance/expertise is needed.
  - b. Identify the type of assistance/expertise needed.
  - c. Prioritize each of these need areas. If assistance/expertise will be limited, for which action items is assistance most needed?
  - d. Begin exploring ways to secure the needed assistance/expertise.

### ***How to Seek Additional Information***

To download copies of the Coaching Packets, please visit the Center's website at <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>. To obtain further information on the use or content of this or any of the Coaching Packets, or on the 2007 PRI Training and Technical Assistance Program, please contact:

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## **Section I: An Overview of Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts**

### ***Background on the Prisoner Reentry Initiative***

The number of incarcerated offenders, and the relative costs of confinement, has risen dramatically during the past several decades. This, coupled with a virtual explosion in research demonstrating methods to reduce offender recidivism, has resulted in increased attention to the management of offenders generally and their successful return to the community in particular.

Among the most significant of the national reentry initiatives is the Presidential Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI). In 2005, the Departments of Justice (DOJ), Labor (DOL), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Health and Human Services (HHS), and other Federal agencies formed a partnership to support reentry efforts at the state level. The goal of the PRI project is to reduce recidivism and increase the successful reintegration of offenders to the community. The PRI project provides direct grant funds through the DOJ's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and the DOL to applicants on a competitive basis. These grants provide funds for a variety of initiatives at the state and local level; they also support grant activities through the provision of training and technical assistance on the strategic and substantive issues related to all aspects of offender reentry.

PRI has three distinct but related phases:

1. **Institutional phase:** During the institutional phase, offenders are assessed to determine their likelihood of recidivism and criminogenic needs. Based upon these assessments, offenders begin to address these risk factors by participating in targeted services, such as substance abuse treatment or cognitive-behavioral change classes. The goal of the institutional phase is to identify the appropriate level of intervention for individual offenders and begin the case management planning and, where appropriate, service delivery process.
2. **Structured reentry or transitional phase:** During the transitional phase, offenders engage in intensive release preparation, formalizing their reintegration plans and enhancing their connections to the community. This phase begins in prison and continues for approximately a month following release. The goal of the transitional phase is to ensure that offenders' stabilization needs are met (e.g., government issued identification is secured, a supply of medications is available, suitable housing plans are in place, etc.) and criminogenic need areas are addressed (e.g., placement into needed services).
3. **Community reintegration phase:** During the community reintegration phase, many offenders are under community supervision and participate in supportive services as identified in individually-tailored reentry plans. The goal of the community reintegration phase is to provide offenders with the support and services needed to be successful in the community (e.g., employment).

## **The Federal PRI Performance Measures**

Both BJA and DOL have identified performance measures that their grantees are expected to use in reporting the progress of their respective PRI programs. In order to promote consistency in PRI reporting among the pre- and post-release programs, BJA and DOL adopted common definitions of recidivism and successful enrollment, as follows:

- ✓ **Recidivism** is a return to prison with a new conviction within 12 months of release.
- ✓ **Successful enrollment** occurs when a referred offender makes contact with a designated faith-based community organization (FBCO) and completes the required procedures to be enrolled in the program offered.

Performance indicators required by DOL and BJA are presented in Exhibits 1 and 2, respectively.

### **Exhibit 1: U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) PRI Grantee Performance Indicators**

Sample DOL PRI measures include:

1. Participation Rate: defined as the percentage of active participants who received at least one PRI or partner service (excluding supportive services) every month during the reporting quarter. *The target for this measure is 60% in each reporting quarter.*
2. Mentoring: defined as the percentage of active participants who received mentoring services during the quarter. *The target for this measure is 60%.*
3. Entered Employment Rate: defined as of those who are not employed at the date of participation (enrollment) and who exit the program: the percentage of participants who are employed in the first quarter after the exit quarter. *The target for this measure is 60%.*
4. Employment Retention Rate: defined as of those who exit the program and are employed in the first quarter after the exit quarter: the percentage of participants who are employed in both the second and third quarters after the exit quarter. *The target for this measure is 70%.*
5. Average Earnings: defined as of those who exit the program and who were employed in the first, second, and third quarters after exit: the average total earnings for the second and third quarters after exit. *The target for this measure is \$9,360, which works out to be \$9 per hour if working full time and just under 200% of the poverty rate for a family of one.*
6. Recidivism Rate: defined as the percentage of participants who were re-arrested for new crimes or re-incarcerated for revocation of their parole or probation orders within one year of their release from prison. *The target for this measure is 22% or below.*

*Adapted from: DOL, 2009.*

**Exhibit 2:**  
**Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) PRI Grantee Performance Indicators**

The set of BJA PRI performance measures includes the following:

1. Number of eligible offenders selected for program participation.
2. Number of total eligible offenders not selected for participation in the Reentry Program.
3. Total number of offenders from facilities used to draw and select the target population.
4. Total number of offenders in the target population.

