

The Need

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- DBS did not have a formal quality assurance system.
- Lacked a consistent definition of quality
- Division collected a lot of data
 - Not aligned in terms of specific ways of defining quality or compliance.
- Internal audit identified a need

Setting

- Texas Blind was achieving above average results and is viewed as a leader in the field of blindness
- We had a number of QA activities in place
- DBS did not want a cookie cutter approach to quality
 - Design practical and unique system for DBS
- Role of consultant
 - Not to design and hand DBS a quality program
 - Guide thinking process about what quality means to DBS
 - Goal: Make quality system visible

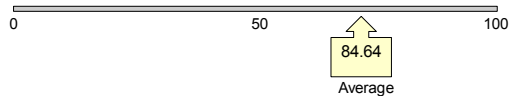
DBS Quality System Efforts

DBS had multiple initiatives and reports addressing quality

- **Planning**
 - DBS Internal Planning
 - Goal Setting
 - Internal (BPPP)
 - State Level (ABEST)
 - VR State Plan
 - RCT, SILC – input, collaboration
 - VR State Plan
 - State Plan for Independent Living
 - DARS Roadmap
 - HHSC Strategic Plan
- **Systems**
 - Case Management System (TWorks)
 - Edits
 - Reports
 - Queries
 - VR Manual, IL Manual
 - VR Coordinators, IL Coordinators
 - Quarterly meetings with Field Directors, VR Coordinators, IL Coordinators
- **Systems**
 - Vendor Qualifications
 - Staff Development
 - Staff Training
 - FUTURES
 - DARS Leadership Institute
- **Monitoring/Oversight**
 - Reports (TWorks reports, RSA-2, RSA-911, RSA-113, RSA-7 OB, ABEST, Standards and Indicators)
 - Case Reviews
 - Program Consultants – Technical Assistance, Oversight
 - Consumer Satisfaction Survey at closure
 - Staff Performance Appraisals
 - Survey of Organizational Excellence
 - Internal Audit
 - State Auditor's Office
 - RSA Monitoring Review
 - Employer Survey (under development)

DBS Quality Self-Assessment

- Overall, DBS leadership assessed their quality performance level as a B+ or better.
- The underlying concern of most participants was that their perception was not based on hard data



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The Design Process & Key Lessons Learned

Doug Wilson

Quality Project Objectives

DBS defined its desired objectives for their quality program

- Simple system
 - Add no additional work responsibilities at counselor level
 - Easy to use and do no harm
- Develop a common definition with clear quality expectations with consistent interpretation uniformly applied statewide
- Focus on critical measures (critical few)
- Utilize the quality components in place
- Align and integrate existing tools into 1 system
 - Refine current QA tools to eliminate duplicative or low value
 - Align tools

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Key Lessons Learned

DBS had a strong focus on quality but was not achieving the desired alignment

1. Multiple quality definitions created false sense of alignment
 - Common terms used but not unclear meanings
 - Used same term with different behaviors in mind
 - Management had just as many different definitions as staff

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Staff Quality Definitions

The most common definitions focused on excellence, meeting expectations and goals

Field (49)	CCRC (11)	Central Office (19)
Excellence every time (7)	Level of excellence that someone has obtained (4)	Consumer satisfaction (4)
Comprehensive service delivery in a timely manner to meet expectations (6)	Consumer focused outcomes (3)	Meeting or exceeding consumer expectations (4)
Successful outcomes, Consumer goal achievement (completion of EP) (5)	The positive outcome of a service (2)	Excellence (3)
Meeting or exceeding expectations (2)	Ability to meet established goals (2)	Providing superior consumer focused services in a timely manner(3)
Providing consumers with best of everything	Services that best enable and empower blind people to successfully compete and gain jobs (2)	Use of rehab funds within guidelines
Consistency, General standard taken up a notch	How well or thoroughly a job gets done given the needs of the individual	Highest possible standards

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How Did DBS Measure Quality?

When leaders defined how they measured quality, they mentioned consumer satisfaction, compliance and activity most often

- **Mission Related**
 - Consistency of hitting mission
 - # of blind consumers employed
- **Compliance**
 - Use of budget
 - Legislative Budget board metrics
 - Feedback from consumer groups
 - Average cost per case
- **Consumer Satisfaction**
 - Customer Satisfaction survey
 - Employer satisfaction with consumer
 - Exit survey
 - Survey or Excellence
 - Voice of consumer
- **Impact or Outcome**
 - Average weekly earnings
 - Successful outcomes
 - % consumers retaining jobs after 1 year
- **Activity**
 - # of successful employment outcomes
 - Case reviews (compliance monitoring)
 - Counselor individual goals
 - Pipeline report
 - Caseload inventories
 - RACs
- **Staff Satisfaction**
 - Morale of team

Disconnect between definitions and measurement

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Key Lessons Learned

2. Five types of metrics were used, all of which are important, but none of which directly measured quality
 1. Quantity (Pipeline)
 2. Compliance and Expectations of Employment
 3. Customer Service
 4. Timeliness
 5. Cost Effectiveness

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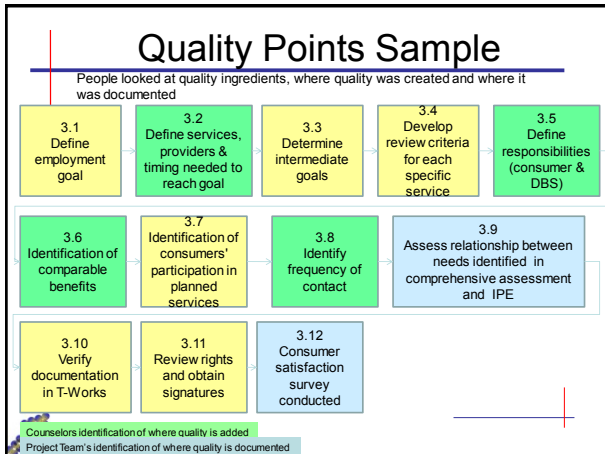
Key Lessons Learned

Counselors and Managers had an overlapping view of where quality was created

3. When process was mapped, both counselors and managers had a common view of where quality was added but with a slightly different perspective

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DBS Mission & Vision

DBS Mission

To work in **partnership** with Texans who are blind or visually impaired to **reach their goals**.

