



MAKING WORK SEARCH SMART - UTAH

UI CASE STUDY

Client Industry:
State Workforce Agency

Challenges Addressed:
Work search
skills training

Budget limitations

Limitations in the
effectiveness of work
search requirements

Job Seeker Results:
Twenty-five percent of
all claimants moved from
disengaged to re-engaged

Claimants voluntarily
completed over 1/3 more
modules than required

Claimants improved
preparedness from
a D+ to a B+

Savings can be more than
a state's two largest UI
integrity programs
totaling 13.5% savings

Lowers duration
by one full week
beyond the impact of
REA services

The Challenge: Job seekers suffer from a major skill gap - the skill of conducting an effective work search. The average job seeker will change jobs 13 times in a career, with significant financial, social, psychological impacts. Yet job seekers rarely learn job search skills - in high school, community college or at a university. With limited funding and less-than-ideal job seeker engagement, most state workforce agencies are adequately able to train only a small portion of all job seekers in job search skills. Meanwhile, Unemployment Insurance program directors have a similar budget dilemma. They have few affordable ways to engage job seekers in meaningful work search activities, which is second largest source of UI overpayments nationwide. Utah found an answer.

The Client: Utah's Department of Workforce Services operates the state's UI program. In June 2011, DWS tested online workshops through NextJob job search learning software. DWS made the workshops part of its required work search activities for selected UI claimants profiled likely-to-exhaust.

The Solution: DWS chose 507 claimants and tested four impacts: 1) job search engagement, 2) job search preparedness, 3) UI program integrity and 4) claim duration / reemployment. Participants were drawn from Utah's Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) program. The state required each claimant to complete any four of nine job search modules, from "Resume" to "Career Direction" to "Interviewing" within two weeks. After each claimant logged in, DWS tracked their progress, through the training system, in real time.

The Results:

Job Seeker Engagement. A significant number of claimants were not engaged but became engaged through the work search skills initiative. Of claimants selected, 68.4% completed their assignment on time. The remaining 31.6% of claimants, however, chose not to engage and DWS suspended their unemployment claims. Significantly, after their claims were suspended, **25.1% became re-engaged** and completed their training. In addition to increasing the number of claimants engaged, the initiative drove deeper engagement. Engaged participants voluntarily completed more training modules than required by 36%.

Job Seeker Preparedness. The system surveyed each claimant on job search preparedness in seven skill areas, from resume writing to networking to interviewing. Surprisingly, claimants rated their preparedness at the equivalent of a D+. On completion of the training, claimants rated their new preparedness at a B+. Through online job search skills training, their preparedness improved by 31%.

UI Program Integrity. Six and a half percent of claimants ultimately chose to refuse to participate, even after screening out nonparticipants who did not show up for the initial REA interview. Statewide, in Utah, a 6.5% claimant opt out, due to lack of need, interest or willingness, etc., will amount to nearly \$15 M in savings, larger than the state's two largest UI integrity cross matching efforts, combined.

Claim Duration/Reemployment. On top of the full REA program impact, the NextJob treatment lowered claim duration one full week (7%) more. Utah launched the idea program-wide in July 2012. Statewide, a one-week duration decrease will save \$16 M annually.