- Hello, this is Michelle Krefft, the Director of Business Services for Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and today we're going to talk about the job analysis. We're going to learn why the job analysis is important to our business partners, and then we'll go through how to do a job analysis.

When we're meeting with our businesses, it's really important to get to know what their needs are, and the first step of getting to know their needs would be to do an intake, and this would be similar to how we would meet with our job candidates. We would meet with our business partners, and really learn from them what their needs are, what their difficulties are, maybe where some of their high turnover positions are so that we can make recommendations on how our services could best help their business.

After we've learned about what some of their needs are, the best next step would be to do a job and task analysis. This would be where we would go in, and really learn about the job that they're having the most difficulty with. We can utilize that information to help make a placement. The process of building that relationship with the business starts at talking to them about what their needs are, using our services to help them with their needs through doing an analysis of the job, and then the placement would only occur after we have done the intake and the analysis.

Let's start with why the analysis is so important to our business partners. The number one thing that we're able to gather when we're doing an analysis of a job, is we get first-hand information of the job. Often times when we work with HR, and we maybe ask them for a job description, and we're looking at the job description to see if the person we're serving would be a good fit. The job description might say you have to be able to lift 50 pounds, or you have to have a driver's license, or you must be able to do A, B, and C. When we're actually watching a person doing the job, and documenting that information of the task involved in the job, we might notice that there is no 50 pounds that the person needs to lift. Actually, they have an assisted lift, and they only need to be able to lift 10 pounds, but they need to be able to use the machine for the assisted lift.

Sometimes, the job descriptions are just not up to date. They were maybe created a while ago, and technology has changed, meaning that the job description has changed. Sometimes HR hasn't actually been out learning the job, and so they have what they think the job looks like, and then they are actually out with you seeing the job, they learn too. It's really important just to get that first-hand information about what the job looks like, and what the essential functions of the job actually are. The other thing you're going to learn when you're out learning, and doing, and observing the job is the culture. You're going to learn about... How to make that right fit. Who's going to fit into this environment? What do their best employees look like? Are there incentive pays? If there is some kind of an incentive, somebody we placed there was slower, and we didn't address that beforehand, it could create almost a hostile culture for a job candidate if everybody wasn't getting their bonuses because it slowed production down. It would be really important for us to understand all of that so that we can make sure that we have the right accommodations and modifications in place before we refer a job candidate for these jobs. If we're not understanding the in's and out's of the job, the requirements of the job, the essential functions, the tasks. How do we make those accommodations? What is the culture like? Who's going to best fit in, and how are they going to be able to be successful in that environment? The only way we can learn all of these types of things is actually be out learning the job, watching the job, talking to people who are doing the job, so that we're building this profile of the business. A solid profile of what they're looking for, and who's going to be successful, and we can match that up with our job candidates.

I mentioned earlier that it helps us identifying the accommodation. If we really are understanding the different tasks of the job, and we know our job candidates, we can better make sure that those accommodations are in place. That starts right with the training. When we're doing the job analysis, we're learning about how they're training new employees. We can make sure that our job candidates are being trained to learn the job in the way that they learn fast. Of course that's going to help with retention if the job candidates are trained properly, they're going to be more comfortable in the job, and they're going to stick around longer because they fully understand how to do the job, and they have all of their accommodations in place. Also, when we do a job analysis, sometimes we might just look at the essential functions of the job, and when we're not breaking it down into different tasks, it's really hard to know what the accommodation would be needed for the person to do that task.

Let's say it's a cashier at a grocery store, and we say task number one... is... to... use the cash register, to... Use the scanner to scan items, and... if we break that down further, we would then know that in order to use the scanner, you would need to put your code into the register to wake the register up... to get the line going to start scanning groceries. The very first thing we would need to do is to make sure that our job candidate know their personal code. If they had difficulty with memory, maybe we could recommend an accommodation that they can have a code on their cell phone, and their cell phone would be beside the cash register, and they can look at their cell phone for the number, and put that number... into the register to wake it up. If we hadn't broken that down, maybe the job candidate wouldn't be able to use the scanner, and it had nothing to do with them scanning groceries, it had everything to do with them not remembering their code. That's why actually breaking the essential functions down into tasks is so important that ensure that we have the proper accommodations for our job candidates. Wow, I jumped ahead of myself a little bit! That proper training for retention is just so important.

