



GROW DEMAND-LED EMPLOYMENT BROKERAGE MODELS IN TARGET COMMUNITIES

When regional commitment to GROW principles is high, and GROW's job creation strategies are progressing well (evidenced by strong employer engagement, and commitments to accessible recruitment and incorporation of GROW employment targets into regional contracts and investments) the initiative will have ensured a diverse set of opportunities and pathways for job seekers in target communities. An additional element is needed to ensure these jobs are accessible to jobless families in GROW target communities – Demand-led Employment Brokerage resources.

To enable these job opportunities to become accessible for people who are disconnected from the labour market, additional supports are needed to engage and prepare the job seekers and the employers for successful and sustainable employment. GROW proposes mobilising resources to deliver Demand-led Employment Brokerage models in target communities.

The current funded employment service system is not addressing this place-based disadvantage. The GROW target communities have all experienced significantly higher levels of unemployment over the past five years than regional averages, and are considered high risk areas in the Employment Vulnerability Index (2013).

The GROW Demand-led Employment Brokerage strategy aims to counter this by developing strong partnerships with employers, and adding value to existing employment services. The strategy starts with the employer and works backwards, co-designing training and delivering services for job seekers based on the hiring requirements of employers. It is founded on the premise that the better the job preparation and training meets the employer's needs, the more likely it is that the individual will be awarded and retain the job.

The Demand-led Employment Brokerage strategy proposed by GROW has the following components:

- 1) Understand the needs of employers
 - a) Building a relationship with the employer and engaging internal champion/s
 - b) Clarifying a shared commitment with the employer
 - c) Working with the employer to make roles attractive to potential candidates
 - d) Investigate specific position and recruitment requirements.
- 2) Co-design of program, ensuring mutual benefit
 - a) Identify and engage with the key stakeholders who need to be consulted/involved in the program, including local service, training and employment agencies
 - b) Prepare and deliver a co-design workshop involving the employer and the key stakeholders
 - c) Co-design the Project Plan which
 - i) Reflects employer requirements
 - ii) Proposes appropriate skills and training for both employer and job seeker
 - iii) Clarifies roles and responsibilities of employer and all service agencies.
- 3) Recruitment of job seekers
 - a) Collaboration with *jobactive* agencies and other agencies to reach disengaged cohorts
 - b) Explore aspirations and strengths of individual job seekers

- c) Recruitment based on agreed selection criteria informed by employer needs
- d) If not suitable, redirect to alternative pathway (training or employment).
- 4) Work-readiness skills training (co-designed with employer) including work placement
 - a) Foundation 'soft' skills training eg confidence, attitudes to work, communication etc. combined with vocation-specific training
 - b) Work exposure – guest speakers, site visits, etc.
 - c) Work placement to enable on-the-job experience, enhance two-way feedback, and determine whether additional supports and/or interventions are needed.
- 5) Intensive individualised mentoring and support activities for job seeker
 - a) Holistic one-to-one support of job seeker to manage barriers to work, including engagement with families
 - b) Diversion through – as opposed to into – family and relationship counselling, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, or other programs
 - c) Develop model of collaboration with full service system (e.g. connecting agencies working with common clients)
 - d) Identify and source services not currently available
 - e) Design agreed risk management and support strategies
 - f) Assist with employment-related expenses, e.g. driver's license, clothing.
- 6) Build employer cultural understanding and support mechanisms
 - a) Ready the organisation through relevant culture/engagement training for management and operational staff i.e. supervisors
 - b) Supporting the employer to design and implement workplace mentoring and a separate buddy program, providing on-the-job support to job seeker along with the supervisor.
- 7) Ongoing post-placement support for both job seeker and employer
 - a) One point of contact for job seeker and employer with regular scheduled meetings
 - b) Early response to identified risks
 - c) Re-allocation of job seeker, if required.
- 8) Evaluation

Delivery:

This model assumes the appointment of a Place-Based Project Coordinator who will provide the single point of contact for job seeker and employer. Their role is to develop the trust of the employers, offer the intensive support to the job seeker through the foundation training and post-placement, as well as connecting the job seeker (and their families) with the local service system.

GROW will identify expertise and seek to partner with organisations who have expertise in Demand-led Employment, to lead the co-design in each location. GROW will seek to establish partners and mobilise funding.

Funding is also required for the employer training and any services not currently available, ie. Vocationally-oriented drug and alcohol support. GROW will promote this gap in service and attempt to align activities to support this gap.

It is expected that GROW will seek to negotiate partnerships with Jobactive agencies who can fund the tailored foundation skills training for the job seeker.

The specific actions required to mobilise resources to establish more demand-led brokerage resources in GROW target communities in 2016 will include:

- Convene partners in target communities
- Negotiate design pilot/project parameters
- Identify and apply for possible resources philanthropic, government
- Working with Employers to identify actual jobs our target communities can be skilled up and linked to
- Mobilise funding to deliver demand led brokerage support to employers and job seekers in target communities

In 2016 GROW has commenced facilitating partners towards these goals for Colac where these resources are most needed and where the job opportunities already exist. In Colac, GROW will

- Explore and develop partnerships
- Build local solutions and convene and facilitate local ownership of the GROW strategy: identifying actions to build the local capacity to support jobless families and to add value to existing employment and job support service providers in target areas.
- Negotiate and identify key projects and employers that can provide opportunities for jobless families in target communities

In addition, GROW will be convening key local stakeholders to work toward local service system improvements that will support the GROW aligned activities in other target communities:

- North – including and supporting the work of Northern Futures, with local Industry and Service Providers; also in linking the Norlane Integrated Development (Baptcare) to training and employment pathways for Norlane residents
- East - including and supporting the work of Whittington Works Alliance – mobilising additional resources enabling demand led employment brokerage for jobless families in 3219.