

*Wyoming Training Tales
of
One Agency's Journey:
Crossing the High
Plains to QUALITY*

“Big Boy” by Eric Petersen

Ark Regional Services – Laramie, Wyoming
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The Journey's Purpose

What do we need to do to ensure that the people who rely on us to provide services and supports get the best, most consistent supports possible so that they will:

- Have the opportunity for a life with quality;
- Be treated with dignity and respect, and
- Have the opportunity to learn and grow?

Description of the Agency

Ark Regional Services, Laramie, Wyoming, is a community service provider offering multiple opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to learn and grow in an enriched environment. The agency provides adult Medicaid Waiver services for residential and vocational services, including community employment, day habilitation, occupational therapy, speech language pathology, skilled nursing, and service coordination. In addition to hippotherapy and therapeutic riding, classes in art, horticulture, drama, yoga, dance, and culinary arts are available through the Creative Arts Center.

Background Information

In order to meet the challenges of recruiting and retraining a well-trained work force, Ark developed an innovative approach to training and compensation based upon demonstrated proficiency. The competency-based performance system (CBPS) clearly demonstrates the agency's commitment to:

- high quality training,
- equitable compensation,
- professional growth, and
- career development for direct support professionals.

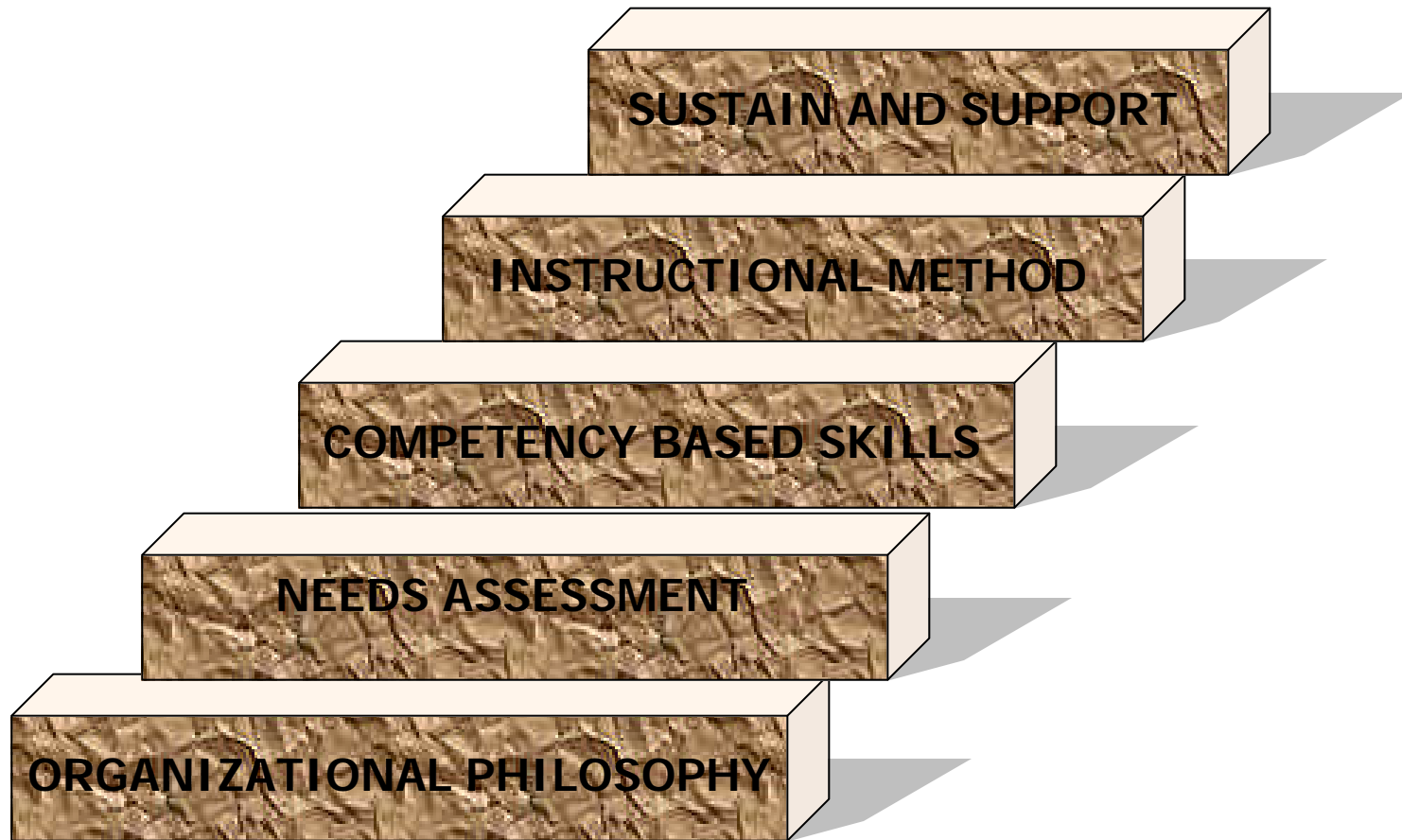
Background Information

Two aspects of the CBPS include:

