

THANKS FOR TAKING TODAY'S TRAINING!
DIGGING FOR GOLD!
HOW TO FIND HIDDEN ASSETS AND STRENGTHS
IN PEOPLE IN REENTRY!

PRESENTED BY
LARRY ROBBIN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ROBBIN AND ASSOCIATES
OVER 45 YEARS OF NATIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
AND REENTRY PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT EXPERIENCE!

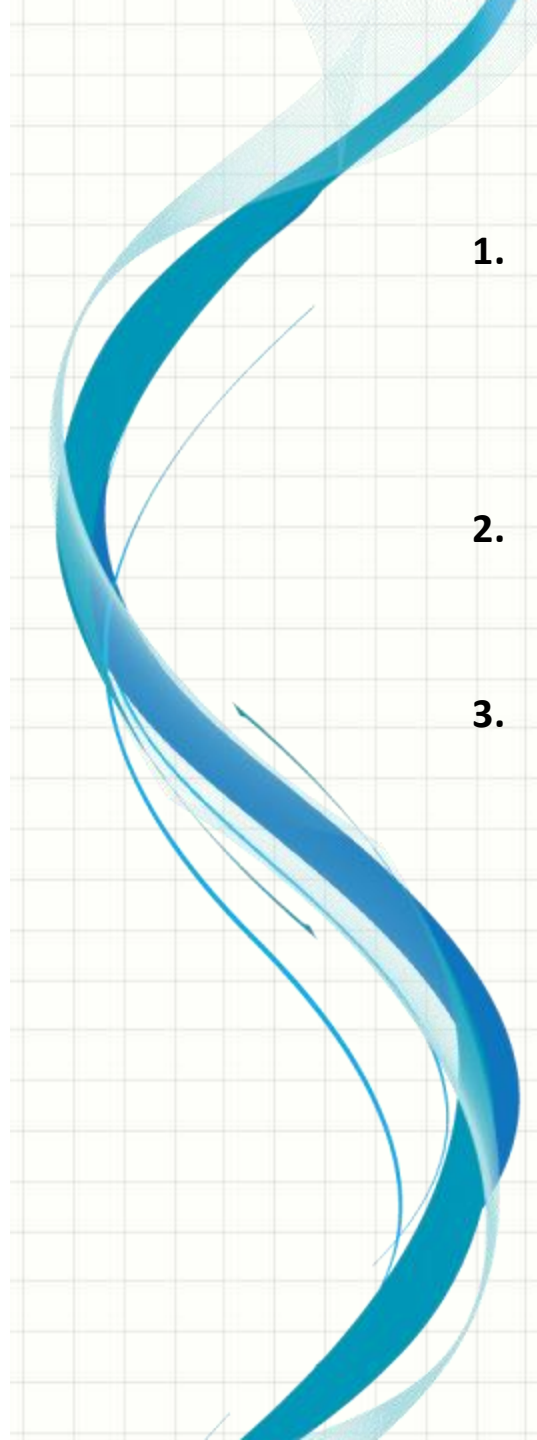
MORE THAN 100,000 PEOPLE TRAINED! OVER 1000 ORGANIZATIONS SERVED!
MORE THAN 300 WEBINARS PRESENTED!

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, NONPROFITS, AMERICA'S JOB CENTERS, SOCIAL
SERVICES, SCHOOLS, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS, BUSINESSES,
CORRECTIONS, TRAINING PROVIDERS AND OTHER CLIENTS!

MORE THAN 300 WEBINARS PRESENTED!

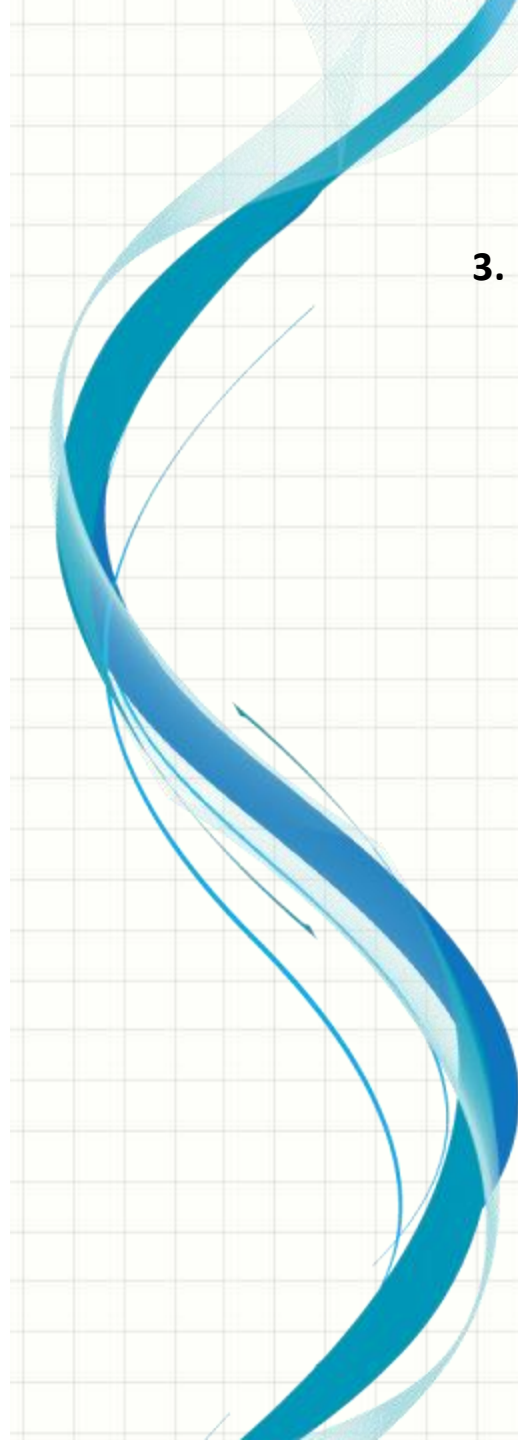
LARRY@LARRYROBBIN.COM **WWW.LARRYROBBIN.COM**

COPYRIGHT ROBBIN AND ASSOCIATES



INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

- 1. The justice impacted people that we serve are a very diverse group of individuals. Even though all of these strategies are field tested, not every strategy presented in this webinar will work for everyone. You need to decide which strategies to use and customize the strategy to make it work for a specific individual.**
- 2. Helping the people we serve discover the positive things they bring to employment and their strengths is a transformative experience that can have a wide ranging impact on people's lives.**
- 3. It can not only help with jobs and careers, but it can also help with their self-esteem, identity, mental health, trauma recovery, relationships with children and other people in their lives and their outlook on life.**



INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

3. We will focus on two categories of assets in this webinar.

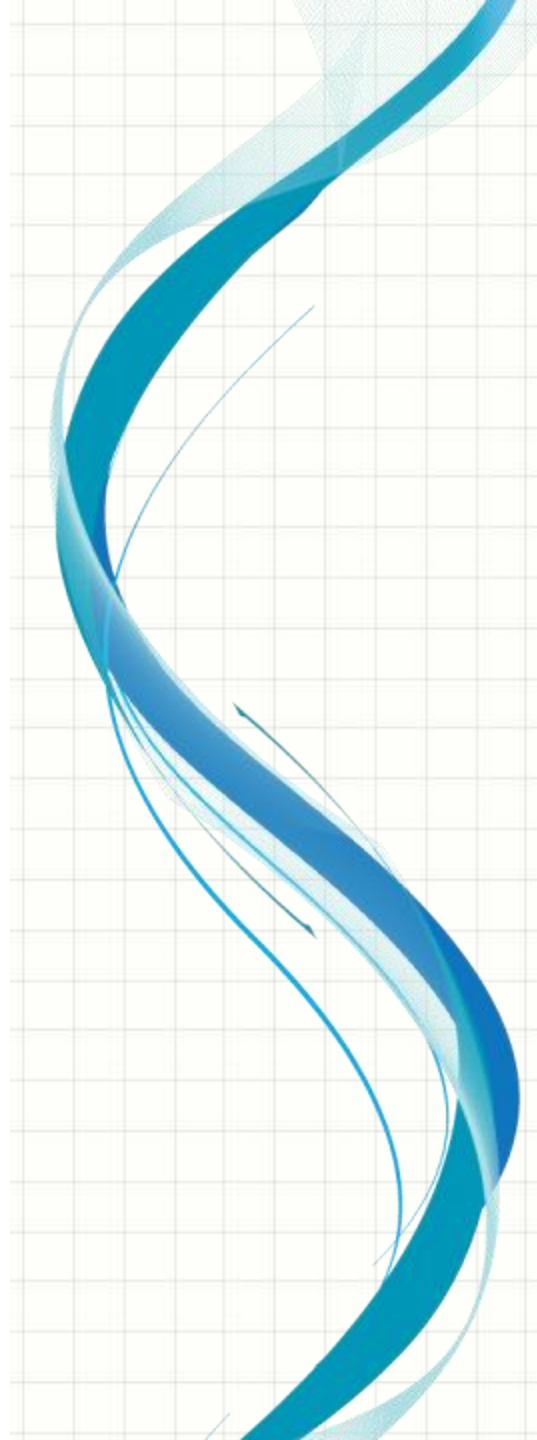
One category of assets are things that will help people become more successful in pursuing employment. These assets will help individuals focus on career and job search goals.

The other category of assets refers to personal strengths that will help people overcome their barriers to employment. These are attributes of these individuals that can help them find the belief in their strength and ability to overcome their challenges.

When you work with people with an emphasis on both of these categories of assets, it can help people make much more employment progress in less time.

But the workforce system has a long history of working from an emphasis on barriers first and not using a strengths and assets approach first. Funding sources ask us to find out what is wrong with people to justify serving them instead of first looking for their strengths and assets. This is a mistake.

This barriers first approach becomes a barrier to employment in itself! If we do not believe in an individual's employability, chances are they will not believe in it either!

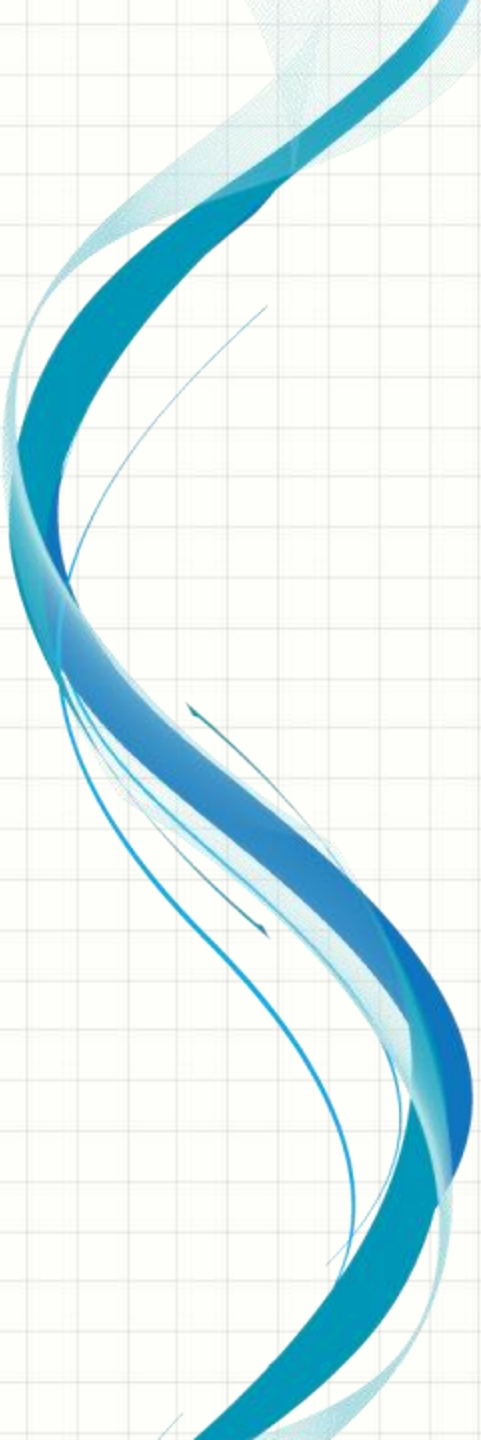


WORKING FROM A STRENGTHS AND ASSETS PERSPECTIVE

- 1. Your first goal in working with someone should be to ask yourself as quickly as possible, “What types of work can I imagine that this person could do?” Look for the clues in how they look, their personality, what they say, their life history, interests and other things about them that would be helpful in a certain line of work.**

