

RESPECTABILITY
Embracing Changes and Breaking Down Silos
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Welcome to the RespectAbility webinar. Embracing changes and breaking down silos to achieve maximum results. Your presenter, Marty Linsky.

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I will turn it over to our moderate and speaker, President of RespectAbility USA. Please begin.

Hello and welcome.

We are delighted that you joined us for this webinar. This webinar is going to go through some meaty issues that are complicated as we are dealing with trying to get better performance metrics for people with disabilities. And that's the issues of change and breaking down silos and getting the attention of the right bosses and the governor and the other people who really control the budgets and the time lines and everything.

So I'm really delighted to have such an expert speaker. Marty Linsky is the author or coauthor of more than a dozen books or chapters including the R. in Leadership, Leadership on the Line. In the link here you see a link to his Amazon page where you can buy any books that you might be interested in. I have actually read I think all of his books or many of his

books. And found them really, really helpful in my work and that's why I wanted to have him on with us today.

He taught at the Harvard Kennedy School since 1982. Except for 92 to 95 when he was chief secretary to Massachusetts Governor William Geld. He is a graduate of Williams College and Harvard Law School. He has been a journalist, a lawyer, a politician. He served as minority leader of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, as a reporter for the "Boston Globe" and editor of the Real Paper. He is a really smart guy and happens to be a really nice guy. I was very privileged to have him be my coach for years. And so I turn it over so that we can see Marty's face.

Operator if we can see Marty. Marty, welcome for joining us.

It's a pleasure to be here and to work with you again.

Well, it's delightful to have you and I know that this is not your issue set. You don't work day to day on the disability side of issues. What you work on is helping people think through big problems that need new solutions. And so let me start off by just observing something that I thought was pretty interesting. That was that when we sent out the invitation to the webinar we sent it out to governors and people from all kinds of different streams of public life that have to do with work force development, work force boards, work force agencies. Most of the people who signed up for the webinar are people who have been working with the people with disabilities for a long time. Whether they are in vocational rehabilitation or whether they work for a nonprofit that is really devoted to employment and people with disabilities. First of all how do we capture the imagination and attention of the other stakeholders who have really something to contribute and someplace to be held accountable to look at these issues?

That's a great observation. I must say I am not surprised to hear that because what we have done today is replicate the problem. The sign up for this webinar mirrors the problem in the larger community which is for most people in government and public affairs what the law says notwithstanding as far as they are concerned the issues around people with disabilities are someone else's problem. They haven't had to deal with it. They have been avoiding dealing with it for a long time. And that's the way they prefer it to be. So not joining in this webinar is both manifestation and a metaphor for a much deeper problem that you are trying to deal with. I don't think it's

surprising at all.

How do we go about addressing that? Actually, before you even answer that question, just as an observation of somebody who has worked with a lot of governments on a lot of different policy issues, why do you think it is that we have not moved the needle on employment for people with disabilities?

There is a lot of serious research about this and I'm not an expert at it. But just looking from the outside, I was on the board of the Jewish vocational service 30, 40 years ago in Boston. So I remember some experience in dealing with some of similar kinds of issues a long time ago. But thinking about it from a broader perspective of leadership and change, it seems to me we have to start with the proposition but the way things are now are the way people want them to be. So the level of attention that work force agencies and state governments have paid to people with disabilities up to now is the way they want it to be. The current reality is not an accident. People are busy. People have their priorities. The work with people with disabilities, my observation is uncomfortable for people. It challenges their own expertise. They are afraid if you are a big manager that you will be incompetent. You are not sure how to deal with people who are blind or are in wheel chairs. There is a lot of discomfort that is associated with this and it's why people are ignoring the challenges because people want to stay where they feel confident and comfortable. Particularly if you're trying to approach people at very high levels of authority. Governors and department heads and senior staff people and for them you are pushing them into a space where their own sense of their own expertise is challenged.

How do you deal with that issue of approaching a leader about an issue where they don't feel they have expertise and frankly they've got other priorities that they rather be dealing with than your issues?

Well, my own experience and observation is the two basic ideas here. One is you have to deal with people experientially. The facts are not really compelling. The facts may be relevant, but they are not controlling. So giving people a lot and lot of information more facts and more for ideas are people who will be moved by that are already moved. They are already with you and helping and collaborating. But clearly there aren't enough of them who are going to be persuaded by the facts and the information. You are really talking about two other things. If you want to take a book out of the gay marriage movement play

book, for example, there are two pieces that are really important, I think, to the success over the last decade.

The first is they force people to experience the reality that they were talking about. So my assumption is that there are a lot of people in senior authority positions that are really important to you who have never spent time working collaboratively dealing with people with disabilities in a professional setting. Their only exposure with people with disabilities is in protective settings in some non-work situation. So it is really critical that they begin to break down their discomfort and lack of experience. There are a lot and lot of ways of doing that. But that's one idea. Putting people face to face with the experience is a critical piece.

The second piece which is related but different. I mean, you are one of the best politicians I know, Jennifer. I think you probably understand this better than most people. You have to push people beyond where they feel comfortable. So what you did and I'm not saying this in any of making advantage of it but descriptive mechanism you invited all of these people by the same invitation route and the people who signed up or the people who are the people who are already committed. What that says to me is that you in order to get people to sign up for this webinar you have to use invitation routes which are out of the norm. 20 phone calls to a governor's office would have produced some staff person on this webinar because they would begin to say, and the only way to get general of off my back is to say yes. Now a lot of people, particularly in my experience, is people who are doing God's work, who are mission driven, they don't get up in the morning and say how can I make my governor and staff feel uncomfortable today. I'm in the business of helping not making people uncomfortable. I'm in the business of making people comfortable about doing good. Not in the business of making trouble. But leading deep change which is the business you are in is a disruptive activity. And in order for you to make more progress than you have made in the past, you will have to disrupt people who are comfortable with the way they have been doing business for a long, long time. A change in the law is not enough. There has to be changes that you can use the law to help you force change and they can use the law to tell their people why they have to change. In order to get people metaphorically and literally to sign up nor webinar, you have to do something more than just send them an invitation.

