

TAA COMMUNITY – SCHEDULED CHAT TRANSCRIPT

Title	TAA Program Messaging
Date	09/21/2021
Start Time	01:57 PM GMT-04:00
End Time	03:01 PM GMT-04:00
Moderator	Theberge, Timothy

Theberge, Timothy- 2:00 PM:

Good afternoon or good morning!

Theberge, Timothy- 2:00 PM:

We'll wait another minute or two to let everyone join.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:01 PM:

As a reminder, this is a chat-only event, there is no audio.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:02 PM:

Welcome to another OTAA Scheduled Chat! Not as entertaining as Office Hours, but at least you don't need to look at my slowly graying hair.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:02 PM:

Today's topic is: "TAA Program Messaging"

Theberge, Timothy- 2:03 PM:

How do you talk about TAA? To workers, to firms, to other workforce development folks...

Theberge, Timothy- 2:03 PM:

A couple of ground rules to support multiple conversations occurring at the same time. If you're responding directly to individual comments or questions, please reference the person in question by using an @ sign and then their first name.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:03 PM:

So, for example, if Beth from MA wanted to ask about states or locals are redesigning their customer flow, it would be helpful if she started off like this:

Customer flow – [Question or statement goes here.]

Then you can reply to Beth like this:

@Beth - [Answer or follow-up goes here]

Pelletier, Judy- 2:03 PM:

@Tim It's the best program we can offer laid off workers.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:04 PM:

@Judy - Agreed! (But I might be biased.)

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Theberge, Timothy- 2:04 PM:

As a reminder, we will be issuing a transcript of this chat to all registered participants. The contents of this chat should be considered technical assistance and not official guidance of the Department.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:04 PM:

But seriously, when you talk to firms about TAA, how do you describe it? How do you talk to them to get them to want to be helpful?

Pelletier, Judy- 2:04 PM:

@Tim There is no other program that offers the extended weeks of UI while in training or length of training assistance.

Grant, Kelli- 2:05 PM:

@ Tim, TAA is the Cadillac of reemployment services - that's how we introduce it to workers and businesses - in those words exactly, gets people's attention

Grant, Kelli- 2:06 PM:

@ Tim, we then go on to really talking up the benefits, including some tried and true examples

Grant, Kelli- 2:07 PM:

@Tim, having worked in the field, case managing both WIA (at the time) and TAA, I have a lot to draw from on successes we have had, and add to it the successes I have seen in my time as administrator

Theberge, Timothy- 2:07 PM:

Anyone else? Does "Trade" still have that negative connotation with working with firms? Are they scared of being associated with that term still?

Detling, Jennifer- 2:08 PM:

@Tim, I always touch on the fact that the services are at no cost to the worker or their previous employer and if workers participate in the program, it does not negatively impact the employers UI tax.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:10 PM:

Any success with selling the firms on "helping" the workers even though they have to let them go? I've seen employers in press releases make those types of statements.

Criscuolo, Joe- 2:13 PM:

@Tim, We recently did a mass direct mailing to employers emphasizing the benefits it provides to workers, but we have had little response as of yet.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:13 PM:

@Joe - We'd love a copy of the mailer.

Criscuolo, Joe- 2:13 PM:

@Tim, sure, I'll get that to you.

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Smith, Stacie- 2:13 PM:

@Tim, I agree with what Jennifer said. I think most companies are most worried about cost to them. So when we can reassure them that it doesn't cost any more than regular UI would that helps.

Pelletier, Judy- 2:13 PM:

@Tim, If a business is to stay open, they are afraid their customers will look at being trade certified as negative - not being made in USA.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:13 PM:

@Judy - That was my assumption.

Story, Christy- 2:15 PM:

@Judy, I agree some firms are concerned of negative reputation.

Omran, Christina- 2:16 PM:

@Judy, I agree.

Uceta, Marjories- 2:14 PM:

Cost and time are potential concerns to employers.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:14 PM:

@Marjories - Cost to provide the required information? Or thinking there is an additional cost on them?

Uceta, Marjories- 2:15 PM:

They think participating in Trade will be an additional cost to them

Theberge, Timothy- 2:16 PM:

@Marjories - Thanks. We'll make a note to maybe address that in some of our materials.

Criscuolo, Joe- 2:15 PM:

@Tim, I sometimes think if the employer does not see a direct benefit to them, they won't take the initiative.