Imagine a picture frame around this person with a picture of them working in the frame. If you start your relationship looking for their employability instead of first looking for barriers, it can help to transform how you work with people, how you think about them and ultimately how they think about themselves.

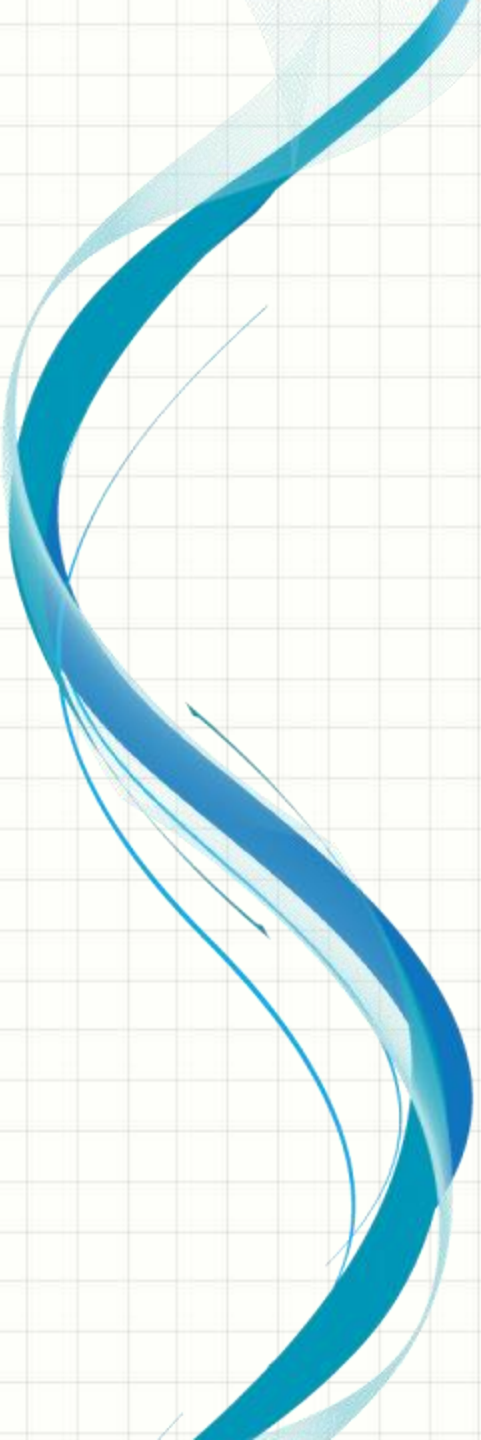
Paint a portrait in your mind of each individual in the world of work. This portrait will evolve and change as you learn more about them. As you work with people, there will be a number of portraits. As you describe the portrait to the person, it will plant the seeds of success in the world of work in this individual’s mind because they can imagine themselves working. These seeds of success can grow and become a driving force that can lead to employment and success in the world of work and other aspects of their lives.



WORKING FROM A STRENGTHS AND ASSETS PERSPECTIVE

2. **There are a number of ways to use this assets first approach. As soon as you have enough information to see them working in the portrait and when it seems appropriate say to them, “You know based on (state the reasons why you see this particular portrait), I could see you working as a” Have you ever thought about that? What does that make you think about in terms of what you could do for work? What would you like and not like about that type of job?”**

People may reject what you say and that can be the end of that specific conversation, but the important thing is that you have reinforced their assets to employment and their employability. Even if they reject that type of work, you have started the very beginning of them seeing themselves in the world of work.

