

IPS Supported Employment Fidelity Visits Observing Meetings with Employers

Observing employment specialists as they meet with employers is the only way to accurately assess whether they are focused on building relationships by using multiple visits to learn about the workplace and hiring needs of each employer. This document includes some tips and a checklist for reviewers.

- A few weeks prior to the review, speak to the IPS supervisor about this part of the fidelity visit. Ask to observe second meetings with employers (or meetings that are part of a long-term relationship), as well a first meeting to schedule an appointment.
- Suggest that the employment specialist introduce you as her colleague.
- Do not participate in the conversation between the specialist and employer.
- After the employer meetings, remark on something positive that the specialist did. Remember that specialists often feel nervous during this part of the fidelity visit.

Behaviors that indicate effective relationship building (specialists will not have opportunities to demonstrate all of these during the review):

- The employment specialist is dressed in business casual attire, or in a manner that is appropriate for the business. No jeans, hoodies, or gym shoes.
- The specialist clearly and succinctly explains the purpose of her visit.
- If scheduling an appointment to come back and learn about the business (first meeting), the specialist asks for a specific date and time. She also records the appointment in her own calendar.
- The employment specialist avoids a lengthy description of the IPS program (unless the employer is very curious about that).
- The employment specialist does not ask about job openings during the early phases of the relationship (first or second appointments).
- For a second appointment, the employment specialist is prepared with open-ended questions to learn about the business, specific positions, and/or the hiring preferences of the employer. (Take notes about the questions asked.)
- If a second appointment, the specialist takes notes during, or after, the meeting.
- During a second appointment, the employment specialist encourages the employer to do most of the talking.
- The employment specialist does not discuss a job seeker unless he has already learned about the needs of the business (usually a third appointment or later).
- If asked, the specialist is able to answer questions about the people he works with confidently and using a strengths-based perspective.
- When asked how she will follow up with the employer, the specialist plans to follow up in person. (She may plan to send a thank you note first.)
- When describing a job seeker, the specialist explains what he can offer to the employer.
- If appropriate, the specialist describes her supports for employers and workers.
- The specialist demonstrates good listening skills.
- Before leaving, the specialist identifies a next step to the employer.