Omran, Christina- 2:16 PM:

@Tim, has OTAA hosted a petition and/or certification process overview covering the steps and the basics specifically for employers? Maybe this took place in the past, and if so, I'd appreciate that link. Employers are not educated on the process and it can be a lot for them to take in and learn.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:17 PM:

@Christina - Once, in the long long ago days, ETA did a few business specific events. We do have materials for employers more recently, but nothing more formal or through a partner like the Chamber.

Manikowski, Susan- 2:18 PM:

@Christina, we put together a video for company officials on our website:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/tradeact/officials>

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Manikowski, Susan- 2:18 PM:

It is 6 minutes and goes over the benefits but then also discusses the process.

Story, Christy- 2:19 PM:

@Susan, I really like the video, I just wonder how many firms actually go to the website to see it.

Allen, Monique- 2:20 PM:

@Susan, I like the video. I use it at Rapid Response events. It says it all.

Manikowski, Susan- 2:22 PM:

@Monique - Great! I'm glad the video is helpful!

Manikowski, Susan- 2:22 PM:

@Christy - We do include the link to the video in the customer service letter the officials get when a petition gets assigned, but yes, it is hard to know how many actually use that link.

Detling, Jennifer- 2:23 PM:

@Susan, it's good to know you provide it to them. I've sent it to employers along with our flyer on the benefits, if it seems like they have a lot of questions.

James, Harron- 2:23 PM:

@ Susan, is the video offered in different languages , especially for populated cities with diverse languages spoken?

Theberge, Timothy- 2:24 PM:

@Harron - No. Currently only in English.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:24 PM:

We could probably do a Spanish one, but not sure we have other languages available in our Office.

James, Harron- 2:24 PM:

@ Tim, has this caused any barriers ?

Theberge, Timothy- 2:27 PM:

@Harron - It's hard to say. We know that states have worked with worker groups from dozens of different languages. I've seen several of those first hand. As for outreach to employers whose primary language is not English, we don't have many materials describing what TAA is other than the petition.

James, Harron- 2:27 PM:

@Tim, thanks for the information.

Omran, Christina- 2:25 PM:

@Tim, thank you. I believe some employers would tune in if OTAA did a training. Having said that, I cannot speak for other states and what they would find useful or helpful.

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Story, Christy- 2:27 PM:
@Christina, I agree

Bruce, Deborah- 2:27 PM:
@Susan Thank you for the video link

Story, Christy- 2:16 PM:
@Tim, I also think some firms are also hesitant to have "government" investigating anything dealing with their business.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:19 PM:
@Christy - I made the mistake of flashing my DOL credentials at a paper mill in Maine. Brought the place to a standstill until I clarified that I wasn't from OSHA...

Story, Christy- 2:19 PM:
@Tim, I can totally see that happening!!

Pelletier, Judy- 2:20 PM:
@Tim, Yes thanks Tim - took some time for the town to work w/ us!

Detling, Jennifer- 2:17 PM:
@Tim, I think many employers automatically gravitate towards "these layoffs were not due to trade", so getting them to a place where you can explain more about what qualifies as trade impact is really important. Yes, I think they get worried about bad publicity or perhaps they were trying to keep the layoffs quiet so they aren't thrilled that the TAA process is initiated.

cureton, floyd- 2:17 PM:
I've had very caring employers contact TAA directly to see if TAA could help their laid off employees. The employers want to help their employees as much as possible.

Uceta, Marjories- 2:19 PM:
@Tim - In terms of the concern of "time, some employers believe they will need to gather important documentation or reports on analysis of business. This will required staff to dedicate time for such research. This adds to what @Christy mentioned about having "government" investigating them.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:21 PM:
@Majories - For sure. The investigation process does require some information, some of which many firms would rather not share. It is important to remind them that it is confidential and that if they are going to have to dismiss workers, they might as well help them.

Story, Christy- 2:26 PM:
@everyone, do you think developing a working relationship with the firm prior to them having the need to layoff is beneficial? Do you think it is a good strategy?

Theberge, Timothy- 2:28 PM:
@Christy - *steps on soapbox* - This is why we say Rapid Response never ends and should be

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part of the full business cycle. The workforce system needs to work with employers / businesses throughout the business cycle so that they don't only see us as the vultures.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:28 PM:

The more you can integrate workforce development with the folks in your state that do economic development, the more successful you will be with that.

Story, Christy- 2:29 PM:

@Tim, I agree. Missouri has "ramped up" our outreach via employer engagement to increase/improve working relationships across the spectrum with employers.

Waters, Jhansi- 2:28 PM:

@everyone, what websites do firms frequently go to for "information" maybe posting the video Susan mentioned on other websites (if possible) would be helpful

Theberge, Timothy- 2:33 PM:

@Jhansi - That's a great idea. I'm told RI did some cross posting on their Commerce site.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:31 PM:

So, what about workers?

Story, Christy- 2:32 PM:

@Tim, our hope is that by providing services and building a relationship with employers/firms prior to them needing to reduce their workforce will assist them with layoff aversion and if layoff is inevitable allow a smoother/friendlier process to assist the affected workers.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:32 PM:

TAA offers the most comprehensive set of benefits and services in the entire workforce development system. Yet our take-up rate (nationally) has rarely been over 50%.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:32 PM:

@Christy - In addition, states need to think of them as not "just" employers. The relationship has to be more than transactional.

Story, Christy- 2:36 PM:

@Tim, I agree. We like to refer to employers/firms as our partners, because they are our partners in the workforce system, just as are workers, and other service providers. Each partner has a role and a purpose in the system.

Criscuolo, Joe- 2:36 PM:

@Tim we are really starting to ramp up our efforts with reaching out to the workers. Before, we would just send apps to the workers on the employer list and wait to see if they return the app. Now we work the list, calling and emailing them and encouraging them to send back the app and participate in a live TAA orientation webinar.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:36 PM:

@Joe - And? Any change in interest?

Pelletier, Judy- 2:37 PM:

@Joe, Peer Support is a great worker outreach tool

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Theberge, Timothy- 2:38 PM:

@Judy - And is actually specifically included in the House Ways and Means proposed reauthorization.

Criscuolo, Joe- 2:38 PM:

Yes. It has generated more interest from the workers and more of them are returning the app. We also made our app available online.

Pelletier, Judy- 2:38 PM:

With Peer Support Workers we always have a great % of Trade enrollment.

Criscuolo, Joe- 2:39 PM:

@Judy. Yes, we want to look into that as well. Well also saw that in the proposed reauthorization.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:39 PM:

@Judy - And it's a built in tool for recruiting new career counselors!

Story, Christy- 2:41 PM:

@Judy, can you provide more information regarding how PA uses Peer Support Workers? MO does not currently use them.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:42 PM:

@Christy - @Judy is with Maine. There is a state law about PSWs in Maine.
<https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/26/title26sec2062.html>

Story, Christy- 2:43 PM:

@Tim. Thank you

Theberge, Timothy- 2:44 PM:

Required for all layoffs over 100. Optional for 50+. Note that no legislation is required. This is allowable under WIOA, TAA, WP, etc.

Pelletier, Judy- 2:45 PM:

@Christy, I have a job description and position announcement if you would like -
judith.a.pelletier@maine.gov

Theberge, Timothy- 2:45 PM:

@Judy - Make sure we have that so we can double check if it is already posted on the TAA Community. Thanks!

Waters, Jhansi- 2:38 PM:

@Tim PA has also ramped up outreach efforts similar to what @Joe described. Currently tracking our success and where to improve.

Pelletier, Judy- 2:36 PM:

@Tim, Sometimes the low take up rate is due to the timing between a petition being filed and approved. Workers go on and gain reemployment and are not interested in services.

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Theberge, Timothy- 2:37 PM:
@Judy - Indeed.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:46 PM:
Social media, texts? Billboards? Radio spots? Any good successes on things like that?

Criscuolo, Joe- 2:49 PM:
@Tim.. Nope, but give me the word and I'll get a billboard put up on 1-95 tomorrow! :)

Theberge, Timothy- 2:49 PM:
@Joe - Depending on the size of the layoff, it wouldn't be unreasonable.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:50 PM:
Space on those digital ones isn't that expensive.

Criscuolo, Joe- 2:50 PM:
@Tim - I will definitely keep that in mind.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:54 PM:
So, we are at 5 minutes left. Last call on program messaging.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:55 PM:
If reauthorization goes through, there will be new renewed emphasis on sustained outreach.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:56 PM:
With that, we'll be looking to all of you to spread the word on what works.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:56 PM:
We're up against the hour. Thank you all for joining us. We hope these chats are helpful.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:56 PM:
They provide us some great insight to what issues you are dealing with and what topics you need to hear from us and your peers on.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:56 PM:
And, as always, make sure to check out the resources and other items available at:
<https://taa.workforcegps.org>

Theberge, Timothy- 2:57 PM:
The transcript of this session will be made available in the next day or two. It is transmitted to the ETA Regional Offices and the state trade coordinators since GPS does not provide us a list of your email addresses.

Theberge, Timothy- 2:57 PM:
We'll keep you posted on reauthorization as that moves along. Make sure to join us for our next TA events and the ever-popular Office Hours.