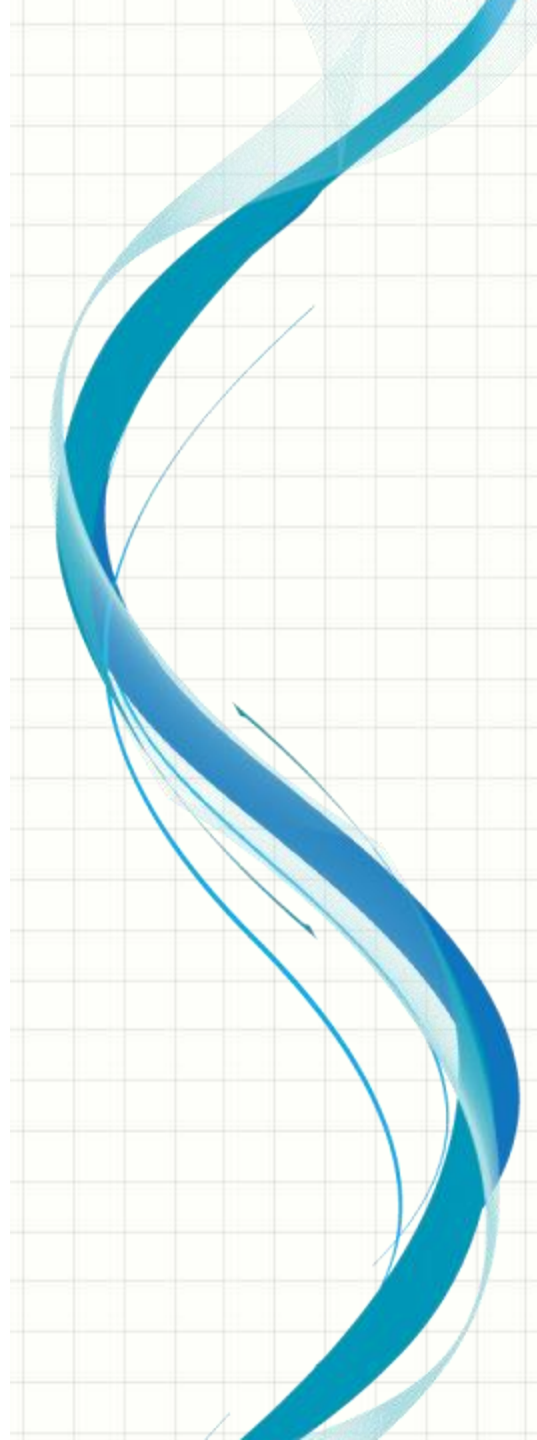


WHY DON'T SOME PEOPLE IN REENTRY RECOGNIZE THEIR OWN ASSETS TO EMPLOYMENT AND THEIR STRENGTHS?

There are many forces that can have a negative impact on people recognizing their assets to employment and their strengths. Here are a few of them.

- 1. The impact of discrimination and poverty make people think that they are not smart, do not have strengths and cannot achieve things.**
- 2. Being incarcerated reduces people's belief in themselves as having any good skills and qualities that would be valued in the world of work.**
- 3. People lack successful vocational role models that look like them.**
- 4. Traditional thinking that can be passed down in families, cultures and communities about what people should do with their lives can limit an individual's thinking about their potential and what they can do.**
- 5. A lack of good and effective educational opportunities.**
- 6. The impact of trauma.**

These are just some of the forces that can make it difficult for justice impacted people to see their assets and strengths.

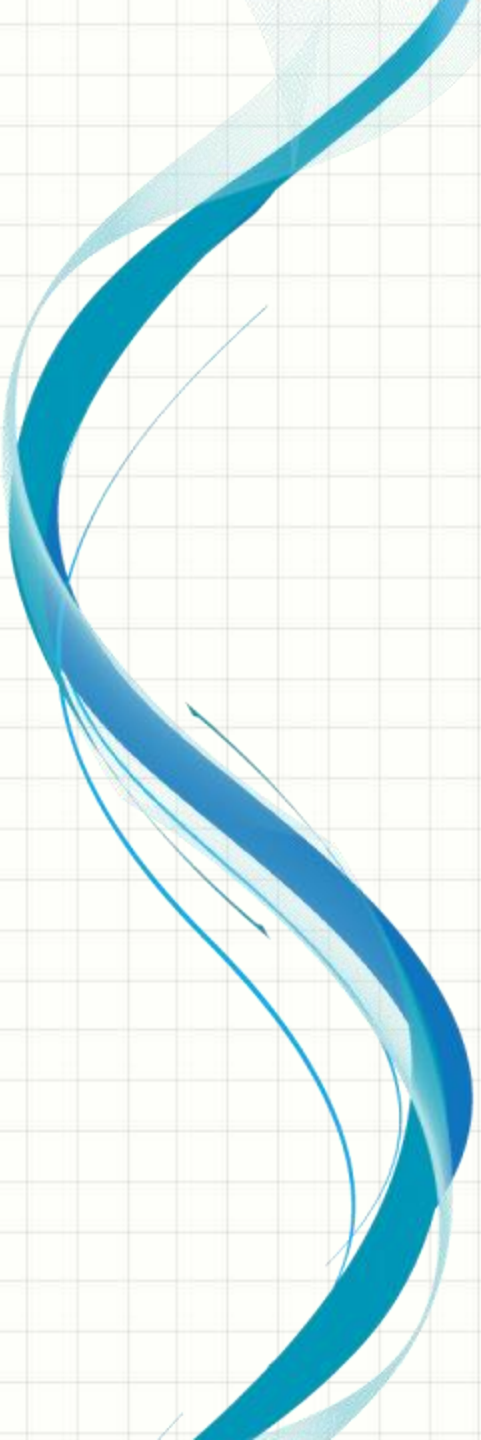


UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF NUDGES IN WORKING WITH ASSETS AND STRENGTHS

- 1. Sometimes we may think that a logical big picture conversation as part of the counseling process can help to move people to a better place in terms of thinking about their employment potential.**

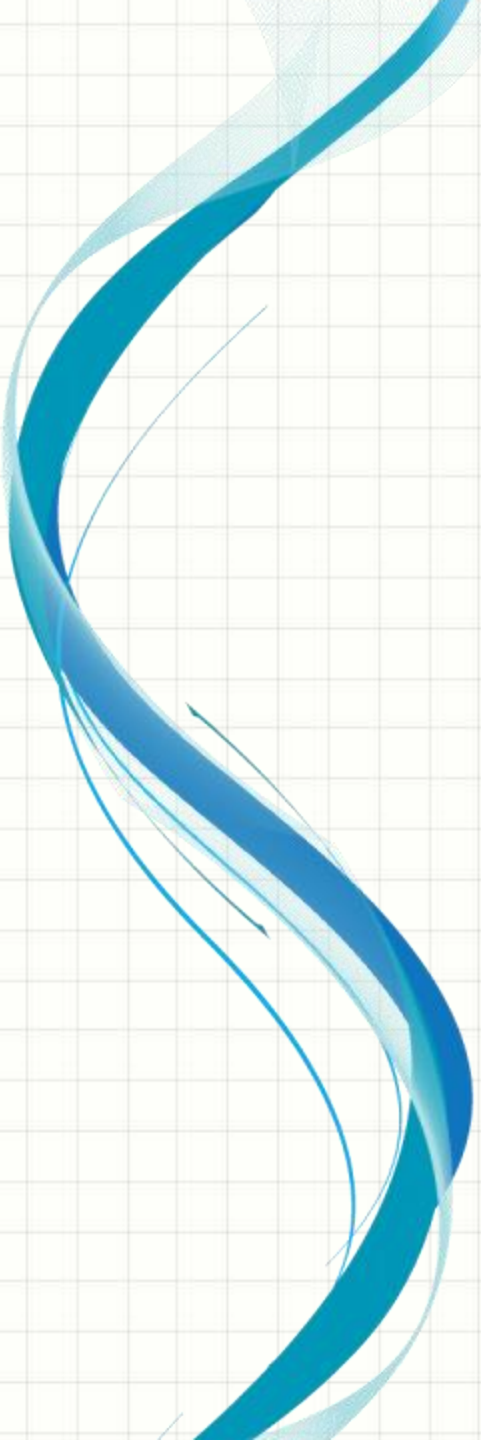
But often these types of conversations can have the opposite effect. Sometimes the big direct conversation approach about employment can actually trigger resistance and confusion in an individual because it is too much for the individual to take in at one time.

