

*Most of the following workshops can be done as 90-minute Conference Workshop, or a half-day (3-hour) or full day (6-hour) On-Site Staff Development Session workshops. Two related half day sessions may also be combined into a full day session.*

### **1. “From Jails to Jobs” Helping the formerly incarcerated succeed at work**

Formerly incarcerated individuals face unique challenges when transitioning from corrections to work. Already significant barriers (criminal records, substance abuse, homelessness, work history) are often overshadowed by antisocial thinking and behaviors. These patterns may have helped them succeed in the chaotic world of criminality -- but they sabotage attempts to gain employment.

This interactive workshop explores some of the cognitive- behavioral (CB) patterns keeping former offenders from finding success in today's world of work. Participants gain new insights into these dynamics, and explore CB strategies for helping them make the switch from corrections to employment.

### **2. “In Survival Mode” Working through self-defeating patterns with the hard to serve**

Hard-to-serve customers present a unique challenge to caseworkers and employers. Defensive, secretive, and ultimately self-defeating, it seems that many would rather be stuck in “comfortable misery” than change.

This activity-based workshop offers insights into the self-defeating beliefs of many customers from poverty. It then teaches a 4-step interpersonal problem solving process based on principles of cognitive restructuring. Participants will master skills needed to better understand and resolve conflicts with their most challenging customers.

### **3. “Cognitive Coaching” Working through differences in perspective on the job.”**

Supervising customers with multiple barriers is challenging work. When a problem is the result of a negative mindset more than motivation, a cognitive coaching approach can be much more effective than strict discipline. This interactive staff training explores some of the cognitive behavioral patterns keeping our most challenging customers from finding success in today's world of work. Staff will gain new insights into these thinking patterns, discover clearer ways to explain expectations, and practice new coaching strategies for communicating when workers misbehave.

#### **4. “Leave me alone!” Understanding Traumatized Youth**

Turning 18 represents a magical transition for many young people: graduation, college, voting, jobs, and independence. Unfortunately, it is not so magical for many at-risk youth growing up exposed to regular drug use, neighborhood violence, and physical or emotional abuse.

This thought-provoking session will offer staff insights and skills for connecting with relationship-wary youth. Participants will discuss the impact of childhood trauma, then delve into four self-protective patterns these youth exhibit, often drawing staff into destructive power struggles. Finally, we will explore effective strategies for connecting with and motivating at-risk youth to build greater resilience and make good decisions for adult life.

#### **5. “Kids These Days!” Preparing at-risk youth for the workplace.**

Troubled youth often have difficulty getting along with peers and authority figures -- difficulties sure to cause problems with co-workers and supervisors when they transition from school and home to the adult world of work.

This highly interactive workshop explored employer expectations, explains why at-risk youth and young adults have trouble adjusting to the culture of the workplace, and offers strategies for teaching them how to work through workplace problems, rather than blowing them out of proportion.

#### **6. Staying Professional When It Feels Personal**

It is simply inevitable: Each of us brings our personal backgrounds and baggage with us to our daily professional lives. More often than we might like, this baggage influences the way we respond to demanding clients, irritating coworkers, and bossy bosses.

This insight-driven workshop develops greater self-awareness in helping professionals by subtly exposing personal beliefs in contrast to our professional ethics. We delve into various interpersonal dynamics and explore specific reasons why some individuals may be especially challenging for us. Finally, we discuss strategies for remaining calm and communicating professionally in moments when things seem very personal.

## **7. “What Matters Most” Reducing Stress by RePrioritizing**

Human services professionals often lead busy lives filled with emotional, mental, and physical stresses. It is easy to find ourselves caught up in endless frantic “busy-work” that occupies every moment of our day, yet leaves us feeling as if we’ve accomplished nothing of real value. Sound familiar?

In this interesting workshop, we first explore four types of stress which can easily overwhelm helping professionals. Drawing from Dr. Stephen Covey’s work, we then explore specific strategies for prioritizing work tasks according to what is truly important, rather than what is simply most urgent. Attendees leave with a deeper understanding of their own motivations and a plan to stay focused on what matters most.

## **8. “Let’s Work This Out” Supervising Difficult Workers.**

Are you working every day with difficult people? And be honest -- can YOU be difficult yourself at times? Working with challenging individuals under demanding conditions sometimes brings out the worst in even the best people. As a result, we may find ourselves engaging in unproductive behaviors out of sheer frustration or helplessness.

This intriguing, interactive workshop will help both supervisors and line staff gain important insights into why we sometimes react so personally to minor workplace issues. Participants examine four impulse reactions to stressful circumstances, and assess their own primary conflict management style. They then learn a structured 5-step method for effectively and professionally expressing a concern to fellow staff or customers, even across cultural boundaries.

## **9. “Can’t We All Get Along?” Strengthening Team-Building and Communication Skills**

The challenges of working with difficult customers can sometimes weaken team bonds, especially when staff are struggling with other changes as well. This interactive workshop uses a variety of hands-on, fun activities to create opportunities for staff to work together and gain critical insights about their group goals and personal roles. It then shares a very direct communication technique for talking through interpersonal problems rather than avoiding or acting them out.

