**The 80% Solution**

In the recently released DSS ***National Disability Employment Framework - Issues Paper May 2015*** (on page 10) it says “*32% of DES Employment Assistance job seekers were in employment for three months following participation in DES.”*

While this is considered an improvement upon older schemes, a one third outcome rate is not really a great figure, indeed it is a poor outcome rate. Firstly as an intervention there is no clear control group (e.g. what would be the outcome rate for a matched group of jobseekers with a disability who had no participation in any employment program) and secondly, if this was for example a medical intervention it would be regarded as a very poor treatment outcome rate, or indeed If only one third of clients going into a barber shop came out with a haircut that would be a very poor service.

From an actuarial perspective, as set out in the recent Welfare Reform Review and the National Mental Health Commission Plan, the actual cost and lost opportunity cost of a lifetime of remaining on welfare for a single person and their associated carer(s) in in the millions of dollars. A whole of government solution to this dreadful situation is required and an approach that gets real sustainable outcomes for the significant majority of participants is needed morally and economically.

Of course shifting somebody with multiple disadvantages (e.g. disability and psycho-social circumstances) from a situation of (A) vulnerability to lifetime dependency on welfare to becoming (B) a tax paying worker for their entire working life (e.g. 18 to 70) is not a simple process.

The key question here is NOT to limit ones investigation to what the current and past programs have been and simply ask how we might tweak their evolution, THE KEY QUESTION SHOULD BE: **What is actually required for a lifetime shift from A to B in the case of any particular person and for the significant majority of all Australians with a Disability**.

**Proposed Solution: The following is intended as a proposal for a national pilot project that could be called “The 80% solution”.**

The metaphor here is the construction industry. If the outcomes of a project can be defined (to renovate a house, or build a bridge, etc.) then quotes are obtained from builders/engineering companies to deliver those outcomes. A company’s reputation and prospect of repeat business is dependent upon delivering the contracted outcomes for the price quoted.

The proposal is that licenced employment agencies quote per person to obtained agreed sustainable open employment outcomes. Agencies that do not succeed, do not obtain repeat business.

An experienced person builder knows that several factors or steps need to be attended to sustainably deliver desired outcomes. In a “social engineering” context to really and effectively deal with each of the success and barrier factors (e.g. necessary level of physical health and fitness, family or carer support, accommodation and transport, mental health stability, etc.) has a real cost. Thus a “quote” for a particular individual would need based upon sound knowledge and of course be fully itemised.

What is unique about this model?

1. Each individual jobseeker stands alone and is individually contacted with or for
2. It is only outcomes that are purchased
3. There is no set price for obtaining those outcome (i.e. the price is free floating)
4. It is also possible that agencies could competitively bid for achieving those outcomes for particular individuals

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