What businesses are learning is that this isn't just helpful for people with disabilities, but if they're asking people how they learn fast, and they're providing that training from the get-go to everybody, they're having better retention. It is really important for us to understand how our job candidates learn best, and help the business understand how to train our job candidates so that they can stay. We kind of talked about why the job analysis is important. Of course, it helps us to better prepare our job candidates. It helps us to find a better fit for the job, and it really helps the business with some of the things that they worry about, which is the bottom line. They want to get the right people in the job, and they want those people to be retained. One of the real keys is to know as much about the job as we know about our candidates, so we can really merge them together, making sure that we're getting the right people in the right jobs, we're getting the right training, we have the proper accommodations, then we're going to see the retention, and the business is going to see a financial value to that. Let's talk about how we might do the job analysis.

Now that we know why we need to do it, let's go through some of the steps. The first thing I like to do is interviews. I do like to interview the human resources manager because they can talk to me about the training, they talk to me about what they're going to be screening for when they're screening applications. They're talking about education, they're talking about criminal background, they're talking about all of those things that are really important for us moving our job candidates forward. We need to know what they're looking for, so that we're doing the proper screening on our end. Then it's important to talk to the hiring manager and the supervisor because they're going to share more about the culture. Who does a great job? Who fits in and does superior in this type of work? How do they train? Sometimes that might be different than how human resources says they train. What does the training look like when they actually get to the job, and how much training do they get? The hiring manager and the supervisors is also the person who's probably going to make the decision on who they hire, and so it's really beneficial to begin building a relationship with that person, and really getting to know them, and what they're looking for before we make a referral of any type. Then it's important to talk to staff who are doing the job because often times, their perception of the job is a little bit different than the hiring manager, or even human resources. By talking to the staff, you can really learn more about why they like the job, maybe what they don't like about the job, maybe those hidden culture kind of things that you only learn when you're out interviewing people. When I start my job analysis, I really meet with all of these different people, and interview them so I can begin to build that profile I talked about. I also like to talk to their star employee, and really ask them to give me a step-by-step of what makes them so successful. How did they get to where they are? What kind of characteristics do they believe is important to really be an outstanding employee within that company?

Typically, I like to either bring a pen and paper to take notes, or I might audio record them on a cell phone, or an iPad so I can document it later. It just really depends on the industry I'm going to, and what their rules are. I think the key to the interview is really interviewing as many people as you can, and begin building as many relationships as you can within that industry, within that setting, within that division. The more relationships you have, obviously the better the trust is going to be when you look at referring a job candidate later on. After the interviews are complete, it's really important to do observation. This would involve just watching the person doing the job, identifying what those essential functions of the job, and then breaking them down into tasks. I like to have at least five or six tasks under every function. That might look like if I was on a SPAM line for Hormel. The first thing I do is I have to get boxes, and so to get boxes, I find where the box- step number one would be find where the boxes are located, step number two would be to get my power- my power jack, step number three would be to load the power jack with the boxes, step number four would be to bring the boxes to the location that I'm going to be working, and step number five would be to take the boxes off the power jack. We would want to know then, how much lifting would be required at that point, and would there be any accommodation to move the boxes on and off the power jack, and what would that accommodation be? We're really getting in to the steps of the job, and learning as much about the steps so that we can provide better training, and really do better screening when we're looking at finding people for those positions. I would break down every task that the person does into multiple tasks. The job analysis could get pretty lengthy, as you're breaking down all of the different tasks.

I like to either take notes, or use video. Some places will not allow us to take video, and so then taking as good of notes as you can is the best action. When you're doing video, you can video record the person doing the job, and talk into your video camera, and you can identify those steps as the person is doing the job, and that'll help you to remember when you go type up the analysis what the tasks were. Also, you'll be wanting to look at what equipment are they using, any other requirements, and making note of that, either verbally or by taking notes. Probably one of the most important things you can do is ask questions and get clarification for each of the tasks that you're going through. Ask tons of questions! Businesses love to talk about their positions, and what they do, and the production of that, or the service of that. Staff love to talk about their jobs. You can gain so much information by that observation, and asking for questions, and getting clarification, and going back to your office, and documenting it. It's so important that we don't skip this step.

Back in the old days, I would say maybe 15, 20 years ago when we looked at doing job analysis, people maybe went to ONET, and pulled the job description off of ONET, and use that to pre-screen people. I think that that's a really good first step, but to really understand the job, you have to go out and observe it. You can't just look at the job description, or the ONET, and think that you fully understand that job. The observation is probably the most important piece of the job analysis. We've really talked about the task analysis, but this is where you're going to look at all of the different steps, and break them down. There are some job analyses that we've broken down with 30 steps under each task, and this would really be dependent on that task, and how detailed it is, and how many steps are under that task. Obviously, the higher level the position is, the more tasks there are going to be under every function. The best way to document this, again, is either with a pen and paper, a walkthrough watching the person doing the job, and writing down each task as they're doing it and then asking for clarification, or doing it with a video recorder, also giving yourself verbal cues as you're recording that person doing those tasks. This is also where we're able to identify modifications, or a job restructure to meet the business needs, or maybe even... pull- pull a job out for- for a candidate. If you are... at a business, and you notice that somebody is stepping off the line often to make a box, you might inquire about that and gather more information. Probably, what you're going to do is you're going to gather why they have to step off the line to make the box, what they make an hour, and what could they be doing if they didn't have to step off the line to make that box.

Then to benefit the business, you would write a proposal that they create a box maker, and this is how it would save them money. By paying a person lesser than a skilled wage to make the box that keeps the skilled worker on the line, doing skilled tasks, which is more productive for the line, and the person making the box could... make those boxes at a lesser wage, and supplement the skilled worker. It has to be not about our job candidates, but how is it going to meet the business, their needs and their demands, and how is it going to help them meet their bottom line? By looking at these jobs, and talking to people, we are able to pull jobs out to meet the business needs. We're able to also maybe look at they've only traditionally had one person do the job, what would it look like if they broke it into two part time positions? By watching the job, you would be able to then determine is it something that two people could do at once, or would they break it into somebody does the morning shift, and another person does the afternoon shift? You can only do this if you understand the job, and you're watching people do the job, and then you're able to make a recommendation, especially if it's a job that has a really high turnover. You're probably hearing it everywhere you go that we have more jobs than we have people applying. This is a great solution, but many businesses have not traditionally broken jobs into part time jobs, and so they really need to see the value, and you can bring that value to them when you've done the task analysis, and you understand enough about the job to make a recommendation such as that.

After we've completed the job analysis, this is where we're going to be looking at the business' job description, and we're going to be comparing our job analysis to their job description. Are there any differences? Are they the same? This is where really, where we're going to seal that deal with the conversation, because- seal the deal with the business because we're going to be having that conversation with them about what we saw, what we learned, and how that compared... to their- their... job description, and what those differences were. It might have them look at their job description to see if they need to make any changes. We recently met with a business who had on- on their job description that the person had to have their driver's license, and when we reviewed the job by doing the job analysis, we didn't see anybody even drove during the course of the day, and so we asked why they had to have... a driver's license, and it was just so they could get to work. We asked if the person could get to work, does it matter if they have a driver's license, and the business said no, but we felt if they had a driver's license, they would be at work. Just having that conversation about perception, people can get to work without a driver's license, and think of all of the people that they've screened out of- of the potential applicant pool because they threw away every application that said no to the driver's license. This step is also really important for the business to make sure they're not screening out people that can do the job, that have the skills and abilities that can do the essential functions. It will also help our job candidates to maybe get through some of that screening that the businesses are doing when they have a better understanding of what really is an essential function of that position, and what kinds of things do they want to help supplement the position, but are not essential functions. I just think it seals the deal. It helps the business know that we're invested, we care about what they're doing, we care about their bottom line. We're not in there meeting with them and working with them so we can get a placement, we're there to help them get the best candidates for the job, and to help with that retention. I don't think that this is a step you really want to skip because this shows our investment.