So what's an example from your work or something you have observed where someone was trying to make social change and they were able to get that kind of attention that we can translate into this problem that we are trying to solve?

Of course, again, this is bringing calls to Newcastle because if someone else asked me that question I would say call Jennifer because she understands that business as well as anybody else. I'm thinking now when you ask that question of a woman who we both know whose passion is gender equity. She is devoted her life to gender equity and has done it without having a big job. Without having formal responsibility, without running a large organization. But she has made enormous progress by using whatever tools she needed to use in order to make progress. One of the things that constrains people, particularly people in mission driven situations is their resistance to use in tools and tactics which make them feel uncomfortable. Never mind make others feel uncomfortable. So the willingness to be able to get into somebody's face. To be relentless. To be a pain in the neck. To bring 20 people to a meeting instead of bringing one person to a meeting. To not take no for an answer. All of those kinds of behaviors which, quote, nice people don't do, are really necessary when all of the nice things that you try to do aren't successful.

I want to use this because it's our live case today. I want to use this webinar as a metaphor for that. If everybody on this webinar, everybody who has signed up for this webinar had made two or three visits to someone they think would benefit from this experience, who had not been involved with disabilities but would be useful to work force development for people with disabilities going forward, if everyone would have signed up, the 130, 140 people signed up, if each of them had gone and made several visits to a couple of people that they wanted to come, that number would be would have been much higher and people would be involved in this conversation who hadn't been involved before. Does that help? Does that make sense?

It does. And actually, Marty, as we have been approaching this issue with the governors ourselves and you know I met one-on-one with 40 of the governors is we have been very pushy and trying to get meetings with them and try to be also very polite to them at the same time. We gave them good information, but at the end of the day the most important selling tool for us was to get the governor to do a site visit to a location where employees with disabilities helped the employer make money. That ultimately is the big sell for us was the eyewitness account they took away

the pity frame. It wasn't look how I'm helping poor Johnny who has these different challenges in his life, oh, this sad person. This employer took them in and now isn't that nice that he can afford to go to McDonald's. But instead went to the employers for whom it was meeting their business growth needs. Their business survival and profit needs. And bringing governors to visit those sites like Scott Walker of Wisconsin who has visited many of them like Governor Jack Markell who didn't need anyone to ask him but went on his own but other governors to do the site inspection. My biggest advice then would be for the people on this call to think about what are the places in your area where it is meeting the needs of the employers and it is something that can be replicated.

So you don't want it to be a place where guys got a small business. He is employing one person with a disability. The business is not going to be expanding. The situation is so unique you want to be taking a look at a large federal contractor who has legal obligations to hire or you want to look at somebody who has a growing business and it can be replicated in many places. Is that what you are thinking, Marty?

No, let me put it in a slightly broader frame. What you are saying is those folks, those governors who made those site visits are not doing it because they care about people with disabilities. They are doing it because they care about reducing unemployment in Delaware and Wisconsin. So you aren't asking them to buy into your issue. You are buying into their issue. And that's a real difference. Part of the problem here is sometimes we want people to do the right thing for the same reason we are doing the right thing. And the people who are going to do the right thing for the same reason are already doing it. So the only way to approach people who for whom this is not been a high priority is to say to yourself, well, what is their high priority? What do they care about? What's important to them? We are heading into an election year.

So what that means is that for a lot of governors and a lot of state legislators what is important to them is getting votes. And getting votes is something that people who care about people with disabilities can help them do. So they are not going to commit themselves during the election year to doing something they haven't been willing to do because it's the right thing. They are going to commit themselves during election year to doing what they haven't been doing because it's going to help them do in an election year which is get elected.

So I would encourage people. I think your example is a good example. Because what you are saying is I'm not trying to convince them that this is a good thing. I'm trying to convince them that I can help them achieve what they are trying to achieve.

So this is not about Governor Markell's caring about people with disabilities this is not about Governor Walker caring about people caring about people with disabilities. It's about the care being their priorities which is to reduce unemployment. It's a very big leap and it's particularly in my experience particularly a difficult leap for people who are so mission driven. It's to say look, I'm not going to try to convince them that they should do this because it's the right thing to do. I'm going to convince them that I can help them achieve something that they want to achieve. That's a big difference. And for some people that's very hard.

I'm really glad you raised that about the voters. We actually today put out the press release about our new blog, the RespectAbility Report on the presidential candidates. If you look at the last presidential cycle, Mitt Romney never talked about employment for people with disabilities. We have been meeting with the candidates and reaching out to them and asking them to talk about it and we are seeing that this time both sides of the aisle are starting to talk about these issues. We have a Twitter hashtag which is #pwdvote. That is really our campaign on this and are blogging on this. That can help with the governor that's up for reelection. But in many cases it's not the political person. It's the civil servant. It's the person who is the head of the work force board or the work force agency. It's the person who is the secretary of transportation labor or health care. All of these people are supposed to according to the new law be sitting together on advisory committees to make this new plan for their state. How do you suggest that the people from the disability community whether they are an individual advocate or a disability organization or they are voc. rehab, how do they use this opportunity of the legal structure that they are supposed to be these meetings of this task force to come up with a statewide work force strategy as a way to really create success for our population.

I think you should probably be meeting with their general counsels and saying to them that this is the law and your boss has not been very compliant with the law and we really don't want to see a story in the front page of the newspaper that says

that your boss is avoiding complying with the law and helping people with disabilities but you are beginning to leave us no choice. Because now that you have got this piece of leverage, the question is how do you use it? If I'm a department heads the Department of Health, the Department of Labor or something, I have a full plate. I'm working very hard. I'm doing important work. And you are a virus. You are intruding into that and you got to make me pay attention in some way. I know all about people with disabilities. I know enough. But you have to find a way to get my attention in a way you haven't been able to do that in the past. The law gives you some leverage. I'm a lawyer or I was trained as a lawyer. I'm not a lawyer and never pay me for my legal advice, but I went to law school and I passed the bar and got the degree. You know, the law doesn't change anything. It's implementation of the law that changes something. So you have the law on the books and that's a great start. But putting that getting giving life and breathing life into that means if I'm the head of the Department of Labor or the Commissioner of Health, I have to do something different than what I have been doing. And it means that something that I have been doing is not going to be as high priority as I want it to be. So you are forcing people to change their priorities. And it's not because they are good people or bad people. It's because they figured out how to survive and thrive in the context that they are in and you are adding a new element to it. I think you have to use some less than conventional ways of getting their attention.