- 2. What often works better in this process is thinking about working with people using nudges. Nudges are small statements and short conversations that are designed to help people think about reframing their thinking about their assets and strengths. They are not big and overwhelming and as a result, they don't provoke resistance to accepting the new idea and self-image. They also don't cause people to feel confused.**



UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF NUDGES IN WORKING WITH ASSETS AND STRENGTHS

- 3. Nudges plant food for thought that can focus people in reentry on appreciating their employability. They can be easier for people to absorb and not instantly reject than a big conversation. A series of nudges about assets and strengths can have a cumulative effect that can lead to people thinking about themselves in new ways.**
- 4. We are using nudges when we identify a hidden asset to employment and leave the conversation at that. We are using nudges when we paint people into the world of work without having a big career conversation.**
- 5. These are relatively brief interactions and not lengthy conversations, but they have the potential to chip away at an individual's self-image of being unemployable.**
- 6. Nudges can have a have a big impact when they happens more than once and when the individual feels a connection with what we are saying. Don't discount the cumulative power of nudges!**



POINTERS ABOUT HIDDEN ASSETS TO EMPLOYMENT AND JOB CONNECTIONS

- 1. One option when you discover a hidden asset to employment might be to connect it to the world of work. This might be a brief nudge like, “You are so good at that. Have you ever thought about being a _____?” The length of the conversation depends on how the individual responds to the nudge. Your goal is to connect the asset to a job or career and not to push for a big conversation. Sometimes this leads to focusing on clusters of occupations and then narrowing down their goals to a specific job or career.**
- 2. Depending on the individual you are talking to, in the nudge you may want to mention an entry level job that connects with the asset and/or a career level job that involves the use of the asset. For some people, the job may resonate while with other people thinking about careers may have more of an impact. You may also want to talk about starting a business using the asset. Remember to customize how you use the nudge.**
- 3. The goal of this process is to help people think about their assets, appreciate them and see their connection to the world of work. This process will help people start to rethink their vocational self-identity and this can have a powerful impact on job search motivation.**

PLACES TO LOOK FOR ASSETS TO EMPLOYMENT

1. **DIRECT ASSETS** - Direct assets are things the person can already do well that connect directly to jobs or careers. In entry level jobs using this asset, very little or no training other than on the job training would be necessary. Careers using this asset would require more education and training.

QUESTIONS THAT CAN HELP TO UNCOVER DIRECT ASSETS

1. What are examples of things that you do well and like to do?
2. What are some things that you do better than other people you know?

EXAMPLE OF A DIRECT ASSET

DIRECT ASSET	JOB AND CAREERS
Very good at with dogs	Dog walker, working at the humane society, dog trainer, veterinarian's assistant. veterinarian.

PLACES TO LOOK FOR ASSETS TO EMPLOYMENT

2. PERSONALITY ASSETS - These are things about an individual's personality that would be very helpful in a particular type of job or career.

QUESTIONS THAT CAN HELP TO UNCOVER PERSONALITY ASSETS

1. How would you describe your personality?
2. Why do your friends and other people like you?

EXAMPLE OF A PERSONALITY ASSET

PERSONALITY ASSET	JOB AND CAREERS
Very good at handling and resolving conflicts.	Customer service representative handling complaints. Gang intervention counselor. Divorce mediation counselor.

PLACES TO LOOK FOR ASSETS TO EMPLOYMENT

3. BELIEFS AND VALUES ASSETS - These are things an individual feels very strongly about that would be helpful in certain jobs.

QUESTIONS THAT CAN HELP TO UNCOVER BELIEFS AND VALUES ASSETS

1. If you could change the world for the better in any way, what would you do?
2. What kinds of things do you feel strongly about?

EXAMPLE OF A BELIEF AND VALUES ASSET

BELIEF AND VALUES ASSET	JOBS AND CAREERS
This person feels very strongly about improving opportunities for youth	Recreation aide in a park. Youth employment specialist. Social worker in a juvenile facility.

PLACES TO LOOK FOR ASSETS TO EMPLOYMENT

4. **INTEREST ASSETS** - These are things the individual shows a strong interest in learning, exploring or doing.

QUESTIONS THAT CAN HELP TO UNCOVER THIS KIND OF ASSET

1. What are doing when you lose track of time?
2. If you could get training or more education, what kind of job would you like to do?

EXAMPLE OF INTEREST ASSET

INTEREST ASSET	JOBS AND CAREERS
Likes to do little projects and build things	Lumber yard job, construction laborer, carpenter, owner of a construction company

PLACES TO LOOK FOR ASSETS TO EMPLOYMENT

5. **LIFE EXPERIENCE ASSETS** - These are assets that come from both overcoming obstacles and having positive life experiences that can be useful in a particular kind of job or career.