Not too long ago, we met with a business, and they were just floored at the amount of time we took to really understand who they were looking for, and what was going to make a successful candidate. Because of that trust, and because of that commitment, we can refer candidates. They still screen them, but they know that when we make that referral, they should probably take a second, third look at this person, because we've done a really thorough job of getting them to the point where we feel like they're going to be a good addition to the company. We do a lot of that pre-screening then beforehand before we even fill out the application, which eliminates some of that work for the business because they know if we're sending them, they're going to be a good fit. By doing this, it's building a relationship with the business, we're showing them our value. We're demonstrating that we're invested in them. We want to- we want to serve them. We want them to get the best people, and the only way we can do that is if we truly and really understand the job, and the culture, and the organization, and the business, and the people within the business, and we're building that great relationship with them. It really is a win-win for our business partners, for our job candidates, and for our partnerships within Iowa workforce.

I think that you're going to just have so much fun going out and getting to know the business, and thinking about this in a different way. Instead of us going out and talking about what we can do- what we can do for the business, let's go out and learn about what the business needs, and then provide services to the business to help them with their bottom line. How we would actually set up the job analysis. We talked at the beginning, we would do an intake, and we would learn about what their needs were. If they said, I have a lot of high turnover positions. There are more openings than we have applicants. We're only getting people that apply that have... a probation officer, and they're only coming to work when people are checking on them, and then the minute people aren't checking on them anymore, they're not coming to work. Those are some of the common things that we hear, and so how could we help- help them with those barriers? The best thing we can do is go in to learn more about the job, so we can make sure that people have the right supports when they're going to work. We can make sure that we're doing some of that pre-screening, and that we're learning as much as we can about the job so... so we can make the best referrals. What I like to say to a business, I like to say, I heard you say you have a lot of turnover in position X, Y, Z. In order for us to really understand the type of people that would do well there, it's important for me to know more about the position. I would love to just come in and watch somebody do the job for a period of time, and ask questions and learn more about the job so we can understand more about what type of transportation they would need to get to work, what the schedule looks like, compare that to the bus line if we need to, what kind of job coaching, or job supports would they need on the job? What kind of modifications and accommodations would they need? Just really putting it all together. Actually, I don't think we've ever had a business that said no, we don't think it's a good idea for you to see our job. They want to talk about the job. They want to show off their jobs. They want you to see what they're looking for because right now, everybody's begging for employees.

Gosh, we really talked about this, but we're going to talk about it a little bit more. We... were recently at Flying J Truck Stops, and these truck stops are all over I-35 and I-80, and we listed the essential functions of the job for those that would be working in the kitchen. Some of the things that they would need to do is they open the deli, they make chicken, they make gravy and biscuits, the coffee, they set up the soup station, and the cleaning of that station, making pizza, they have to make macaroni and cheese every 4 hours, they go through the cleaning checklist, and then there's a closing checklist to complete. These would be the essential functions of the job. Then if we looked at what might be some of the tasks to opening the deli. Well, the first thing we need to do is turn on all of the equipment. The fryers, the pizza oven, then we set up the 3 compartment sink. In one compartment, we have our wash water, and we'd get our sanitizer buckets ready to go, and so this... just broke it down, opening up the deli in more tasks than just open the deli. Again, to make pizza, we broke making pizza down into 14 tasks, so instead of just saying the essential function, make pizza, we break it down and we start with sanitizing our hands. Then... we remove the dough from the proofing rack, and inspect the quality. We look at the expiration date to determine if we can even use that or not, then we place it on a pan. Then we get out the six ounce scoop ladle, and put one level scoop... of sauce or gravy into the into the center of the dough. Then using the heel of the ladle, we spread that evenly until we're about one inch from the crust, the edge of the crust. We can continue going through this. Every essential function, we should be able to break that down into tasks. This is where we're going to find the unmet needs. This is where we're going to find how we could restructure a job, or do some job carving because we're going to be able to see what another person might be able to do to supplement the person we're evaluating's job, or we might be able to see how we could break it into several jobs, or... we might be able to do some job carving. What we saw at Flying J... was... it might be beneficial to have- because there was so much going on within this position, it might be beneficial to have somebody come in for a couple hours a day, and measure the fruit that they had cut up, and put them into fruit cups, seal the cups. They would put the date on them, and put them in the cooler for sale. How would that benefit the business? We saw that people cut up fruit, but by watching everything that this person had to do, they weren't necessarily getting packaged into the cups, and out onto the cooler for sale. If somebody did that, they would get into the cooler, they would then be able to sell them, which would generate revenue for the business, it would more than pay that person's wages to package the fruit.