That's why I think meeting with the legal counsel is the first thought that came to my head would be a good start. You want that legal counsel to go into his or her boss and say, you know, unless we begin to play well with others on this issue, we will get some very bad press and then our governor is going to go ballistic. Does that make sense?

It does. You know interestingly I don't think we have to go with the legal threat in many cases because in many cases the governors want to do the right thing. We met with them and they asked their staffs to do the right thing. But they are completely unused to working outside of their silo. Or working in collaboration. So walk us through let's assume the best intentions of a group of people. You have got education secretary, labor secretary, transportation secretary, voc. rehab, they are all in the same room. How do you work on an issue to help these groups break down their silos and succeed?

I think that the way, the best way, to understand is that the

problems are not in the room. You know look at the head, I hesitate to mention the subject knowing you and your passions, but you look at the Iran nuclear negotiations, it was not hard to figure out what an agreement could look like. I think the same thing is true in the Middle East. It's not hard to figure out what an agreement between the Palestinian authority and the State of Israel might look like. Those are technical problems. Experts can figure that out. The problem in the negotiations with Iran were that the American side and the Iranian side had to deal with their people back home that was the problem. The problem is not the technical agreement. The problem is the politics back home. I think that's just true in the Middle East as it was in the Iranian nuclear negotiations as it is in the situation you are describing. So you put those people around a table. They can work out a comprehensive plan. It's not very hard. It's very simple. It's very straightforward. There are issues and they have to be sorted out but it's not a technically complex problem. What is a problem is when they go back to their people and say, you know, these three people that have been working on this issue for the last five years now they are going to have to stop working on it because I signed them up to work on disabilities. I signed them up to work on this collaborative effort. I signed them up to change the way we deal with people in sheltered settings. I don't know. But that's where it's a problem.

The conversation is not about what a good plan would look like for Delaware or Wisconsin or Massachusetts in New York or anywhere. The problem is how do we help the people around the table deal with the mess that we created for them by creating this agreement? Much less time needs to be spent on an agreement than if we have an agreement what problems is it going to cause for you?

I think it is fantasy, it's an illusion to think that this will be a win-win. When anybody tells me it's going to be a win-win, then I know nothing really important is going to happen. Because there are going to be some people who are going to experience this collaboration as a threat or a loss. And that's what holds back this kind of change. That's what keeps people in their silo. People like to do the work they know how to do. Who doesn't like particularly when you move up the food chain in your organization, who doesn't like to be competent and you are asking people to do something that they are not as sure they will be good at as what they are doing now. And that's very threatening to people. So what you are trying to do while it looks obvious and unquestionably a good thing, the people who

are pushing back who are not collaborating, it's not because they don't understand what you are trying to do and it's not because they don't even think intellectually it's a good idea. It's not because they don't get it. It's because they do get it and they don't like it. Now they can't say they don't like it because how can you say I'm against the law and I'm against people with disabilities. Nobody can say that. So the manifestation of it, and using our metaphor is not signing up for the webinar. They don't have to deal with it. Does make sense?

Let's imagine you got a great program that has been operating for a long time in a state for people who have come out of prison. Now they serve people coming out of prison and a lot of those people they have mental health issues but they are not dealing with the mental health issues of the individuals. They are sort of putting them on the we don't want to see recidivism and we are trying to get them a job category and now you are coming along and saying we have to put a disability lens on this conversation. So what might the conversation look like to try and make people feel less threatened and more embracing of thinking through some change that might get some better outcomes?

Well, it depends on who you are talking to. Because one of the things about this business of deep change is that it's not a wholesale business. It's a retail business. You tell me who you are talking to and I will tell you how to deal with them because it goes back to what we were saying before. It's not about you and your issue. It's about them and their issues. So you have to understand what is important to them. What they care about in order to make progress where you haven't been made before when you are asking them to shake up their own priority. It depends who you talk to. Give me an example of someone who you have been talking to.

Let me turn it over to our audience a bit to let them writing in some problems that they are having. I mean, maybe people can write in now. All of you who are listening, if you want to type in a situation that you are facing where you like some ideas for how to deal with it. Operator, do you want to give any instructions on how to do that, if you would?

Yes, to submit a chat message simply type in your message at the bottom of the chat window and hit enter in your keyboard.

So while we are waiting for that, you know, I think there is a

lot of different levels, Marty, of who that person might be. I mean at some point it might be the budget people who put together the budget who were saying, you know, I recognize that if we get people with disabilities into work that it reduces the amount of cost to the Federal Government in their disability benefits but the expense to solve the problem comes from the state budget. Why should the state budget spend money to save money from the federal budget, for example. That's something that I know a lot of issues face. What are your thoughts on that issue?

I think that's a very tough one because if they are making a rational calculation that from a budget perspective is going to cost the state net cost to the state money to do what you want them to do, then saving money is not going to be a good argument and they aren't going to be the right people to start with because that's their highest value is creating a balanced budget. And that means using all of the federal dollars they can get and saving all of the state dollars they can find. So it seems to me the budget people are probably not the right people to approach unless you should happened to find that a budget director or an associate budget director has a family member who has a disability and which case they are going to look at the issue quite different lie than if that were not the differently than if that were not the case.