QUESTIONS THAT CAN HELP TO UNCOVER LIFE EXPERIENCE ASSETS

1. Do you feel there are any things you have learned from being incarcerated that would be helpful in a job? What would impress an employer about you based on how you managed your experience of being incarcerated?
2. What are some of the positive things that someone else could learn from the way you have overcome the challenges in your life?

EXAMPLE OF LIFE EXPERIENCE ASSET

LIFE EXPERIENCE ASSET	WORK ASSETS
Completed sentence with time off because of rehabilitation activities	Knows how to work under stress Knows how to follow instructions Knows how to get along with all types of people Knows how to stay focused and positive Knows how to set goals and achieve them

RESOURCES

ONLINE TOOLS THAT CAN HELP REVEAL HIDDEN ASSETS TO EMPLOYMENT

<https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2021/article/field-of-degree-and-careers.htm>
Matches college degrees to careers and includes salary and other information.

<https://linkedin.github.io/career-explorer/> Connects skills and work history to available jobs on LinkedIn and gives ideas about advancement related jobs and careers

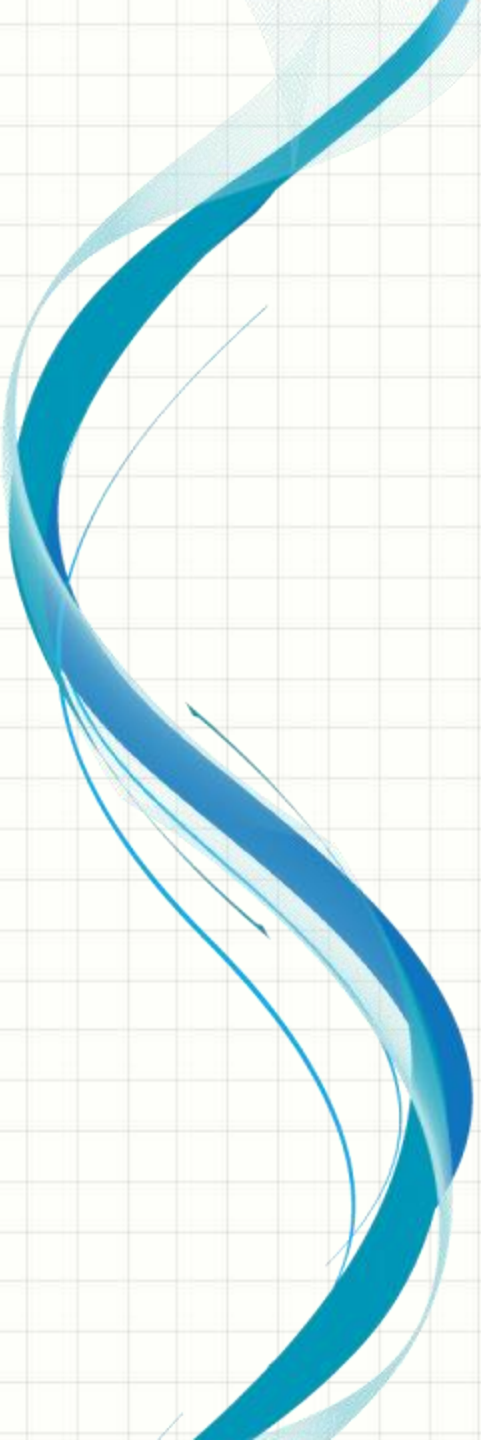
<https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip> Helps to match people's interests to jobs and careers

<https://www.onetonline.org/> <http://www.careeronestop.org>
The two most comprehensive websites about jobs, careers, apprenticeships, labor market information etc. on the internet. Careeronestop has job videos in English and Spanish.

<http://www.myskillsmyfuture.org/>. Very helpful in doing a transferable skills analysis from current or previous jobs and careers to future opportunities. Explore this site and learn about all it has to offer.

**USE A STRENGTHS BASED CHANGE HISTORY ASSESSMENT
TO HELP PEOPLE OVERCOME THEIR BARRIERS!**

- 1. It is easy when you are working with people in reentry, to focus more on their barriers and their resistance to change than to look for their strengths and their ability to change and improve their lives.**
- 2. When we focus on the barriers and resistance to change, we lose sight of how people have already used strengths to change their lives for the better.**
- 3. If we change this deficit and resistance perspective and operate from an assets and change oriented approach, we can help people use their strengths and ability to change things to overcome their barriers.**



INFORMATION TO GATHER TO HELP YOU DISCOVER PEOPLE'S STRENGTHS AND THEIR ABILITY TO CHANGE

- 1. Look for things people have done that demonstrate strengths. Here are some examples of the strengths and changes.**

This person was born into extreme poverty. They did not have access to a good education. They dropped out of school but eventually worked their way back into high school and graduated.

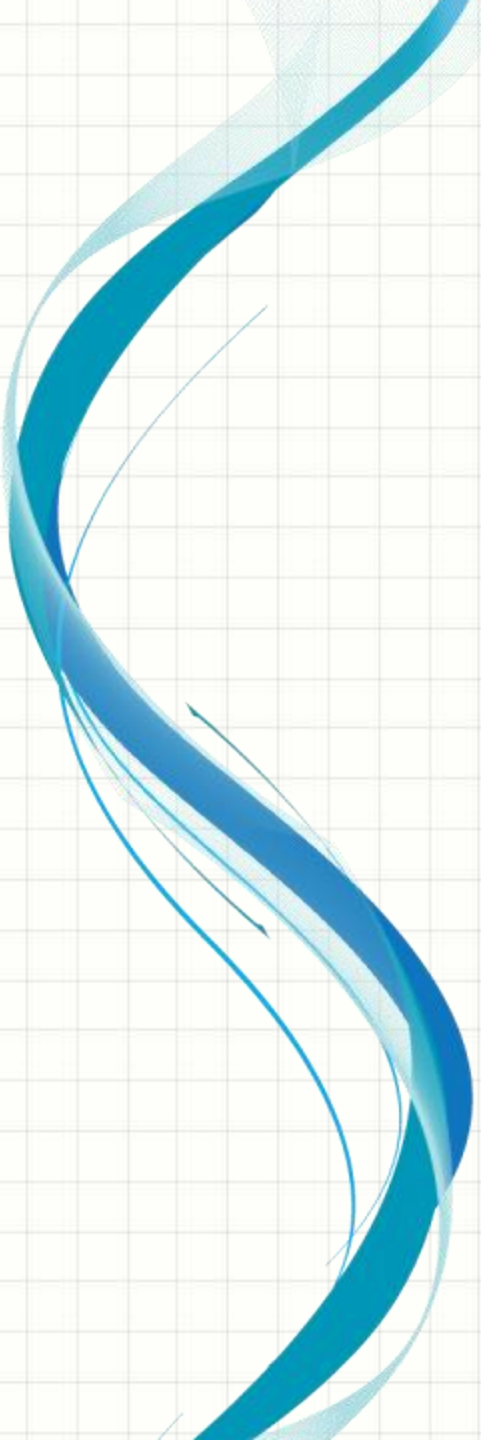
This person was persecuted in their country of origin. They had to survive a refugee camp and deal with difficult systems, but eventually they got out of the country.