DBS Vision

A Texas where people who are blind or visually impaired enjoy the same opportunities as other Texans to **pursue independence and employment**.

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Key Lessons Learned

DBS Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles statements provided direction to the quality program effort

4. The mission defined outcomes in 3 critical areas

1. Employment
2. Increased independence
3. Consumer choice and partnership

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Key Lessons Learned

5. Quality is baked in throughout the process

- Quality ingredients were throughout the process
- Subtle but critically important inputs
- Quality of ingredients can be measured, but by themselves, they are not quality

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Key Lessons Learned

6. How the consumer plan was developed was the foundation of quality
 - Assessment data was an important ingredient
 - Counselors had to think about the consumer plan differently
 - Focus first on solution, then actions
 - Implications for counselor behavior and training
 - Key point of partnership

Key Lessons Learned

7. Vocational Rehabilitation Manual had potential as a significant quality job aid
 - used to formally address quality and quality ingredients
 - Compliance and expectations of employment had to be documented in the manual but were separated from quality behaviors

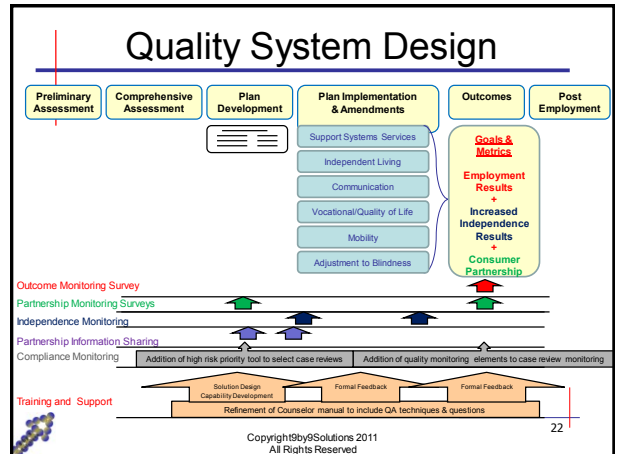
Key Lessons Learned

8. Previous consumer satisfaction surveys focused on customer service, not partnership
 - Important but not the sole focus
 - Shift in focus
9. New quality approach meant very high previous consumer satisfaction ratings would likely change initially
 - Was management prepared?

Key Lessons Learned

10. Line management desired individual counselor quality be measured
 - Quality measured by how defined process is followed
 - QA measures quality at the end
 - If problems identified, conduct root cause analysis (RCA) to find and correct cause
11. Quality system could not be threatening if it had a chance of being implemented
 - Quality measured at program level, not counselor level
 - Quality based on sampling, not 100% tracking

QA Design



Results and Impact

DBS Perspective on Project Impact

- What was different?
 - Quality reflects the DBS Mission and Vision Statements.
 - Provides a quality dashboard to focus on 3 critical components of quality
 - VR Manual includes quality and compliance throughout.
 - Does not just look at “26” closures.
 - Surveys the consumer after plan development and at closure

Questions asked After IPE Development

- **My counselor does a good job of explaining what's going on.**
 - Strongly Agree --Agree
 - Undecided --Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
- **My counselor does a good job of staying in touch with me regarding the process of my case.**
- **I agreed to the evaluations that were set up for me.**
- **Evaluations and other services were provided on a timely basis.**

Questions asked After IPE Development

- **I was actively involved in choosing my employment goal.**
- **I was actively involved in choosing the services and service providers to help me achieve my employment goal.**
- **My understanding of how my progress toward my employment goal will be evaluated is:**
 - Very Clear --Clear
 - Undecided --Unclear
 - Very unclear

Questions asked After IPE Development

- **My understanding of how my progress toward my employment goal will be evaluated is:**
 - Very Clear --Clear
 - Undecided --Unclear
 - Very unclear
- **My understanding of my responsibilities and the agency's responsibilities regarding my Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is:**
- **Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?**

Questions Asked at Closure

- **I have increased skills because of the services I received through DBS.**
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Undecided
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
- **My counselor listened to and considered my needs and concerns.**

Questions Asked at Closure

- I was an active partner in making decisions.
- I was actively involved in choosing my employment goal and the services I received.
- I received the services that my counselor and I planned.

Questions Asked at Closure (con't)

- I received my planned services within a reasonable period of time.
- The services I received through DBS helped me obtain or maintain my job.
- My job is a good match for what I was looking for.

- After I became employed my counselor contacted me at least one time before my case was closed.

- Yes
- No
- I don't remember
- Not Applicable

How would you rate your overall experience with the Division for Blind Services?

- Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

Next Steps

- We are piloting a self-addressed post-card that consumers will rate vendors.
- DARS is working on methods for counselors to rate vendors.
- DARS has a listing of all CRP's on our intranet.
- Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center programs have been redesigned.



Questions?