



Building a Business Case for Work-Based Learning: SSTAR's Experience

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Jobs to Careers Learning Collaborative Roundtable: July 22nd 2008



OUTLINE

- Background
- Certification in Addictions Counseling
- Certification in ARISE Interventions
Group Skills Facilitation Course
- Summary



Sustainability = Business Case

- To the extent we demonstrate that work-based learning solves key organizational problems it will be sustained beyond the grant.

1) Fall River, MA 2) North Kingston RI 3) Cranston RI





SSTAR Staff Training:

- Prior to J2C low budget priority. Our experience with traditional training approaches was that it wasn't effective in creating changes in performance (employee or organizational).
- FY 2005 –FY 2007 between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ of one percent of total expenses.
- Goal is to justify at least doubling that if our initiatives can demonstrate a positive business case.



Front line workers at SSTAR

- 52% at SSTAR 3+ years
- 40% at SSTAR 5+ years
- 12% at SSTAR 10+ years
- At start of J2C, average wage was \$11.22 per hour.



Underutilized Resource: FLW

- SSTAR has committed FLWs
- FLWs need increased wages
- SSTAR has need for credentialed workers (Certification in addictions counseling, etc.) to meet program and financial objectives
- J2C and Work-based Learning initiatives to meet FLW and SSTAR needs



Problem: Shortage of Certified Addictions Counselors

- Third party payers mandate that inpatient counselors be CAC
- Shortage of clinicians in outpatient causing waits for services, lost revenue.



WBL Initiative for CAC

- Onsite classes led by faculty of the Trundy Institute for Addictions Counseling
- Partial release time
- Learning objectives derived from skill requirements
- Learning teams
- Journaling
- Developmental Relationships-coach, peers, supervisors
- Reflection



Certification in Addictions Counseling

Two cohorts of 9 each.

- 1st cohort:
 - CAC exam in December 06 and Orals in Fall of 07
- 2nd cohort:
 - CAC exam December 07. 2nd test pending.



Results – 1st Cohort

- No drop-outs.
- 8 of 9 passed CAC test.
- Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADAC) Orals 6 took and 5 passed.
- The one that didn't pass has since re-taken and awaiting results.



Results 2nd Cohort

- 1 Drop-out
- All 8 passed the CAC exam
- Next exam pending



Work-Based Learning Cohorts vs. all Test Takers

Work-based learning Cohorts	# who took	# who passed	Cohort Pass Rate	Global Pass Rate
Cohort 1	9	8	89%	71%
Cohort 2	8	8	100%	75%

- Global test takers included people with Master's Degrees; our cohort uncredentialed FLWs



WBL Strategies Impact

- Engaged even initially reluctant learners in the learning initiative resulting in very high attendance, very low drop-out rate
- Coaching, peer support, relevance of learning to day-to-day work contributed to high pass rate on test
- These successes and ongoing coaching and peer support led to 6 of the 7 eligible from Cohort One going on to take their orals and higher certification (CADAC) without any attendant pay or job role incentive. CADAC, unlike CAC, confers reciprocity with other states and internationally (Career rather than “job”)



Impact on Participants

- Increased income
- Promotions
- Academic Credit
- Changed View of themselves – engaged in learning and career



Income

- Comparing wages in the quarter before J2C to most recent quarter:
 - **15 of 17 in the CAC-Track cohort had increases in earnings .**
 - **Average increase in income 12%.**



Promotions

- **During the first 18 months of J2C five(29%) of the CAC-Track cohorts had promotions to different positions –**
- 3 became Counselors in the new Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)



Academic Credit

- Through the J2C collaboration between SSTAR and Bristol Community College (BCC) the college approved award of **15 credits for CAC.**



Changed view from job to career

- Even initially reluctant participants discovered they could be successful learners.
- Acknowledged dreams/career goals and took additional steps towards those goals.