First, if the budget is a really critical leverage place for you. The first thing I would want to know is to survey the budget directors and the associate budget directors and see if any of them have had personal experience with people with disabilities and what that has been like. What have they brought from that. Again, it's not on the merits. And you are quite right to identify that as a challenge if they see from their value, which is saving money, that this is not a good deal. Or that it's a good deal in the long run but not in the short run so it won't happen on their watch.

One thing that we saw that was really exciting was that the state of Wisconsin has invested in some youth employment programs like project search and some other things that are very successful and they were able to get enough people off benefits that they tapped into what was almost like a reward program from the Federal Government that they spent money, the money caused people to get off benefits in the Federal Government wound up sending them \$4 million for the state basically a very big thank you prize for saving the Federal Government so much money. And that wound up being a really good way to go for them.

I think that their vocational rehabilitation director in Wisconsin deserves a lot of credit for figuring out how to spend money wisely to help people get off benefits so then they can get the money back from for the state which really helped a lot.

Again, the point here which I think is really the central idea is that it's not about getting people to care more about people with disabilities. It's about understanding what people do care about and fitting this issue into what they care about. So if you can say to people there is a part of federal money which you can access if you do these four things which is what I want you to do but I don't want you to do it because of the federal money, but if I can get you to do it because of the federal money, that's fine. We don't care why people do the right thing from our perspective. We want them to do the right thing and the people who are going to do the right thing because it's the right thing are already doing it. People we were looking at are people who the merits really are not convincing. But saying to them, you care about money, and there is a part of federal money which you can access if you do these four things, that's going to make a difference for them.

Right, right. So Barbara W. is asking, how do you find out what businesses have federal contracts?

Actually, I know the answer to that. Which is really a wonderful magic secret answer which is that there is a website called fedspending.org, I believe is it. We have for every single state we have a PowerPoint that is on our website under resources for policy makers and there is a page that talks about the federal contractors in each state. And interestingly this nonprofit organization, I think it's fedspending.org, because they were compared they were concerned about different issues like Marty is talking about how sometimes you have to use somebody else's agenda to help yours, their agenda is that they are worried about sort of bribery in government. Who are the federal contractors making donations to politicians so they created a website through the government that shows every single federal contract in the country broken down by congressional district. So if you are or you were goodwill or voc. rehab, you want to know who are the federal contractors in my neighborhood that have these new 503 obligations to hire people with disabilities, believe it or not there is a website that links to every single name of every single business in your congressional district that has a federal contract.

By the way, it doesn't matter whether that contract is for a

billion dollars for a contract in Washington with Lockheed Martin or whether it's a \$50,000 contract. As long as the contract is for \$50,000 for any part of the company, it has to do with 100% of the company. And so you can always go into it and you can type in the name of the company. It has a search feature and you can see maybe they don't have the contract for something being done in your congressional district.

Maybe it's happening through their parent company in Washington but you can see whether they have those 503 obligations. It's really a wonderful tool to figure out what federal contractors have those obligations through the 503. However, if they have the obligation but there is no public transportation to that company, you have a problem. So now, Marty, you a problem that federal contractor "X," Lockheed Martin or the Marriott corporation or Hilton or somebody is really nearby but not on public transportation. How do you take that to go to the silos and deal with getting the Department of Transportation to maybe adjust a bus route or look at other issues like that.

I first will see what their legal obligations are or aren't. Try to see what the public transportation agency's record is with hiring with people with disabilities themselves my assumption if they are good at hiring people with disabilities that they will be more sensitive to the issue and in fact if you could organize the people with disabilities that work for them that would help them be even more sensitive to it.

Again.

Wait a minute. That's an interesting thought. I have to interrupt you. I have never heard anybody give that idea to organize the employees with disabilities within an organization beyond being in an ERG where they talk about just short of their own personal workplace challenges, but you are saying to essentially start an advocacy amongst their own employees?

Of course. They aren't going to I mean, if you went to them first and said, why don't you extend this bus to Lockheed Martin so these people can take their route and they said no, we can't do that it doesn't fit with our long range plan or whatever excuses they gave and then that might be a second step. I wouldn't start with that but that might be a second step. I would think for any of these public agencies that you are talking about that they are the one of the most powerful tools that you have is the people with disabilities that they already

hired. Not only because they see the capacity and potential for doing great work but also because they are beholden to those people and they are loyal to them and those people are going to have more influence on them than some outside advocate who is banging on their door.

That's interesting. I think the initial perception might be, oh, the person with disability who is in the workplace is sort of watching out for their own self-interest and not ready yet to carry somebody else's water.

And that may be true. That's the issue that people who are fighting for gender equity face all the time. That women who have made it to the top in the organization think that their job is done. And they don't want to use any of their political capital to try to help other women. That's something that you can help people move beyond. In my experience in the gender equity issue is that there is an enormous potential in that. It does mean putting yourself out there a little bit. But that's what we are talking about. That's again, I don't want to keep harping on it, but it is today's case is so useful. If everybody who signed up for this webinar had pushed themselves to go beat up on somebody who they wanted to come and listen to this webinar who they needed to collaborate with, there would be a lot of those people there. So it require everybody, all of us involved in this to do things a little bit differently than they otherwise would do. Because if you keep doing the same behavior, nothing is going to change. The only people we are can deal with are the 140 people or whatever the number is who are involved in this webinar. And for each of us to do something differently I mean, I will give you another case on today's case. I would not have done this if you hadn't asked me. I don't spend a lot of time doing pro bono work for anybody, but you are very hard person to say no to. And if I said no, I'm busy on this particular Tuesday, you would have said, when are you not busy, right? And you would have been after me until I said yes and your willingness to do that is what made you such a great change agent. So the constraints on making more progress than we have made in the past on work force development for people with disabilities are sitting right on this webinar. They are all of us.

But I'm in a much easier place because I'm an outside activist as opposed to somebody on state payroll. How does somebody on state payroll or working for one of the larger more established the ARC or goodwill or something. How do they go pushing us when they are worried about their own funding and own

survival of their agency?