NOTE: Each offender should only be counted once among the following questions 5, 7-10:

5. Number of participating offenders from the target population who are rearrested for new crimes within 12 months of release.
6. From those rearrested for a new crime, the number of offenders whose cases have been dismissed or the charges dropped. (NOTE: These participating offenders will be removed from the recidivism count.)
7. Number of participating offenders from the target population who are rearrested for previous crimes within 12 months of release. (NOTE: This option does not count towards the recidivism rate.)
8. Number of participating offenders from the target population who are re-incarcerated for revocation of the parole or probation orders for violations of terms of their sentence within 12 months of release.
9. Number of participating offenders from the target population who otherwise violated the terms and conditions of their sentence within 12 months of release and are not re-incarcerated. (NOTE: This option does not count towards the recidivism rate.)
10. Number of participating offenders from the target population who are not rearrested or re-incarcerated within the first 12 months of release.
11. Number of offenders in the target population undergoing risk and need assessments.
12. From those undergoing assessments, number of offenders recommended for pre- and post-release services.
13. From those undergoing assessments, number of offenders not recommended for pre- and post-release services. (Note: This refers to a snapshot of actual assessments and referrals that occurred during reporting period and reported by service category.)
14. Number of offenders in the target population receiving pre-release services while incarcerated and post-release services after release. Types of service include: cognitive behavioral therapy or other counseling, life skills, employment, education, substance abuse, mental health, overall health, family, anger management, mentoring, faith-based, and other. (NOTE: Provide one overall number and then the specific number in each category.)
15. Number of offenders in the target population for whom transition plans are developed.
16. Number of offenders in the target population who successfully complete pre-release risk or need assessments, participate in all assigned pre-release services, and obtain transition plans.
17. From those offenders in the target population referred to DOL-funded faith-based community organization sub-grantees for post-release services, percentage of offenders who successfully enrolled in the post-release program.

*Adapted from: BJA, 2008.*

## ***The Importance of Performance Measurement***

There are a number of ways in which a carefully constructed performance measurement system will prove useful. Performance information provides:

- ✓ An objective way to account for activities and accomplishments over time.
- ✓ A method to quantify the cost/benefit of investments and allocate additional resources (or reallocate resources) as may be appropriate.
- ✓ An opportunity to identify and intervene with implementation problems (or potential problems) that can impede goal achievement if not addressed in a timely fashion.
- ✓ Objective and specific data that can be used to report performance to staff as a means to further engage and motivate, and external stakeholders (e.g., funders, other vested parties) as a means to demonstrate the benefit of investments.

## ***Basic Concepts Related to Performance Management***

Although the terms performance measurement, performance management, and program evaluation are often used interchangeably, these terms have important distinctions:

- ✓ ***Performance measurement*** refers to the regular and systematic collection of quantitative information that will empirically demonstrate the results (outcomes) of activities (e.g., modified policies and practices, new program initiatives, etc.). Performance measurement connects indicators (i.e., quantitative measures) with specific agency or jurisdictional objectives (i.e., expected outcomes).
- ✓ ***Performance management*** is the use of the performance measurement information to report on successful performance and/or fine-tune policy decisions, practices, and adjust the allocation of resources in order to further enhance outcomes.
- ✓ ***Program evaluations*** are typically in-depth studies designed to assess the processes, intermediate outcomes and end outcomes of programs or services. They are generally ad hoc (one time or infrequently repeated) studies designed to answer specific questions. These studies are often motivated by the interests of those providing the resources for the initiative. Occasionally agencies/jurisdictions conduct program evaluations with their own resources and for their own purposes. Because program evaluations often require significant effort by staff or outside contractors, it is generally not feasible to repeat these studies routinely. And because they often seek to determine long-term outcomes (e.g., changes in the rates of violation behavior among supervised offenders, rearrest rates, reconviction rates), data collection may span a fairly lengthy period of time.

Throughout this document, the term “performance management” will imply both the collection and analysis of quantitative information *and* the use of that information to improve outcomes.

## **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT VERSUS PROGRAM EVALUATION.**

Program evaluation typically provides the most comprehensive information about an initiative. It may involve sophisticated methodologies including the use of comparison groups to determine the end outcomes of various interventions. As ideal as these evaluation results are, most agencies and jurisdictions are not in a position to conduct them, at least not with regularity. They can be costly to design, complex to administer, and time consuming. On the other hand, performance management systems can be designed and administered with relative ease. And because the information derived is essential to ongoing performance monitoring and improvement, their establishment should be a priority for all agencies.

### Important Benefits of Performance Management

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***Performance measurement*** provides **accountability** regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of programs/services.

***Performance reporting*** provides **transparency** regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of programs/services.

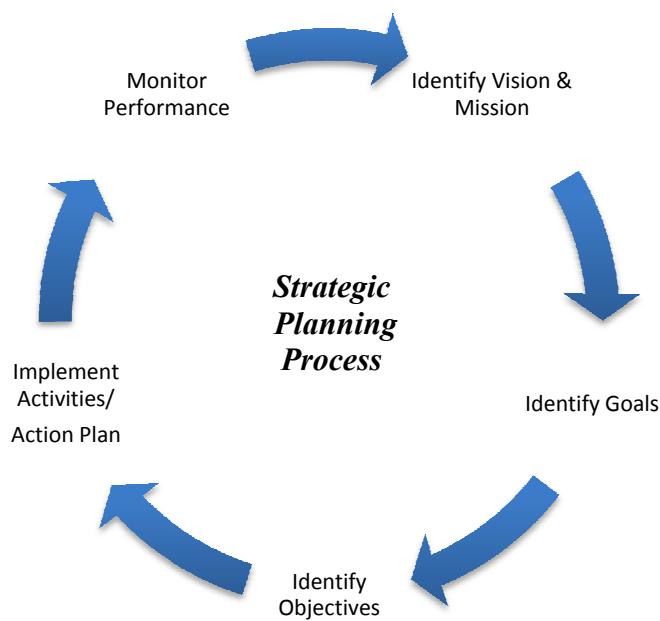
## **SIMILAR MEASUREMENTS, DIFFERENT METHODOLOGIES AND RESULTS.**

The same measurements might be used in a performance management system as in a program evaluation (e.g., the number/percent of participants who reduced or discontinued substance abuse). The primary difference is in the methodology and the ability to draw definitive conclusions about the outcomes derived. For example, in the most rigorous of program evaluations, it is possible to attribute outcomes (effects) to the program's activities. In the case of the sample logic model in Exhibit 3, the performance management system may reveal that 80% of the offenders who participate in the job readiness and employment counseling services retain their positions after one year on the job. This may lead to the conclusion that the services provided had a positive influence on job retention. But without conducting a program evaluation – which controls for other external events that could also influence the outcome (such as other services the offender may have been provided) – it is not possible to determine precisely the degree to which the results can be attributed to any one set of conditions. In other words, because performance measurement systems report on collected data but do not provide a method to control for external variables, they cannot identify the reasons for a lower number of program graduates than expected, or explain why program participants were not employed at the rates originally planned.

#### **BUILDING ON THE QUANTITATIVE DATA.**

Performance measurement data, in and of itself, is extremely useful to determine the outcomes of a new initiative and, as will be described later, can be fairly easy to construct. Its utility therefore cannot be underestimated. Where it falls short in comparison to program evaluation is in the additional explanatory power of understanding the extent to which external influences contribute to the end result. Performance measurement data can be strengthened in this regard by gathering qualitative data, such as holding discussions with individual staff or convening focus groups with clients to identify the extent to which they attribute the outcome(s) to the activities conducted. For example, an outcome indicator might be “The percent of offenders who reported that the job readiness and placement services contributed significantly to their ability to maintain steady employment for more than one year.” In general, performance management systems should include both the collection of quantitative and qualitative information.

#### ***Performance Management: A Critical Ingredient in the Strategic/Rational Planning Process***



Strategic (or “rational”) planning is the subject of another document in this series of Coaching Packets and therefore is not reviewed in detail. For the purposes of this Coaching Packet, it is simply important to make the connection between performance management and the strategic planning process.

One way to think about strategic or rational planning is as a cycle that involves a series of key stages, beginning with articulating a vision for a system, agency or a particular initiative, and progressing to monitoring performance of activities designed to accomplish the vision. The purpose of monitoring is to substantiate (and enhance) achievements. Therefore, where the vision and mission of an initiative defines the *desired results* of the efforts and investments

(e.g., reduced recidivism), the performance management system provides a “report card” on the *actual* results.

While not necessarily desirable, it is not essential to conduct a full-blown strategic planning exercise in order to start implementing performance management. Under some circumstances, timing may not permit such a deliberate planning process. At a minimum, all new initiatives should follow the key steps in performance management, including the development of a logic model – a clear statement of what will be done and what is expected as a result.

## ***Key Steps in Performance Management***

### **INVOLVE THE RIGHT PEOPLE.**

Experience from organizations that have undertaken the establishment of performance management systems in the past suggests that establishing a working group to oversee the design and pilot testing phases of the measurement system produces the best results.

Typically, the working group is charged with the following responsibilities:

- ✓ Defining the parameters of the performance management system based upon the needs, resources, size, and capacity of the jurisdiction/organization;
- ✓ Soliciting input from a diverse group of stakeholders (e.g., internal staff and managers, as well as external parties) to ensure that their perspectives are taken into account and their buy-in to the performance management process is secured from the outset. Key topics for input include:
  - The outcomes to be measured,
  - The data to be collected to measure the specified outcomes,
  - How and when to collect the data,
  - The quality control methods needed to ensure the accuracy of the data,
  - The training needs of staff regarding the collection, analysis, or interpretation of the data,
  - The timing of and methods to be used to share the data with staff, and
  - The ways in which the data will be used to inform policy and practice;
- ✓ Identifying existing data sources (either internal or external), whether these can be used “as is” or require adaptation in some fashion, and methods to fill gaps in existing data sources;
- ✓ Establishing the timeline for the design of the performance management system, pilot testing it prior to full-scale implementation, making modifications as needed based upon the pilot test, and finalizing the implementation of the system;

### ***Performance Management is a system of:***

- ✓ Regularly measuring the results (outcomes) of initiatives,
- ✓ Using this information to increase efficiency and effectiveness in approaches or service delivery, and
- ✓ Reporting important indicators of program operations and results.

- ✓ Developing and implementing a data collection and analysis pilot test, and revising implementation plans as needed based upon the results of the pilot test;
- ✓ Determining the resources needed to carry out the performance management system (e.g., personnel, hardware and software, financial needs, training and technical assistance, etc.);
- ✓ Estimating the costs for the performance management system and suggesting strategies to meet these needs;
- ✓ Monitoring implementation, making mid-course corrections as needed; and
- ✓ Establishing regular reporting processes.

#### TAKE THE RIGHT STEPS.

##### *Step 1. Specify Goals and Objectives.*

For each new initiative, agencies/jurisdictions should specify a goal and its objectives. Goals represent what the initiative is designed to achieve. They are typically general in nature, and specify the long-term outcomes desired for a program.