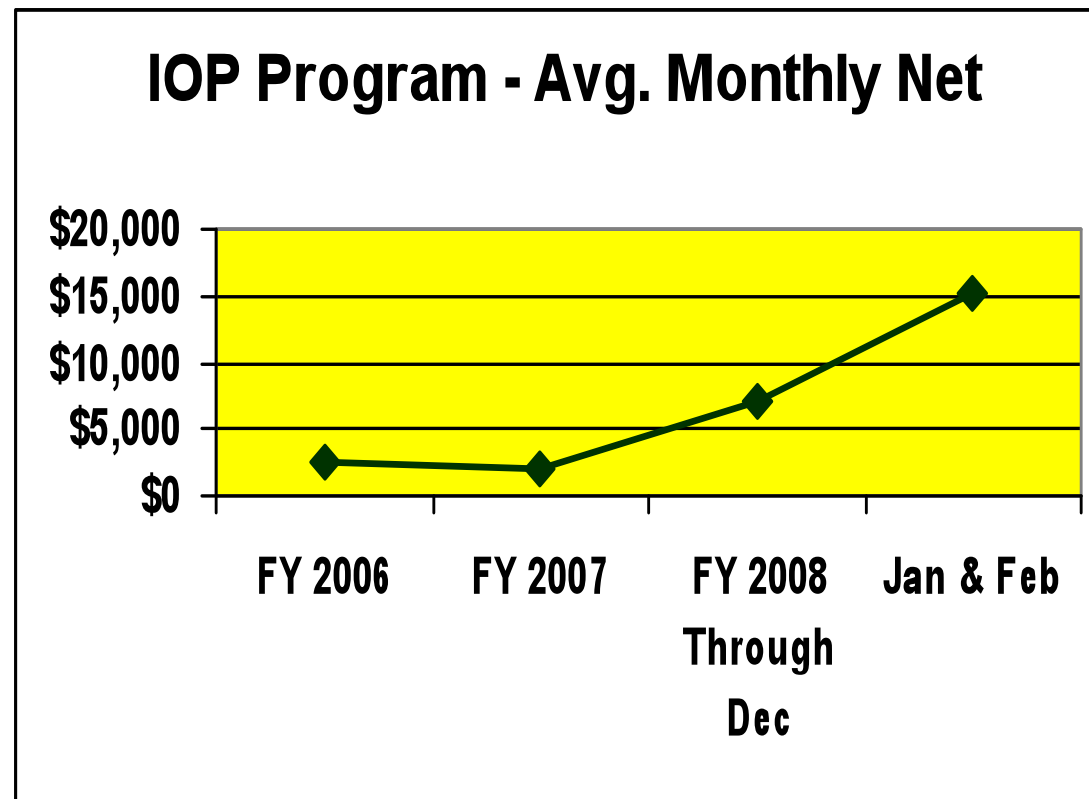
When I was young I dreamed of being a nurse but until I took this course I hadn't allowed myself to think about this for many years because I assumed it was impossible – I wouldn't be able to do the work.