They have some advantages. The glib answer is very carefully. But they have some advantages, too. Because in the same way that people with disabilities sometimes make other people uncomfortable, they also appeal to the better nature. So I would encourage anybody to try to do this alone and never encourage anybody to start by organizing a wheel chair demonstration outside of the governor's house. There are a lot of things you can do short of that which minimize the risk and danger that you will be marginalized or punished in some way. And part of it is not doing it alone. Not trying to be a lone wolf and a hero, but looking for people who are similar situated who can speak the same song and because you have a lot of people singing it, it's a much more powerful song than if you are singing it alone.

I agree with you. We make those calculations. We make risk calculations that are perfectly reasonable. What we are asking everybody on this webinar to do is to push that boundary just a little bit to see if you can make a little more progress than you have in the past.

So Sheldon is asking, so let's say we did this. He is asking. If each of us here today on the webinar was to reach out to two other people and get them on this call what would those two other people hear that would move them to action?

Well, they would hear something about we understand. We advocates understand that if you do what we were asking you to do it will cause you some problems. So we would like to understand what those problems are to see if we can help you. One of the important pieces of trying to lead deep change is being empathetic. People who are advocates too often are so focused on their advocacy and their commitment that they are talking passed the people they are trying to influence. So I want to know from people who are in that situation what's important to them? What do they care about? Why haven't they, what are they afraid of? What will happen if they were to be more collaborative with the other work force related agencies on behalf of the people with disabilities? I want to understand their problem. And if I were an advocate that's where I would start and I think that message to them is that we aren't asking you to do this because it's the right thing because it says so in the Bible and because God will punish you if you don't. We are asking people to do this because we can help them with problems that they have is the way to start making progress with

people who have been resistant to date.

Let's go back to that federal contract, and imagine that Marriott, Hilton or whatever hotel that needs to hire people to clean hotel rooms and to do kitchen prep and you've got a group of people coming out of school who have autism spectrum disorder or Down Syndrome or something that could make great employees for them. They could be great to have a project search site there, but they not on the public transportation route and you want to go to the mayor's office whoever, whoever controls the bus, and you want to say to them we want to have the bus stop go here. What problems does cause for you? How do you have that do you want to bring somebody with a disability with you to that meeting. How would you sort of think about that conversation?

First thing I would want to do is figure out who else would benefit that has nothing to do with disability for extending that bus route to the Lockheed Martin plant who else would benefit from that. Who lives around that and who needs to get there for other purposes. Then I want to see if there is a coalition of people who have a shared interest in the bus route even if they don't have a shared interest in disabilities. So I went to see the mayor's people, I would do so not alone but representing a whole coalition of people who have some interest. Second thing I would want to do before I saw the mayor about the bus route is I would go back to the point I made before. I want to know if anybody on the mayor staff is a person with disabilities. Anybody who is appointed to a senior position is a person with disabilities.

I want to know by asking around if anybody if the mayor or anybody on his or her staff has a relative who has disabilities. I want to know as much of that information as possible to know if there is anybody who they listen to who is has personal experience with this situation and if so what is that personal experience. It may be useful or not. I want to have that information when I go there. The other thing is the history is of extending bus routes. This is a big issue in the city or a nonissue in the city? Have they done it with big public hearings and a lots of publicity or been done quietly. How has this issue been addressed?

Again, it's not about convincing people to do the right thing. It's about trying to understand the context in which you are stepping into so you can make the moves that are most likely to achieve success. I would want to find out who I would want to have at that meeting from a mayor's side.

Who are the people that are likely to be most receptive if there is a person on his staff or in the city agency that deals with people with disabilities, I want to make sure that person was an advocate for extending the bus route first. If I'm the mayor and I have a person who I identify on my staff as a person who knows about this subject or deals with the subject and that person is for extending the bus route isn't for extending the bus route? No way it will happen if that's my person and he is the only person it's just like as women know as gay people know, if you are a senior woman in a male dominated organization and a gender equity issue comes up, the CEO calls you up and says, you know, you my highest ranking woman, what do you think about this? That will be hugely influential. I want to know a lot before that meeting took place.

Super helpful.

Let me think of another situation that I think is pretty common which is this issue of youth employment. The new law puts a lot of funding in youth employment. It seems that a lot of areas are doing it the easy way. They are just saying, okay, we will do summer jobs. Cookie cutter summer jobs. We like to see something else. We like to see apprentices at these companies that are hiring. Where people with disabilities would do a great job for them. We would like to see project search programs that are more ongoing. We would like to see ongoing job coaches. A young person doesn't just have a short training and then nothing go cold turkey. We like to see something that is more intelligent than just throwing the money at summer jobs. So how would we think about talking to the people who control the mayor's summer job program to think about being more strategic in terms of their investments?

If I'm controlling the summer jobs program, I probably don't have enough money to feed the demand. So my metric for doing a good job is getting the money out the door and that's easy to do. So you come and you say why don't we spend it a different way and this will be different and new and smart and I'm going say, hey, I got plenty to do. Is that pain in the ass to get this money out the door. I'm already going to disappoint a whole bunch of people. You want me to disappoint more people with your cockamamie idea? No, I'm not interested. Let's say the mayor or the governor has a donor who also runs an apprentice program at his or her company. He is already excited about the idea of turning a summer jobs program into an apprenticeship program because he cares about his industry. So I would have that person approach the mayor first.

And say, you know, I got a great idea for how you can have a more creative use of that summer job money and by the way, I think it's going to help our unemployment rate and by the way, on and on and on.

And then the mayor calls the summer jobs person and says, you know, I like to take a portion of that money you get the idea. It's not when you go to someone whose job it is to get the money out the door, he doesn't want or she doesn't want a new idea. They have already their problem is not getting the money out the door. The problem is disappointing all the people they don't have enough money to fund. Go at it a different way. It's this idea of it's not about the merits. It's about the human dynamics and the small politics around the issue. That's what's going to make progress.

Operator, I would like to encourage people again to be asking questions.

I just got in a long question. Let me actually read this one. David is asking, one of the challenges we face is that there are so many actors in the existing system at the federal, state and local level as well as multiple private entities that make it hard to innovate on top of that there is an additional fear to implement any type of innovation that might potentially cause harm which would wind up in the media. They do no part they do no harm principle is laudable, we don't understand how the current system causes harm which leaves us stuck without officials who are perhaps rightfully afraid to take risk to make change. How can we develop messages either through print or through meetings like this one to convince the entities in this complicated system to get over the fear of failure and to recognize that failure might lead to an idea that is innovative? Do we have evidence on the types of interactions or the combinations of interactions that are most effective?

Well, it's a great question because the public sector in the civil service system is set up to encourage risk averseness. It's designed for people who are risk averse or learn to be risk averse once they get there. So that's a very deep value and you can understand that. Taxpayers don't want their money spent in ways that are unproductive. How you deal with that? One of the ways historically that we dealt with that in the public sector is by the rouse and I use that word carefully. By the rouse of pilot programs. Pilot programs are a way to innovate. It's a camel under the tent because everybody who is pushing a pilot program frames it as an experiment.

In reality they are trying to deliver a service to a group of people that they are confident is going to work and they know that once it does everybody else will get in on it and the senior political people will say we have to do this for everybody. So I find in the work that I do particularly in public sector situations that using the language of pilot project or an experiment or taste hypothesis or do something over a short period of time to see if it works is a way to introduce innovation. It lowers the risk, lower the threat because I think the questioner is right. The chances or the risk of it coming back are being on the front page of the paper if it doesn't work leads people to reduce their risk tolerance to almost zero. So you have to find a way to soften that risk. There are other ways of doing it one of the ways is the way you suggested which is to say if there is a pot of money that they could access by doing an innovation, then that takes some of the pressure off of them. Then they can say there is this money sitting here and it goes waste. At least we can try something. If they have people on an advisory committee who are well established in the community who are advising them on this innovation, that can cushion the blow if something doesn't go all that well. There are a lot of things you can do. But again to think about it in those political terms, small P. political term rather than think about it here is a project that would be good. Why can't we innovate and try it? There is a reason they won't try it and is the reason that the questioner identifies.

We are looking for more questions so people can type in more questions. But we have been focusing a lot on how to talk about external stakeholders. How do we talk about looking at for change within our own organizations? Even voc. rehab organizations or organizations that are agencies that are trying to get people with disabilities jobs, how do they look at their own strengths or weakness? How do they evaluate what they should do more of? What they should do less of?

I think that it's not a dissimilar problem. The current reality is not an exact accident. The way things are the way people want them to be. I don't think there is any such thing as a dysfunctional family or dysfunctional organization or dysfunctional country because every family organization and country is perfectly organized to get the results that is currently is getting. If you are trying to create change internally, you trying to get people to do something different internally, you got to think about why things are the way they are and what are the risks that people of experience, even though you don't think they are risky but from other people's

point of view in getting them to do something different. People will be worried they won't be competent in what you are asking them to do. People will be worried that they will disappoint. I have seen this in nonprofit where nonprofit organizations try and to do something different and they are pushed back into their old ways by the beneficiaries of the way they have been used to doing business. The external beneficiaries and the constituent. You have to find a way to mobilize people either externally or internally. You have to identify what their fears are and what their concerns are and begin to think about how you will deal with those. It's not it's not going to happen because it's the right thing to do or it would have already happened that way.

How do you it does. How do you introduce performance metrics and accountability into that conversation?

Performance metrics and accountability are not value neutral. What you measure and how you measure it, you know, is critical. I worked for ways on the board of a work force agency in New York for a long time and there were huge differences about what you should measure and how you should measure. When is the case closed. What does success look like? I think the resistance to perform a metrics is really about the question of what are we going to measure and how are we going to measure? The only way I have seen performance metrics really work is when the people who are going to be measured participate in the process of figure out what I will be measured and how I will be measured. If you impose it on people, if you hire some outside contractor to develop a performance metrics system. I have seen those systems fail and been fought tooth and nail. I think you can see that's the best big public example is teacher accountability. Unless the people who are going to be held accountable are part of the process of deciding the accountability system, it won't succeed.

My experience is that too often those are imposed on them and then people are either fight them or figure out how to get around them and beat them. I think that's what you saw happen on the tragedy in Atlanta and the teacher situation.

So I would start by getting the people 40 you want to measure people who you want to measure.

What does success look like to you?

Let's figure out and see if we agree on it and then make sure that it's not too low a bar and then maybe I have seen the organizations who have set an aspirational bar and a minimally acceptable bar.

There is a lot of interesting conversation now about measuring people against each other. Very controversial area. But for some people and some organizations nobody wants to be in the bottom half. Everybody wants to be above average. And so in some organizations that is very effective to measure people against each other. That's a technique. It's a kind of accountability. In some cultures it works very well. In some cultures it doesn't. Again, this is not one size fits all. It's about trying to figure out what will work in my organization and what we are talking about now is understanding the organization and making sure that the people who are going to be held accountable are part of the process of figuring out how to do it.

So that's incredibly interesting to me. Because what you are asking is you are saying that the group that needs to be measured let's say your job placement agency, your voc. rehab or a nonprofit that you are asking the staff to come up with or the lay people to come up with or maybe there is some consumer surveys for your consumers. Now let me give you a perspective that I have from looking at a lot of studies. From looking at a lot of studies there are two things I would like to see in the performance metrics that everybody is doing. So one of those things is that when governors see their dash boards or when the work force boards look at their dash boards, I don't want them only to see the unemployment number. I want them to see the work force participation rates of people with disabilities. Why? Because frequently people with disabilities are not actively pursuing work and therefore they are not reflected in the unemployment numbers. By having the work force participation numbers it's a much better metric and we also see that it's not improving like it is improving for women or for minorities. That's number one.

Number two, if I want to see more young people between the age of 16 and 24 have paid employment. I want to know for particularly these youth the number of youth getting their internships getting their real genuine work opportunities, those are two things that I want because I know that the evidence shows that there is a correlation that if they have paid work experience when they are younger, much greater likelihood that they will be independent in the future. Let's say I got two things that I have on my wish list. How do I sort of manipulate that performance metric or do I manipulate that performance criteria?