Some of the stuff you can't see unless you're actually in the business, doing observation, doing interviewing, getting everything that you can possibly get, is that cultural environment in the hidden rules. This comes from Flying J again. That person that they're really, really looking for that's going to be ideal is going to show up everyday on time. They're going to be self-motivated to do the job correctly, and go from task to task, have a good attitude, and not get too easily upset. What is being on time? For Flying J, it means that you're at work five minutes before your shift starts, and when your shift starts, you're ready to go to work, so you've brought a lunch, you've put it into the cooler, you've went to the bathroom, you've washed your hands, you've said hello to everybody you want to say hello to. If you're a coffee drinker, you've gotten your coffee, and you're checked in, ready to go at the time your shift starts, versus coming in at the time your shift starts, and then going to the back, punching in, and then going to the bathroom, and then washing your hands, and then getting your coffee, and then making your rounds to say hello, that is not being on time for them. They want all of that done before you punch in. Breaks, you get to go on break when the supervisor tells you you can go on break. You can't just decide, I want to go on break. I need a cigarette, I'm going to go on break. That would be one of the hidden rules that they don't really talk about, you just know you get to go on break when they tell you you can go on break. What about cell phones? They do not allow cell phones. They provide a locker that you can keep your cell phone in, and when you go on break, you can check that cell phone. Attendance, what does this look like? This is kind of interesting. They don't have a formal attendance policy. They're looking for patterns, and if you're not coming in, or you're late, or you're coming in on time, but you're not starting work for 30 minutes until after you get there because you're busy talking to everybody, then your hours are just going to decrease as they're noticing these different patterns.

Just to kind of recap, we're going to review with the business after we've done the job analysis to make sure we did it correctly, the steps are correct, and they- they believe that to the best of our ability, that we've done this job analysis correctly. We get their signature, not that it's a legal document or anything, just that they agree with what we've written down, and then what we're going to do is we're going to use this job analysis to vet and refer our job candidates. If they need at least high school graduation, we're going to make sure that we only refer people for the job that have at least a high school graduation, and we've checked and we've verified that the person has a high school graduation. If they want people who are going to show up everyday, we're looking for our job candidates who maybe don't have the hard skills, but they're going to show up everyday with a great smile on their face. If we're thinking back to Flying J, they want somebody who's going to come in everyday, have a great attitude, want to work, so that's what we're going to be looking for. Who wants to work? Who has a great attitude and always has a smile on their face because certainly, we can teach them how to make that pizza, we might not be able to teach them how to put a smile on their face everyday.

That's what we're using this information for, to give the businesses the types of people that they're looking for to be successful and to stay in that job. Hopefully, this overview helped you to understand the benefits of doing a job analysis, how it can benefit both your job seekers, and your business partners, and have a little bit more insight on how to do a job analysis. Please reach out to me with any questions you have. I respond really well to email, and it's michelle.krefft@iowa.gov. Thank you!