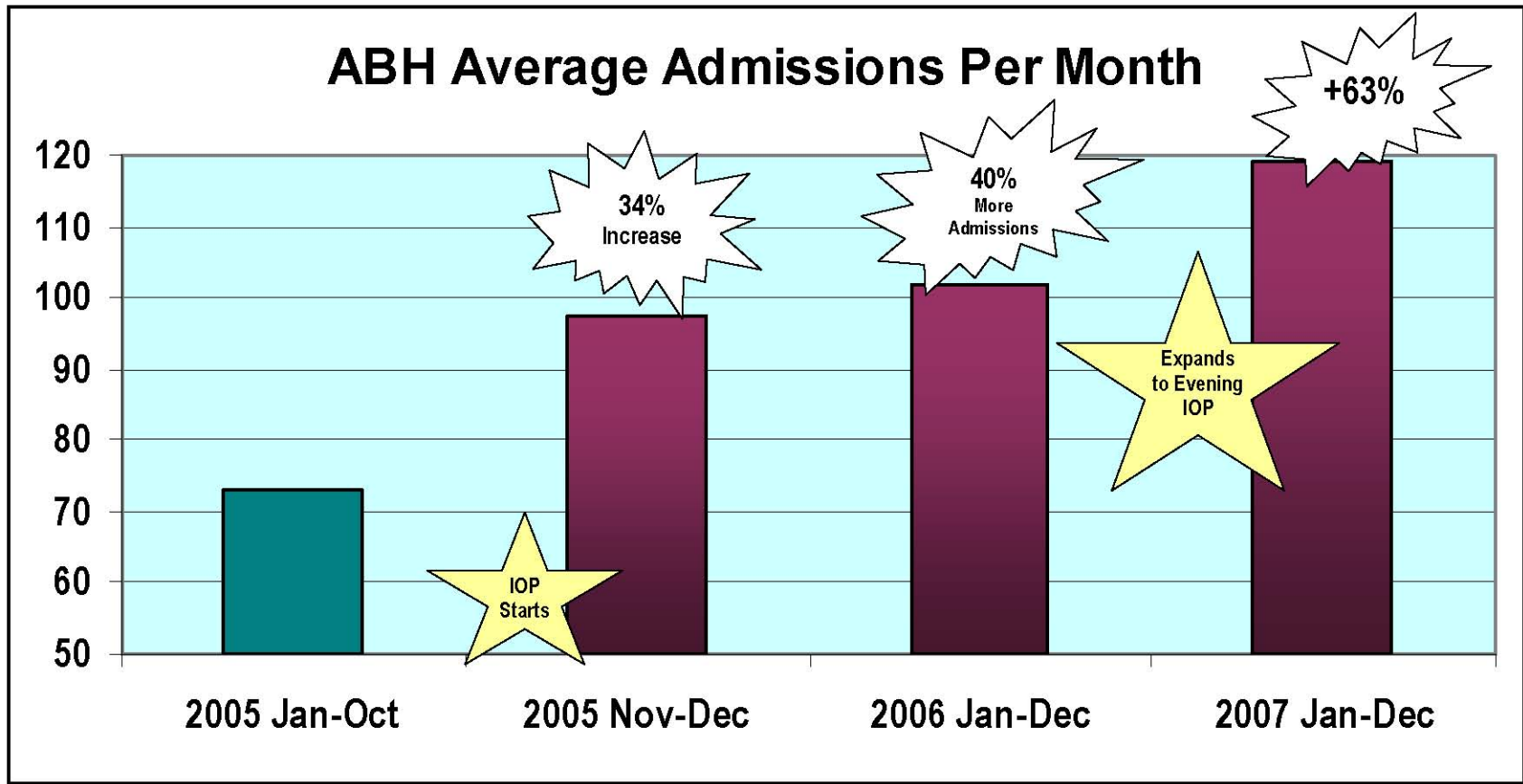
Agency Benefits


- Additional Credentialed Staff allowed for expansion of revenue-generating Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)

Impact on Finances



Impact on Quality of Care – Improved Access.





Problem: Families call SSTAR desperate for help for an addicted family member. SSTAR has nothing to offer *“until the addicted individual is ready to call and ask for help themselves”*

ARISE – *A Relational Intervention Sequence for Engagement.*

Model of family intervention to get the addicted individual into treatment




ARISE - WBL

- 3-day training at worksite
- Learning circles
- SSTAR Executives, supervisors, FLWs help build a *Learning Organization*



ARISE - Impact

- 24 FLWs certified.
- As of June, 89 families helped; 69% resulted in addicted person entering treatment.
- New revenue stream for agency
- Increased income for interventionists
- As a result of our experience, the State of MA is planning to fund interventions.



PROBLEM: Too many patients on inpatient addictions treatment units leave treatment early (AMA) perhaps related to lack of skill of FLWs who provide much of the group treatment – the least credentialed, least trained have most interaction with the patients.

Group Skills Facilitation WBL

- 4-credit course developed by SSTAR and BCC. On-line curriculum with 1X per week face-to-face at worksite.



Course Planning

- Designed to address specific skill needs for this job role
- Planning team included FLWs, Supervisors, outside experts, BCC faculty and administration.



Skills and Competencies Identified

- Direct feedback from SSTAR workforce and supervisors
- Outside experts
- Professional literature



Baseline Survey

- Class participants assessed on effective group skills and competencies prior to start of course.
- Scored on 15 competencies through observation by their supervisor, outside expert, self-assessment.



Enhanced Partnership with Educational Partners

- Four SSTAR employees are now adjunct faculty at Bristol Community College
- Trundy Institute became an effective recruiting resource for SSTAR for FLWs



Summary

Work-Based learning can be a “win-win-win” for Agency, FLWs, Clients, and Educational Partners.

Agency Increased revenue
Employer of choice: improved recruitment & retention
Expanded programs: IOP, ARISE
Transforms culture to "Learning Organization"
Impact on quality of services

FLWs Increased income
Changed view of themselves as learners/competence
Credentials CAC, CADAC, ARISE certification
From "Jobs to Careers"
College Credit
Promotions
Increased job satisfaction

Clients Increased access - reduced waits for outpatient services
Better trained workers are more effective helpers
Access to new, critically needed intervention service - ARISE

Educational Partners Ideas for new programming/courses/approaches at BCC/Trundy
New adjunct faculty recruited from SSTAR