Well, you certainly manipulated a loaded word. I feel

comfortable with it. The two issues are different issues. And I think in order to add those to the performance metrics, you need a different game plan for each one. There is some overlap between the two. You need a different game plan for each one. And I think it's the same kind of process that we have been talking about before. Who would benefit if people with disabilities were included in those employment statistics and broken out as a separate category? Who would benefit from that? Who would be threatened by that? Who would be against it? How can you help them with the problems that they have created that you created for them by including them because if I'm a governor, I know that you want me to include those because it's going to reduce the employment rates overall in the state. That's not good news for me. So you can't pretend that it's not going to do that and you have to say to the governor or his surrogate or her surrogate, I know this will create a problem for you.

In the short run this is going to produce lower higher unemployment numbers than otherwise would be. But I'm going to do these 14 things not only to make that a shorter run as possible but also to protect you on several other fronts and in order that the fallout from this won't be too big. It seems to me it's the same kind of thing we are talking about. What is the problem here. What's the nature of the resistance? It's not because people are bad people. It's because there are other things they care about. How can I help them with what they care about in order for them to do what I want them to do because it's important to me.

Right, right.

Folks on the webinar, now is a good time to put in your questions because we only have 15 minutes left. But I do want to go back to this question of the youth employment and looking at the youth data. You know, there are any other thoughts that you have on how to approach? I mean, there are, for example, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and others, they are all about what they call opportunity youth. To them it's all about the disenfranchised youth and Howard Schultz yesterday had a huge op ed in the New York Times how he will write a check as the CEO of Starbucks that will help these opportunity youth with his \$30 million grant to get jobs and in his head he is thinking minority kids and kids from poor neighborhoods. How do we get those folks to say, you know what, a lot of those minority kids and a lot of the poor kids they also might have a disability because of lead paint in their house.

Because their mom had an alcohol abuse and now they have some differences, disability-wise because they were born a child of a crack addict or an alcoholic or it might than they have autism or something that is another developmental disability. How do we get people who are only focused on these quote-unquote opportunity youth which seems to never understand that there are other disabilities or mental health involved.

First of all, first thing I would do is find out what Starbucks policy is around hiring people around disability.

Theirs is good. Theirs is good.

Then I think it's easy. I would just I would just organize them to talk to Howard. I don't think you you're well positioned to do it they are very well positioned to do it, right? They can say, look, there are people like me all over the place that can't get into the game. You are an unusual employer and you are doing something that other employers easily could do and now you are taking this incredible initiative with young people. It's an opportunity to extend your values into this area. I think that's really set up very well. Again, he is a very smart guy. I think he wrote that with his wife, the coauthor of that piece. And my guess is that he either it has not occurred to him or some reason why this doesn't seem important to him. It's going to be a way to bring it to his attention.

Interestingly the U.S. business leadership council has done survey of who are the best employers on disability issues and to sort of compete in it the employers themselves had to fill out a lot of form to prove whether or not they are good at these issues. 19 companies across America, these are Fortune 500 companies but 19 of the Fortune 500 companies scored 100%. And Starbucks was one of those companies where their practices are really fabulous. They aren't really happening often. In other words, you have these pockets where people are doing it quite enthusiastically and quite effectively. But I don't think that a lot of VR agencies or nonprofits are thinking, Starbucks, that's my place of first choice yet. So I do think that looking at those 19 companies who they are and finding out who their Howard Schultz is, who their CEO is could also be good for all 19 of those companies. Rachel T. asks, any suggestion for encouraging nonprofit agencies that aren't going to benefit from federal agencies and are functioning on limited budgets? >> I think the advantages of nonprofit agencies is that they have a lot of more freedom and so the question is, what would get them to make this more of a priority?

The good news is since they are mission driven. The bad news is that it's not your mission. It's somebody else's mission. It's their mission. It's not the mission that you care about. So how do you get this to their attention in a way that would make it nonthreatening to them? It's very similar it seems to me in to the issue of paid leave that has been on the gender equity agenda for a long time because non-private agencies have been very resistant to that on the grounds that we can't afford it our budgets are tight. We need to spend our money on services. We can't afford shared employment. We can't afford paid leave. And so what they have done is done some research which has showed that they can actually save money by having people come back from paid leave ready to work hard rather than work around the edges. Or that shared employment they get more than 100% out of the two people sharing a job. So I think there is a factual case to be made which would actually be useful for some people in a nonprofit world. The best of my knowledge that case hasn't been made in a systematic way. That is the first thing. Then I would begin to do some of the things we were talking about before. Who are the nonprofit agencies that are good at this that already do it really well? And how can we have the people who are resistant experience that? How can we do what you did with the governors which was take them to places where they can actually see a world that's beyond their imagination. Then the third thing that comes is the same idea that we talked about before which is if you are approaching a particular nonprofit agency that isn't very creative about hiring people with disabilities, do they have any people with disabilities on the staff? Now if they don't have anybody on their staff ,that would be a nice thing to remind people of. Even in the organization. Because since they think of themselves on the high moral ground, that would probably be embarrassing. If they do have people with disabilities, and they are well regarded employees, then that is a foot in the door to try to institute a broader systemic change. So again I think it's not one size fits all and it's not one argument fits all. It's using all of the tools and not resting your chances of success on any single particular approach but fitting what you are trying to do to the situation that you are trying to step into.

Now Marty, we provided folks a couple of PowerPoint slides that are sort of an attachment to this if people want to download them and when we introduced you we had a link to your books and publications and some of them by the way are very short so they take very little time for thing like think thinking about sitting on the balcony and looking down at a situation. But I am interested in sort of what's the to-do list that you

are going to want people to think about when they think about this. But have one more question before I sort of ask you to wrap everything up which is for most organizations there seems to be a high risk associated with employee disclosure of disabilities, more specifically mental health related disabilities. How do we motivate successful employees especially those at senior levels to disclose their disabilities so that the top management begins to understand that people with disabilities do not always equate to additional costs and problems for a company but actually are part of the value of their existing company.

I think that's a great question. And I think it is a movement that needs some poster children. You do have some poster children nationally. You have the new governor of Texas in a wheel chair. There are people in public life who have obvious disabilities and you also are beginning to have people who are talking about having had therapy and other kinds of services which weren't discussible publicly before. So I would apply that to individual situations that as I think you need poster children. So when somebody who you know has suffered from disability or a person with disability that has achieved a position of senior authority in an organization, I would think a long term campaign to get that person to out himself or herself to use the language of the gay movement would be really important. It's not going solve all of the problems but as you say it will make a difference in how people understand what problem is. It's been true of women and it's been true of gay and it's been true of African-Americans. It would be true with people with disabilities as well. It would be particularly interesting because the governor of Texas, I don't know anything about him other than he is in a wheel chair. But he is clearly not a person who was sympathetic philosophically to a big government agenda. And so rather than try to get him to be a leader in collaboration for work force development, I would try to get him to be willing to be something of a poster child because I think that could make a huge difference to people in ways you never would be able to understand or pinpoint.

Right. The idea of poster child is very sensitive in the disability community because of the whole Jerry Lewis telethon pity frame. I know that the office of disability employment policy has with others created a very nice campaign of professionals in the work place who are disclosing some of those issues in a very productive professional way. Robert is asking, does he have any coordination highlights since Massachusetts is such a progressive state and has such a valued record.

Actually, Robert, I will push back and say something controversial. People are constantly telling me as somebody who runs an organization that's dough voted to people with devoted to people with disabilities. Massachusetts is the model. Massachusetts has such a fabulous program that I love that enables people who are quadriplegic who are employed to keep their personal care assistants while they are employed. If you are quadriplegic and you want to have a job that pays \$60,000 a year and still have somebody help you get dressed and ready to go to work, then you can do that in Massachusetts. But if you actually look at the performance metrics of what percentage of Massachusetts citizens with disabilities are in the work force, its record is about tied with Mississippi and Alabama.

And I think that is an important thing for us to think about. The states that are succeeding are North Dakota and South Dakota and some other states that have maybe a 40% participation rate but the states that are more liberal like Massachusetts and New York and California where you might think that they would have better performance metrics have some pretty catastrophic performance metrics. So I would like to actually mention that and ask Marty how you think about that and how one could approach even looking at that.

I don't think that well intentioned people in Massachusetts would like to hear what you just said. It seems to be obviously the way to get them to move is to point that out to them. It's also important to understand why that is in Massachusetts. I moved out of Massachusetts 20 years ago so I'm out of touch. Why is that the case? Why is the large states that are large states and liberal states why they intend to be more at the bottom of the pack on those performance metrics than some of the smaller states. I don't have a hypothesis for it.

I personally have a hypothesis, don't know if I'm right or not. In the presidential campaign we are employing or utilizing the tactic of self-advocates. Young people with disabilities that want work and we are sending them out on the campaign trail to ask candidates what their plan is on these issues. We have a young man on the autism spectrum who is very, very bright and very successful at engaging with presidential candidates. He has already had amazing conversations with Governor Kasich, but he has this interesting one on our YouTube in our brand-new blog that we published today where he asks Bernie Sanders about employment for people with disabilities. And basically Senator Sander's reaction was jobs for everybody

are important for the dignity of Americans. But let me take some time to attack the Republicans for failing to have enough money in the disability benefits system. And so I think the frame in a lot of liberal states is to think that what people with disabilities want are more benefits. Whereas our survey of people in the disability community and we now done several polls has shown there are 30% of people with disabilities that want the benefits and they don't want to work. Maybe they have chronic pain or maybe they are just happy with the way things are. But 70% want to work. I think their perception is that people want something different that's a theory.

Very interesting.

You saw the David Brooks column in the Times today comments on Hillary Clinton's speech basically he was saying that the remedies that she talks about are really old liberal remedies. What you are talking about is a different approach which is going challenge some of those assumptions in those very liberal states about the way to help people. That's great.

Interestingly in her speech he didn't she didn't talk about people with disabilities at all nor in her video launch whereas Jeb Bush interestingly launched with people with disabilities in his initial campaign launch and he and Kasich and Walker and others are going to be dealing with these we want 100% of the candidates on both sides of the aisles to be dealing with these issues.

Marty you have been so generous with your time. And we have come to the end of our window. As we are closing this webinar I would like you to close with what your to do list or thought process that you like people to have as they get off the webinar and they think about their own challenges in their jobs. What questions would you like them to ask themselves to enable them to be more successful and dealing with change and dealing with helping people get out of their silos or to do things differently.

My experience is that people don't spend enough time in the dying art of the diagnostic part of leadership. Trying to understand what you're stepping into. What are the dynamics of what you are stepping into and also trying to understand how you fit in the system. Who are you in the system. My first piece of advice is to before you leap to action, before you try to do something, spend more time or analytic time trying to figure out what's going on here.

Why are things the way they are. Am I well positioned and what ways am I well positioned and what ways am I not so well positioned to step in?

My experience is that if you spend a lot of time a lot more time than we typically do thinking diagnostically that will open up different ways of stepping in that are beyond your imagination before. If there is one simple idea that would be think harder, spend more time and step instead and deciding what it is you stepping into.

Marty Linsky, we really appreciate your time and your leadership and the fact that you shared this with us. To those who are on the webinar, we really appreciate your time. We will be posting this along with a transcript on our website. Just like we do with all of our websites. Materials are through YouTube so if you know people who should have listened to this and they missed out for one reason or another, now is your chance when we put it on the website for you to share the link so that they can see this as well.

Marty Linsky, thank you for your time. To those of you who listened in, we appreciate your participation. There will be a follow-up survey so let us know what you thought and what other topics that you are interested in.

Thank you again. And we really appreciate it.