##### **Five Key Steps in Establishing a Performance Management System**

1. Identify the goals and objectives of the initiative.
2. Develop a logic model.
3. Specify the measurement framework (i.e., develop a data collection plan).
4. Collect and analyze the performance data.
5. Create various reporting structures to capture changes in measures over time, and use the information to inform decisionmaking.

***Sample Goal Statement:*** Reduce the rate of violations and new crime behavior among offenders released from prison to community supervision.

The methods planned to achieve the goal are the objectives. Objectives are results-oriented and measurable. They should be clearly stated, specific, realistic, and time-limited action statements that – when completed – will likely result in movement toward the stated goal. Initiatives generally have multiple objectives to meet the goal.

### *Step 2. Develop a Logic Model.*

#### *Sample Objectives:*

- Determine offenders' level of risk to reoffend using an empirically-based assessment tool.
- Design and deliver offender services that are evidence-based and demonstrated to reduce non-compliance and reoffense.
- Deliver services to offenders at an intensity appropriate to their assessed level of risk.
- Match services to offenders' assessed risk factors (criminogenic needs).

#### **Performance Measurement**

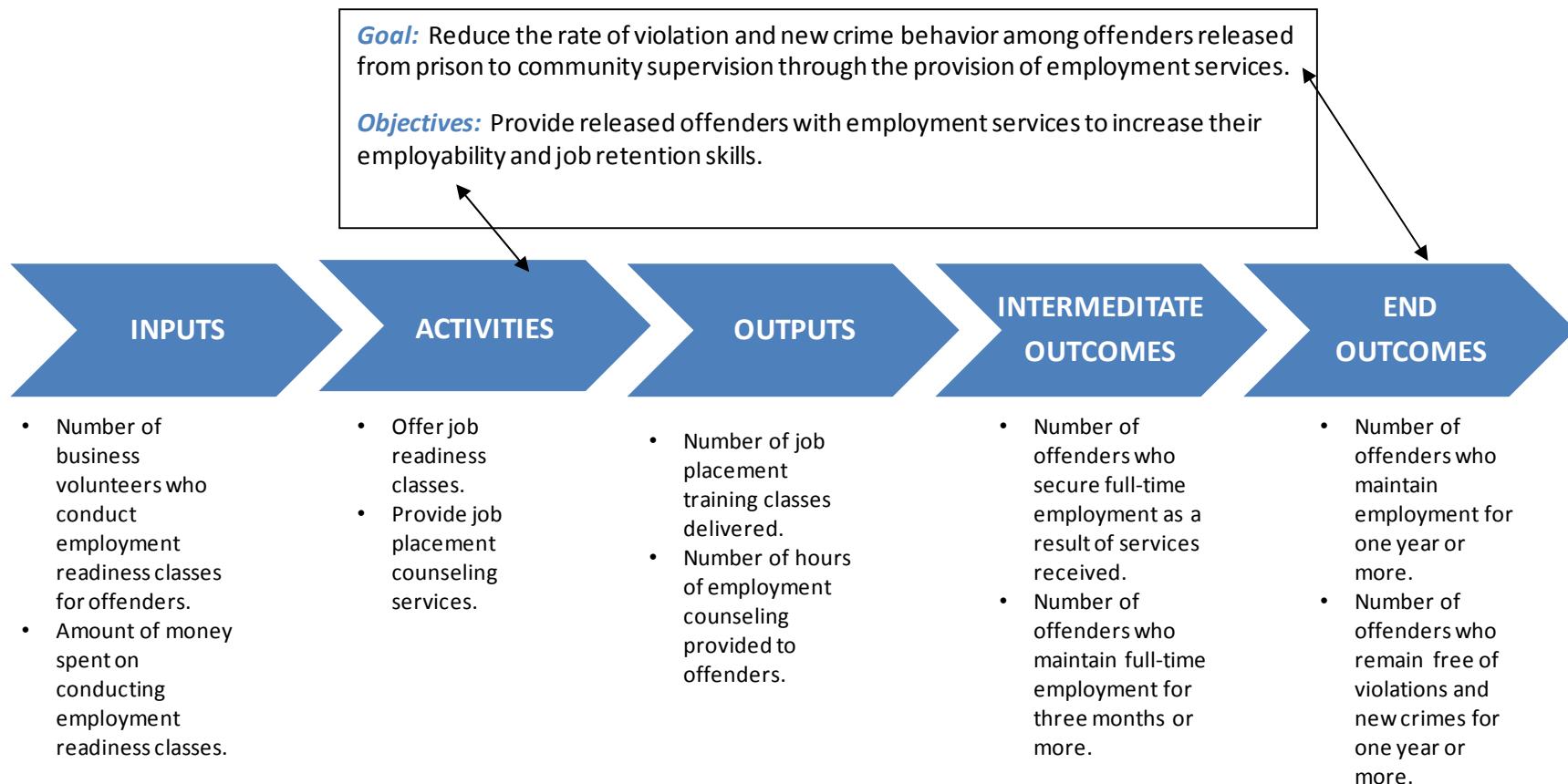


#### *The Purpose and Components of a Logic Model*

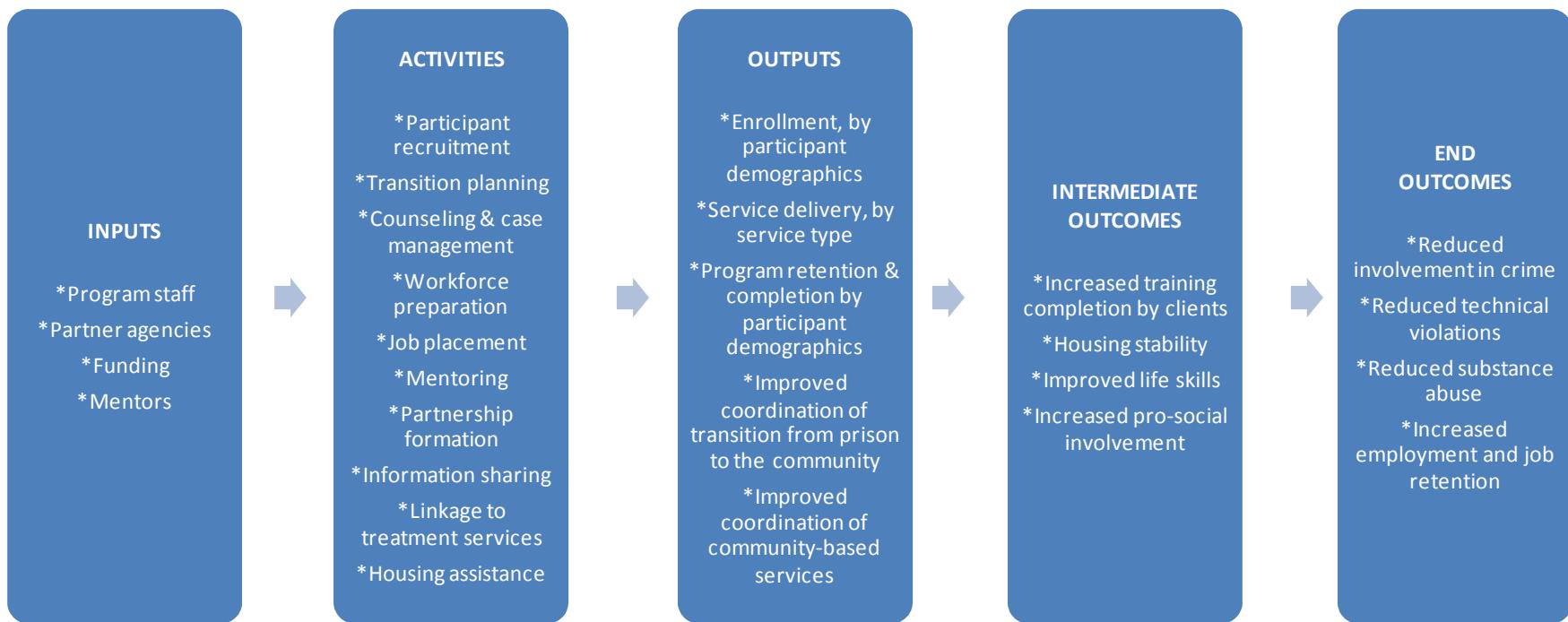
Logic models needn't be intimidating. They simply represent the thinking behind a plan of action. Logic models outline the flow of both the processes and activities involved in implementing a plan of action, and document what is expected to occur as a result. They are generally represented as a diagram.

Exhibit 3 provides an illustration of a logic model for an offender employment services program. Exhibit 4 provides an illustration of the types of elements that might be included in a PRI project logic model.

**Exhibit 3:**  
**Sample Logic Model: Offender Employment Services**



**Exhibit 4:**  
**Sample Elements that Might be Contained in a PRI Logic Model**



A logic model identifies an initiative's "theory of change" (i.e., the expected sequence of events and linkages among resources, planned/implemented activities, and desired results). As such, logic models contain several elements:

- ✓ Inputs, which represent existing **resources** (both financial and human), policies, practices, facilities, and capabilities that agencies/jurisdictions bring to the table to implement a new approach (examples include money, staff and staff time, volunteers and volunteer time, facilities, equipment, and supplies);
- ✓ Activities, which represent the specific **strategies** to be put in place to implement the new initiative (examples include performing risk and needs assessments, developing individualized case plans, providing job training, referring clients to transitional housing or other supportive services, mentoring, and providing short-term emergency assistance like food, clothes, or transportation vouchers);
- ✓ Outputs, which specify the **completed activities** that occur internal to the program or organization as specified strategies are implemented (examples include change in policy/practice, adoption of new tools/protocols, number of staff trained, risk and needs assessments performed, case management plans completed, job training sessions held, referrals made, and types of emergency assistance delivered);
- ✓ Intermediate Outcomes, which document early **indications** that change is occurring in the desired way (examples include enhanced pro-social attitudes, and increased skills or new knowledge); and
- ✓ End Outcomes, which define the ultimate or **longer-term results** that can be anticipated and measured as a result of implementation (examples include obtaining and retaining employment, absence from substance use, compliance with supervision requirements, and absence of new arrests).

#### ***Distinguishing Between Objectives and Activities***

The objectives designed to achieve the initiative's goal(s) are related to but different from the activities in the logic model. Where objectives are the methods planned to achieve the goal, the activities are the very specific steps that will be taken to meet the objectives.

#### ***Distinguishing Between Intermediate and End Outcomes***

Logic models contain both intermediate outcomes (early or short-term indicators of change) and end outcomes (long-term results). It is sometimes difficult to know where to draw the line between what is an intermediate outcome and what is an end outcome. To a large extent, such decisionmaking may be driven by management's preference or by funders' determination of what ultimate results are anticipated. For example, DOL reentry programs are likely to consider employment outcomes such as job preparedness as intermediate, and job placement/retention as end outcomes. Whereas DOJ reentry programs might be more likely to consider any of the employment factors as intermediate outcomes, and only the criminal justice elements, such as reductions in technical violations, re-arrest, and re-incarceration as end outcomes. What is critical is not how the key outcomes are labeled, but that they are identified and captured in the performance management system.

### ***Building a Logic Model***

Organizations do not have to build logic models from scratch; for most types of activities and services, some organization has already identified similar sequences of events, together with sets of outputs and outcomes to be measured. Some resources that might be helpful in this respect are discussions with funders or external project monitors, literature reviews, and materials from other similar programs.

### ***Step 3. Specify the Measurement Framework.***

Once the logic model has been fleshed out in sufficient detail, it will be possible to identify the important elements that should be tracked; the indicators that will help to determine whether the anticipated activities were performed, and whether this occurred in a satisfactory manner; and whether the intended results were achieved. In addition, specifying the measurement framework will also lead to the consideration of other important logistical considerations, such as what data sources and data collection techniques will be used.

The third step in building a performance management system therefore is identifying the specific data to be collected that will fulfill these purposes. In other words, inputs, outputs, and outcomes need to be converted into measurement terms. This is accomplished by identifying the ways in which specific pieces of information quantify the activities conducted and the intermediate outcomes that are assumed to lead to ultimate results. Exhibits 5 and 6 provide an example of the relationship of an objective to activities in a logic model, and the identification of the indicators to be collected to quantify the outputs, intermediate outcomes, and end outcomes.

### **Exhibit 5: Implementing the Use of Risk/Need Assessment Tools Sample Objective and Logic Model Activities**

**Objective:** Determine offenders' level of risk to reoffend and criminogenic need areas using an empirically-based assessment tool(s).

**Sample activities** that might be included in the logic model:

1. Review the current literature on empirically-based assessment tools to determine "state of the art" instruments, their costs, administration guidelines, and target audiences.
2. Evaluate the merits of the available tools, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each.
3. Select an appropriate risk/need assessment tool(s).
4. Develop policy regarding the use of the assessment tool(s) including the timing of administration, agency administration guidelines, and quality assurance procedures.
5. Provide information to all staff regarding the implementation/use of the assessment tool(s).
6. Train specifically designated staff in the administration of the assessment tool(s).

**Exhibit 6:**  
**Implementing the Use of Risk/Need Assessment Tools**  
**Sample Output, Intermediate and End Outcome Measurements**

***Outputs:***

1. Number/percent of staff trained in the administration of the assessment tool(s).
2. Number/percent of staff objectively assessed as possessing competency in the administration of the assessment tool(s).
3. Number/percent of assessments conducted.
4. Number/percent of offenders who are placed in supervision levels that match their risk level.
5. Number/percent of offenders who are placed in services that match their risk level.
6. Number/percent of officers whose caseloads contain 90% or more of the proper offender risk levels.
7. Number/percent of medium and high risk offenders who are placed in programs designed to address their top three criminogenic needs.
8. Number/percent of program slots made up of medium and high risk offenders.

***Intermediate Outcomes:***

1. Number/percent of medium and high risk offenders whose program compliance ratings are “unsatisfactory.”
2. Number/percent of offenders whose program compliance ratings are “satisfactory.”
3. Number/percent of offenders who successfully/unsuccessfully complete program requirements.
4. Number/percent of offenders who are in compliance with terms and conditions of supervision.

***End Outcomes:***

1. Number/percent of offenders who are violation free after one year on supervision.
2. Number/percent of offenders who are free of new arrests after one year on supervision.

***Developing a Data Collection Plan***

In addition to specifying the logic model and specific indicators that will be collected, data collection plans should clearly identify:

- ✓ How the data will be collected and analyzed, for example:
  - The data sources that will be used (e.g., program records, administrative records provided by other organizations, staff/offender surveys, trained observer ratings, technological devices such as laboratory testing);
  - The sampling plan design if only a sub-set of activities or clients will be tracked;
  - The method for storing and analyzing the data, whether an automated management information system, a manual recording system, or a combination of the two; and
  - The analysis plan, including specification of the kinds of descriptive and comparative analyses that will be performed.
- ✓ Who will be responsible for data collection, data entry, quality control, and analysis. If data collected by other organizations is anticipated, it is advisable to clarify confidentiality and information-sharing issues, and obtain Memoranda of Agreement to ensure access to the needed information.

- ✓ When the data will be collected, what period of performance it will cover, and when it will be reported.
- ✓ Data-related costs, and who will support them.

### ***Determining How Much Data is Enough Data***

Often, a program will identify a large number of output and outcome measures that are relevant to the program model. However, it is important to select only those that focus on key, high-priority measures that convey the most meaningful information about the initiative and its results. Asking too many questions or trying to collect too much data can be costly and may be so cumbersome as to jeopardize the ability to collect any information at all. In this case, less is probably more. Strive to identify a manageable number of key indicators (two dozen or less) and invest efforts in establishing *a high quality, rather than high quantity*, data collection and analysis process.

### ***Measuring End Outcomes***

Program managers often prefer to focus on output and intermediate outcome measures rather than end outcomes that typically take longer to capture and can be more costly to measure. Nonetheless, end outcomes are ultimately extremely important as they provide evaluative information about the overall initiative and relate directly to the achievement of the agency/jurisdiction's vision and mission. For this reason, all agencies/jurisdictions should work towards the collection of this kind of data.

### ***Step 4. Collect and Analyze the Indicator Data.***

Depending on the nature of the data and its source, information may be collected at varying times. For example, information on individual risk and needs or transition plans may be collected in real time as such activities take place, while information gathered from administrative records may be extracted and compiled retrospectively to cover the performance period in question. The data collection plan referenced above should indicate the data source, frequency of data collection, and timeframe for each element of data collection. While the use of computers can make data processing easier, it is possible to conduct performance monitoring using manual data processing.

In large agencies/jurisdictions, there may be a specific unit(s) with responsibility for and/or the skills to perform analyses. In other situations, it may be necessary to give some thought to who should assume this role. Local universities are often very receptive to partnering with agencies/jurisdictions in the design of data collection plans and the collection and analysis of data.

### ***Step 5. Create Reporting Structures; Use the Information Wisely.***

Once data are collected and analyzed, it is advisable to:

- ✓ Select reporting formats that present the findings in clear and understandable ways. This may include using data tables, bar or pie charts, or other graphic presentations. Regardless of the type of visual presentation selected, care should be taken to clearly label all information so that the audience can easily understand the data.

- ✓ Present explanatory information that places the numbers in a context that the audience can easily use to draw conclusions about the initiative's progress. For example, it is helpful for readers to learn of documented or highly probable reasons why the outputs or outcomes look unexpectedly high or low (e.g., an unusually high unemployment rate within the geographic area that makes it difficult for anyone, much less offenders, to gain employment).

The point of monitoring performance is not simply to meet the reporting requirements of external stakeholders. **THE PRIMARY VALUE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IS TO GAUGE PROGRESS RELATIVE TO DESIRED OUTCOMES AND USE THE INFORMATION COLLECTED TO SHAPE DECISIONMAKING AND ACTIONS THAT WILL SUPPORT GREATER SUCCESS OVER TIME.** In a sense, this is the payoff for having undertaken the first four steps – the ability to understand how to improve in the future.

### ***The Power Behind the Numbers***

In order to get the most return on an investment in performance management, consider the following:

- ✓ Hold regular performance management meetings with staff (i.e., "How Are We Doing?" sessions) to review the data and discuss their implications, identify need areas, and make plans to improve current activities.
- ✓ Use data as a means to motivate staff and clients to improve. Set success targets and report on the progress towards reaching these goals. Remember, what gets measured gets done. Reporting on performance on a regular basis sends a powerful message that managers and others are paying attention. For example, post a scorecard in a highly visible location indicating the number/percentage of offenders completing job training classes and of those, the number who secured gainful employment.
- ✓ Engage in performance budgeting by using data to develop and support budget requests. For example, by demonstrating that the rate of violations among offenders who receive employment services is lower, a justification for increased spending on employment services as a cost savings against violation failures can be made.
- ✓ Use the data collected to identify other strategies the agency/jurisdiction can employ to further advance its vision, mission, and goals. For example, the data collected on offenders who participate in job readiness programs may show a pattern of failure among offenders with unstable living conditions. This might suggest a new initiative area: developing sustainable, supportive housing for released offenders.

### **Results-Based Management**

- What gets measured gets done.
- If results are not measured, successes cannot be distinguished from failures.
- If successes cannot be distinguished, they cannot be acknowledged and rewarded, or learned from.
- If failures cannot be identified, they can't be corrected.
- If results cannot be demonstrated, support cannot be secured.

*Adapted from: Osborne & Gaebler, 1992.*

### ***When the Data News is Less than Expected***

Despite a program's efforts, some performance indicators may show results significantly below expectations. Perhaps fewer offenders than anticipated are reporting for or completing services. This can occur for a variety of reasons: external factors (i.e., local unemployment rates) beyond the program's control may partially account for lower than expected results; program referrals may be lower than anticipated; start-up time may have been delayed due to hiring or procurement difficulties. It is also possible that hypothesized links between actions and results may have been erroneous, or targets may simply have been set too high.

Regardless, it is important to include these results in both internal and external reports, along with assumptions and explanations for unanticipated outcomes and the steps that have been/will be taken to correct the problem. It is often possible to learn as much or more from failure as from success. View less-than-expected results as opportunities for improvement, rather than as failures.

### ***Establishing a Data Collection Quality Assurance Plan***

An often neglected aspect of performance management is quality control. The old adage "garbage in, garbage out" could not be more relevant to this discussion. A carefully constructed data collection plan – and the best analysis – will prove useless if the raw data collected is not reliable and accurate. Establishing a quality assurance plan then is another critical component of the performance measurement system. Among other strategies, establishing a data collection quality assurance plan involves:

- ✓ Carefully defining the specific data elements to be collected and how these data are to be interpreted (e.g., Is an assessment "completed" if the offender refuses to answer 75% of the questions or is the assessment "completed" only when all information is obtained and the assessment can therefore be scored?);
- ✓ Committing data definitions to writing and field testing the definitions to ensure that they are interpreted in the same way by different reviewers;
- ✓ Carefully training staff on the collection and recording of data, including evaluating staff's competency initially and periodically throughout the data collection process;
- ✓ Conducting periodic, organized "spot checks" to compare recorded data against the raw data source to ensure that information is recorded properly (e.g., reviewing assessments to determine they are scored properly and these scores are transferred to data collection instruments accurately); and
- ✓ Observing the established data collection processes to ensure that information is collected as planned (e.g., Do staff ask offenders to complete a written survey that is intended to be administered verbally to ensure offenders understand all of the questions, or do staff "short cut" time by handing the survey to the offender and asking them to complete it independently?).

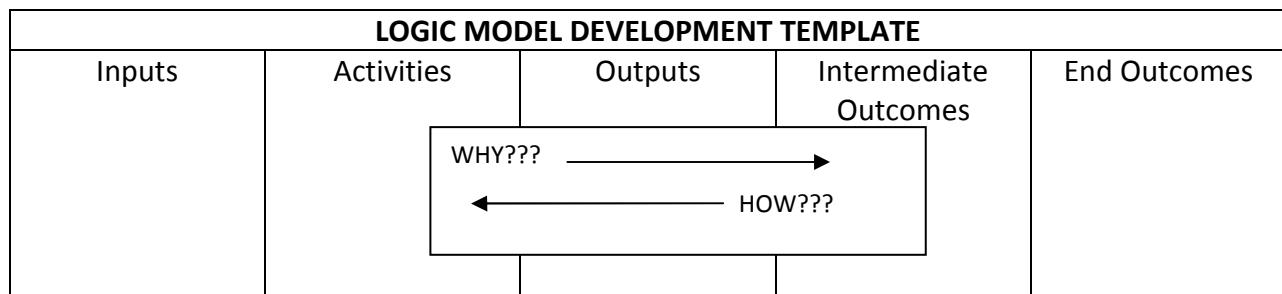
## Section II: Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts Coaching Packet Checklist

	Yes	No	Unclear (Make note of the additional information that needs to be collected to rate this item)
1. Has a team been assembled to work together on the development of a performance management system?			
2. Does the team represent or have access to those involved in the key activities related to the initiative?			
3. Has the team, or a representative of the team, met with internal stakeholders to determine their interests in the performance management system?			
4. Has the team, or a representative of the team, met with external stakeholders to determine their interests in the performance management system?			
5. Have vision and mission statements related to the initiative been articulated?			
6. Have the initiative's goals been identified?			
7. Have the initiatives objectives been identified?			
8. Has a logic model been developed? (If not, a tool is provided on the next page to assist in its development).			
9. Has a data collection plan been developed?			
10. Is the needed data readily available?			
11. Does the data collection plan specify the data to be collected, when it will be collected and by whom?			
12. In addition to quantitative data, does the data collection plan include qualitative information (e.g., staff interviews, offender surveys) that will augment the quantitative data?			
13. Does the data collection plan address the resources that are necessary to collect and analyze the data?			
14. Have staff been sufficiently briefed on the purposes and processes related to the data collection plan?			
15. Have staff who will be involved in data collection been trained to carry out these responsibilities effectively?			
16. Has a data reporting schedule been established?			
17. Has a data dictionary been developed?			
18. Has a data reporting format been determined?			
19. Do the data reports place the information that is reported in a context?			
20. Has a regular briefing process been established to review the data internally?			
21. Are accomplishments noted and celebrated?			
22. Are less-than-expected results reviewed to determine opportunities for improvement?			
23. Have DOJ/DOL indicators been compared against the initiative's indicators?			
24. Have discrepancies between these indicators been addressed?			

## *Developing a Logic Model*

Performance measurement is often approached by first identifying resources/activities, then, defining outputs and finally, defining intermediate and end outcomes. This process answers the questions: "Why are we undertaking this initiative? What is the progression of activities, and what is supposed to happen next?"

Another approach is to begin with the end in mind and work backwards. In this way, the first step is to define the end outcomes (ultimate results) to be achieved; then to determine how this outcome could be realized by identifying the indicators that would suggest the outcome was likely; then to determine what would have to occur for those indicators to be realized, and so forth.



Use the template above to create a logic model. Refer to the sample logic model included as Exhibits 3 and 4 as needed.

1. ***End Outcomes:*** Identify the long-term results the initiative is designed to achieve (e.g., number of offenders who maintain employment for one year or more; number of offenders who remain free of violations and new crimes for one year or more).
2. ***Intermediate Outcomes:*** Identify the shorter-term outcomes that must be accomplished in order to achieve the ultimate results (e.g., number of offenders who secure full-time employment as a result of services received; number of offenders who maintain full-time employment for three months or more).
3. ***Outputs:*** Identify the events that need to occur in order for the outcomes to be accomplished (e.g., number of job placement training classes delivered; number of hours of employment counseling provided to offenders).
4. ***Activities:*** Identify the strategies or steps that must be undertaken in order to achieve the outputs (e.g., job readiness classes; job placement counseling services).
5. ***Inputs:*** Identify the resources that are necessary in order for the activities to be conducted (e.g., number of business volunteers who conduct employment readiness classes for offenders; amount of money spent on conducting employment readiness classes).
6. ***Priorities:*** Finally, prioritize the outputs and outcomes in terms of their level of importance to external and internal stakeholders. It may not be possible to collect all measures, therefore this will serve as a guide to the identification of the most critical of the items identified.

## Section III: Action Planning Worksheet

<b>GOAL:</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 2:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Objective 3:</b>			
Tasks	Lead Person	Completion Date	Assistance/Expertise Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

## Section IV: References and Additional Resources

### *References*

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