

CJC Implementation Research Protocol: Employer

Abt Associates IRB Approval No. XXXX

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Introduction of and Informed Consent for the Study *(read to all respondents)*

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview today.

My name is **(insert name here)**, and I'm a researcher from MDRC, located in **(Oakland CA or New York, NY)**. I'm here because Abt Associates and MDRC, on behalf of the United States Department of Labor (DOL), are conducting a five-year study of the Cascades Program.

We are **visiting/calling** to conduct **(in-person)** interviews with center staff and partners (such as referral partners and employers) to learn what is happening on the ground and what are the challenges of implementing this new program.

These interviews will provide important qualitative information on the implementation at Cascades. We will use what we learn from these interviews to contribute to a report about the effectiveness of the Cascades program. This report will be submitted to DOL to inform the federal government about this new model.

Privacy Statement *[Interviewer must read this to all respondents]*

Before beginning the interview, **I (we)** want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study and remind you that your participation is voluntary. **I (we)** know that you are busy and will try to be as brief as possible. We have many questions and are going to talk to many different people, so please do not feel as though we expect you to be able to answer every question. You may also refuse to answer any question. The interview today should last about 30 minutes. We are interested in learning about your ideas, experiences, and opinions about the Cascades program. There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what you think.

You can send comments regarding the time estimate or any other aspect of this interview, including suggestions for reducing the duration, to **(insert contact name and provide address if necessary)**.

In addition, before we start, I want to let you know that although we will take notes during these interviews, information is never repeated with the name of the respondent in any reports or in any discussions with supervisors, colleagues, or any one from DOL. When we write our reports and discuss our findings, information from all the people we speak with is compiled and presented so that no one person can be identified. There is a small risk of loss of privacy, but we have many procedures in place to ensure your information does not get lost.

To help me accurately report on the information you share, it would help if I could tape record this call; of course, I could turn off the recorder at any point if you so desire. I do not have a recorder on now; is it okay with you for me to turn it on?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Do I have your permission to begin the interview?

- This interview protocol is intended for employers working with Cascades.
- Text in italics is background information for the interviewer.
- Please allow 30 minutes for the interview.

Employer Title: Title

Employer: Employer

Interviewer: Interviewer last name

Write-up: Last name of person doing write-up

INTERVIEW DATE/TIME: Date/Time

Questions Geared Primarily Toward More-Involved Employers

1. How did you first hear about Cascades? Did someone refer you to Cascades or did Cascades staff reach out to you directly? What message did you first hear about Cascades that made you think it might be worth pursuing a relationship? Describe
2. What were you hoping to achieve by working with Cascades? Describe
3. A primary goal of Cascades is to be sure that the training and other services they provide to eventual job applicants in the [REDACTED] sector are aligned closely with the needs of local employers in the sector.
 - a. Has staff at Cascades ever actively sought your company's input or guidance about the training or other activities they conduct – for example, the way they screen applicants for their program, the technical or soft skills curriculum they use, etc.? If yes, which activities have they sought input on? Describe
 - b. Has your company ever had the opportunity to provide this kind of input or support to Cascades? If yes, please describe. Describe

[Probe, if necessary]: Other types of guidance or input they might seek could include:

 - Selection of targeted occupations and description of career paths
 - Placement services
 - o Visit training classroom to describe jobs and workplace environment
 - o Employer site tours
 - o Mock interviews
 - o Work experiences such as internships or mentoring
4. Did Cascades' services help you and your company in any of the following ways?
 - a. Reduced time to hire? Describe
 - b. Reduced turnover? Describe
 - c. Troubleshooting with new hires – for example, assistance to:
 - Improve attendance? Describe
 - Improve job performance? Describe
 - d. Reduced safety infractions? Describe
 - e. Help filling skilled positions beyond entry level? Describe
5. [If employer has hired a relatively large number of Cascades graduates]: Have any of these services saved your business money or helped your business grow or expand? Describe
6. Did the services/assistance your company received from Cascades' meet your company's expectations? Describe

7. How does the experience of working with Cascades compare with the experience of working with your other recruitment sources or other staffing agencies? Describe
 - a. Is Cascades an important source of recruitment for your company when you are trying to fill jobs in the [] industry/occupation? Describe
 - b. How do you evaluate if these recruitment sources are effective in terms of providing qualified workers? Describe
 - c. Do you expect to hire again from this provider? Describe
 - d. Would you recommend them to other employers? Describe
8. Are there any other ways in which your company benefited from the services it received from Cascades? Describe
9. How could Cascades have improved your company's experience with them? Describe
 - a. [If provide feedback:] Did you share any of that feedback with Cascades? Describe
10. Are there any services Cascades could offer to your company to be helpful in meeting your needs as a (COMPANY INDUSTRY [ex: trucking provider])? What kinds of services? Describe
 - a. [if yes:] Have you ever shared that feedback with Cascades? Describe
11. Compared to other individuals you hire, are the individuals you've hired from Cascades
 - a. Similar in level of preparedness?
 - b. Not as well prepared? or
 - c. More prepared? Describe

[Probe: In which ways]
12. Are there any ways that Cascades could better prepare individuals for jobs with your company or in your industry more broadly? If yes, how? Describe
 - a. [If yes:] Have you ever shared that feedback with Cascades? Describe
13. WRAP UP QUESTION: Are there any other ways that you've interacted with Cascades that we haven't touched on here today? Describe

If time, or if the employer's primary connection is hiring Cascades program graduates:

14. Other than Cascades, what other sources of recruitment do you use for hiring entry-level workers? How does your company typically identify these sources? Describe
15. What factors would be the leading considerations in deciding whether to get more involved with Cascades? Describe
16. Have you played a role in developing any other relationships for Cascades that might benefit the workforce system in the local area – for example, with government officials, funders, or other interested associations or agencies? Describe
17. Was the amount of contact you received from Cascades the right amount? Would you prefer that they check in with you more or less often? Describe
18. Have you learned anything from working with Cascades that might help you improve the way you hire or manage your workforce? (e.g., labor market information that might help you set wages at an appropriate level?) Describe