This person has a strong belief system that they used when they were incarcerated to stay out of trouble, get rid of their drug problem and make the best use of their time.

In each of these examples there are strengths a person used to overcome obstacles and change their lives for the better. These strengths can be referenced to help them find the strength they need to overcome their employment barriers.

**INFORMATION TO GATHER TO HELP YOU DISCOVER
PEOPLE'S STRENGTHS AND THEIR ABILITY TO CHANGE**

2. The information about strengths may come out in your conversations with people as well as in response to questions that you may ask if you feel it is appropriate to do so.
 - A. What is the most challenging thing you have ever had to overcome in your life?
 - B. What are some of the biggest changes you have made to improve your life?
 - C. You have faced some really difficult times. What has helped you to get through them?
 - D. What are you proud of that you have done in your life?



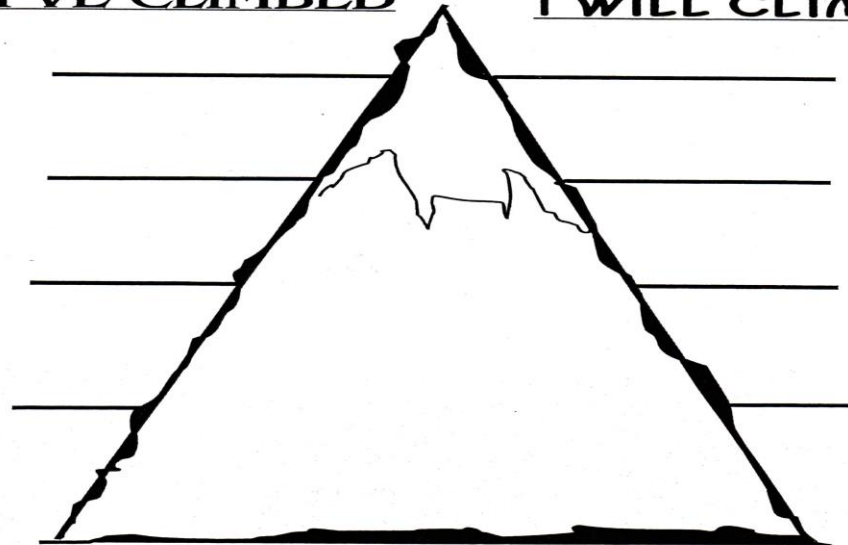
CELEBRATE STRENGTHS AND POSITIVE CHANGE!

- 1. When you uncover a strength that led to a positive change, make sure you point it out and make a big deal about it. Ask people how they were able to do this and explore their strength. Justice impacted individuals are not used to thinking of themselves as having strengths and they may say that this is no big deal, but you need to point out that not everyone could do what they have done.**
- 2. The goal of this process is to help people feel their strengths, become empowered by them and realize that they have made positive changes in their life. This can all be focused toward eliminating barriers to employment.**
- 3. With some barriers, it may be possible to use a strength and the example of change that came from it to connect to how that strength can be used again to overcome a current barrier. The goal is not to just talk about eliminating a barrier, but to give an example of how a strength of the individual will be helpful and make it possible for them to overcome the barrier.**