- carefully crafted performance standards,
- a highly specific instructional method.

Each standard is designed to provide clear, concise staff performance expectations, which are measurable, teachable, observable, and applicable in the work setting.

The instructional method ensures training consistency and provides a way to sustain and support all staff development efforts.



Major Components of The Training system



Training Processes

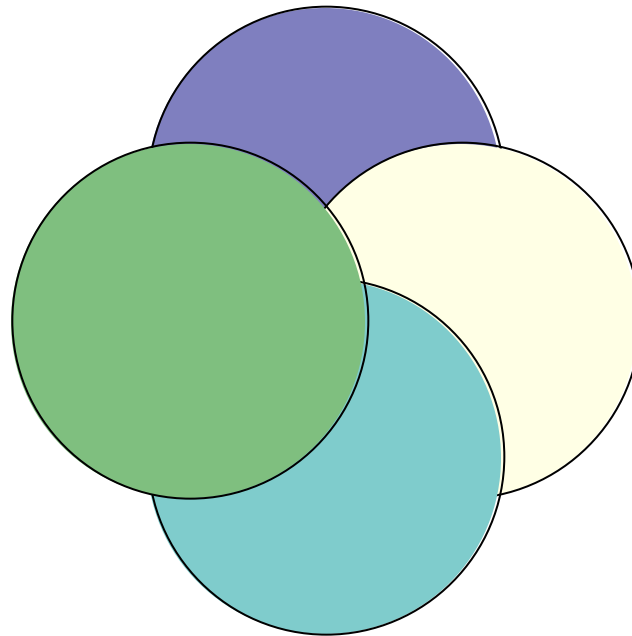
- Are dynamic and subject to constant reassessment
- Provide long term results
- Can not be rushed
- Require broad organizational awareness essential for support
- Require a concrete training plan
- Open communication essential
- Require clear roles and responsibilities



Instructional Method

EDUCATE

EVALUATION



MODEL

**OBSERVATION
AND FEEDBACK**



Ark Regional Services' Staff Development Program ensures:

High quality training with crafted performance standards

Specific instructional method – Consistent Training

Equitable compensation

Career development opportunities using a tiered approach:

- Trainee
- Department of Labor Apprenticeship Program
- Model/Mentors

Professional growth

- Community/Academic Certificates in Disability Studies – University of Wyoming

Overall Benefits

Provided opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to make choices that influence quality of life & personal growth

Increased performance accountability from Direct Support Professionals and Front-Line Supervisors

Increased consistency in performance and skill application

Integration, application and retention of trained performance standards

Reduced rates of turnover among DSPs

Increased job satisfaction for DSPs