MOUNTAINS
I'VE CLIMBED

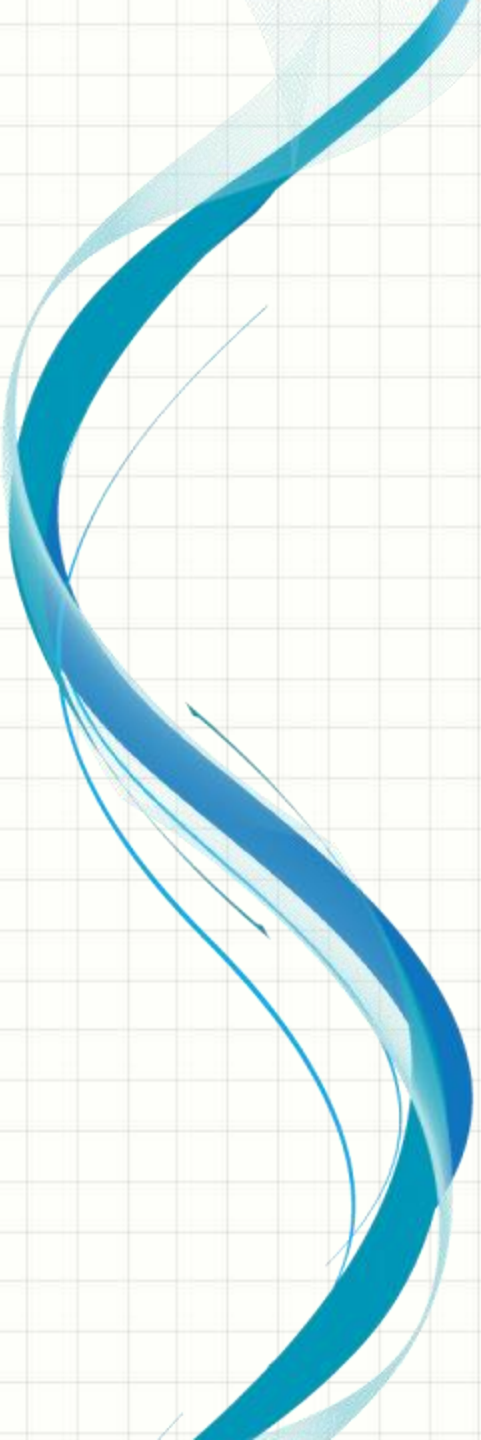


MOUNTAINS
I WILL CLIMB



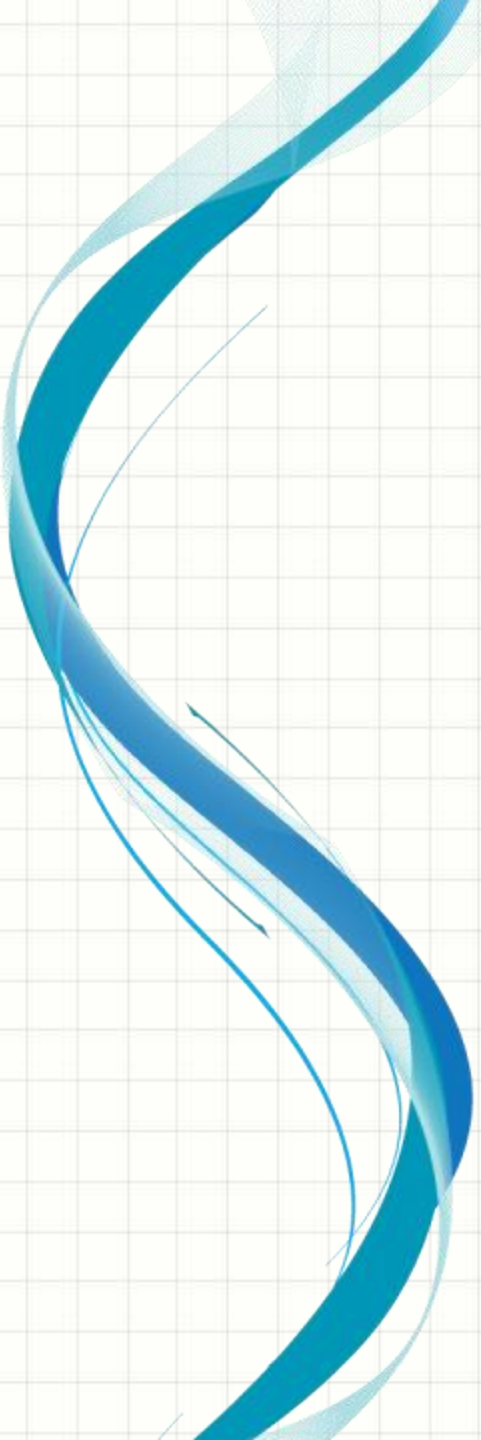
Copyright Robbin and Associates.
Your Staff Training Resource!

www.LarryRobbin.com



SOME COMMON RESPONSES YOU MAY GET WHEN YOU POINT OUT STRENGTHS

- 1. Many of the people we work with are not used to thinking of themselves as having many strengths. This is similar to their thinking about not having many assets to employment. You may get different forms of resistance as part of their journey to appreciating their strengths. Some people may deny that they showed that strength. Other people may minimize the strength. Some people may change the topic because talking about their strengths makes them uncomfortable. Helping people recognize, appreciate and celebrate their strengths is a very important step in them believing they can overcome their barriers to employment.**
- 2. Keep in mind you want to work in the nudge approach when you bring up strengths. The strength may not be accepted as something that can help them with their barriers the first time you bring it up. It may take more than one conversation.**



SOME COMMON RESPONSES YOU MAY GET WHEN YOU POINT OUT STRENGTHS

3. Be prepared for people to deny the strength by saying something like, “That is not a strength. Lots of people have done that.” Another form of resistance can be minimizing. People may say, “Yeah but that won’t help me overcome the barrier.”
4. You need to patiently make the case and connect the dots between the strength and the challenge. The strength may not be completely directly applicable to the barrier, but look for the aspects of the strength that are transferable.
5. Some people may need time to think about what you are saying before they can accept it.

**WHEN YOU UNCOVER HIDDEN ASSETS TO EMPLOYMENT
AND CONNECT STRENGTHS IN WHATEVER WAY
YOU CAN TO OVERCOMING BARRIERS
YOU ARE DIGGING FOR GOLD AND
YOU CAN HELP PEOPLE MAKE MORE
EMPLOYMENT PROGRESS IN LESS TIME!**

THANKS FOR TAKING THE WORKSHOP!!

OTHER WEBINARS FROM LARRY ROBBIN

- * You Can be a Change Agent! How to Help People in Reentry Increase Their Employment Motivation!
- * The All New Barrier Buster! New, More Powerful and Faster Ways to Help People in Reentry Eliminate Their Barriers to Employment!
- * The Revolutionary New Captain and Coach Approach to Case Management! Teach People in Reentry to Case Manage Themselves
- * Customer Service Success with Angry and Challenging Customers! How to Get to Win Win!
- Shaking Hands Through the Screen! How to Make Virtual Employment Counseling Much More Effective

www.LarryRobbin.com.

- * Get information on the website about Larry's upcoming webinars
 - * Sign up for the free newsletter read by over 25,000 people
 - * Check out more than 500 articles filled with best practices
 - * Download free employment counseling handouts
- Get the What Were the Steps on Your Path?
handout for people in reentry

Thanks for the very important work that you do!

TIME FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS!