



Social Media

CURRENT TOOLS FOR JOB-SEEKING

Contact Information and Acknowledgements



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Background

- **Telecommunications is an important rural VR strategy**
 - Reduces access and transportation barriers
 - Improves contact rates between counselors and consumers
 - Associated with greater attachment to the VR system

Telecommunications – more broadly, can refer to a variety of online job search strategies as well.



Background Research – Counselor Use



- **Surveyed VR staff on use of online tools during the VR process (n = 1447)**
 - 25 states represented
 - 65% counselors, 10% supervisors/managers, 8% employment consultants
- **Findings**
 - 57% did not use any social media sites for work
 - 26% used Facebook
 - 24% used LinkedIn

Training Desires (n = 1447)

Training Desire	Definitely	Definitely & Maybe
1. Strategies to improve online privacy	64 %	91 %
2. HIPPA and ADA policies and social media	63 %	91 %
3. Online professional networking practices	63 %	91 %
4. Online ethical practices	61 %	91 %
5. Strategies for improving a consumer's online reputation	57 %	89 %
6. Developing an online professional profile	51 %	84 %
7. Basic <i>how to's</i> of using different social media sites	50 %	82 %

Intervention Research

- **Quasi-experimental Design**

- 3 states – Washington, Alabama, Montana
- Random assignment of offices in each state
- Survey data – baseline, 4-months

- **Social Media Intervention**

- 7.5 hours of webinar training
- 1.5 hours per week for 5 consecutive weeks
- Live captioned

- **Webinar Topics**

- Intro to Social Media
- Online Networking with LinkedIn
- Facebook, Twitter, and others
- Resumes, Cover letters, and Job Boards
- Talent Acquisition Portal

Counselor Surveys

- **Baseline data (n = 289)**
 - 77% counselors, 9% supervisors, 6% employment consultants
 - 56% did not use any social media sites for work
 - 23% used Facebook
 - 31% used LinkedIn
- **Baseline data similar to exploratory research data (n = 1447)**
 - 57% did not use any social media sites for work, 26% used Facebook, 24% used LinkedIn

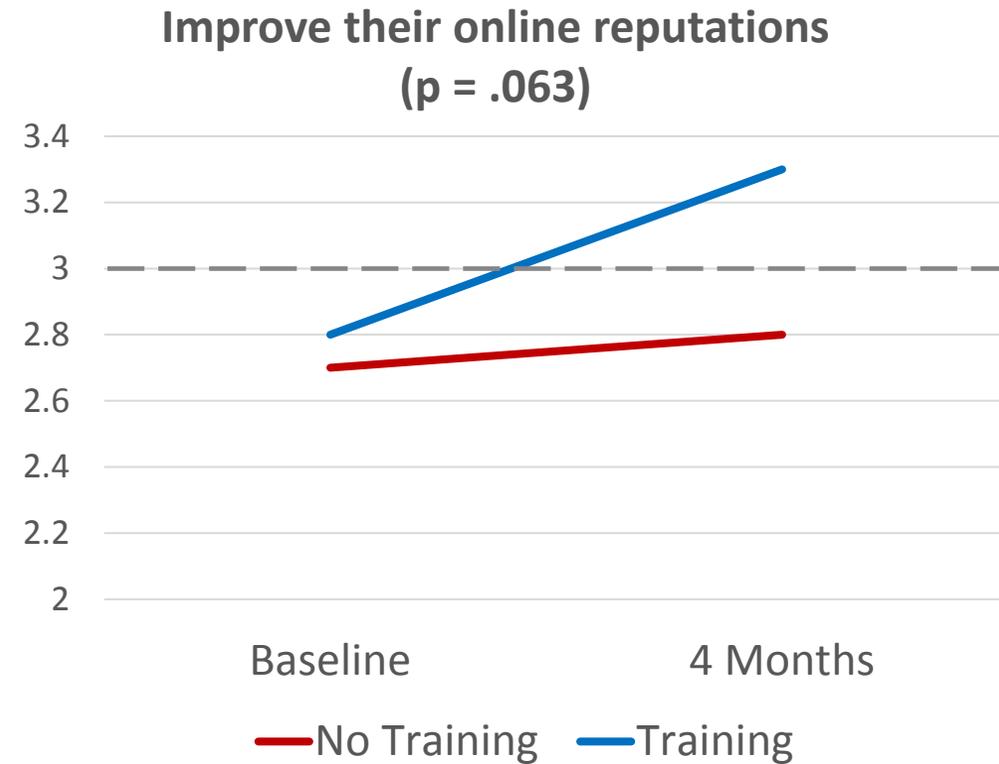
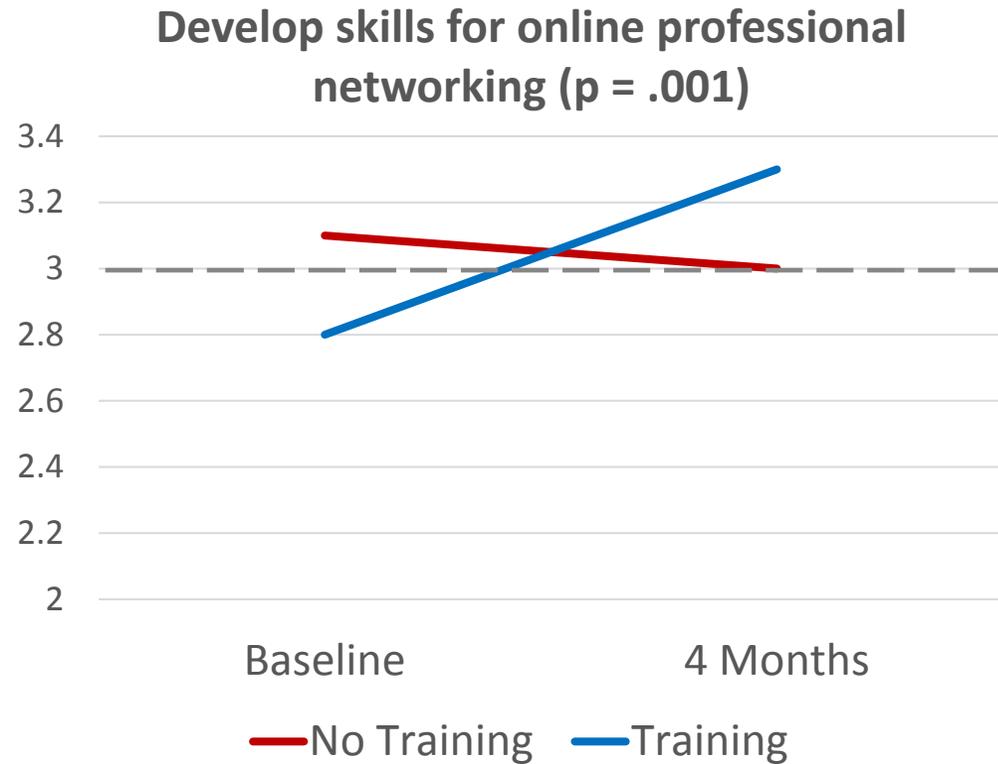
Outcomes – How Sites Used

- More training group participants used LinkedIn ($p = .039$)
- At follow-up, significantly more participants in the intervention group used:
 - Facebook to stay in contact with other VR counselors, ($p=.036$,)
 - Facebook to assess a consumer's online reputation ($p=.031$)
 - LinkedIn to develop relationships with local employers ($p = .028$).

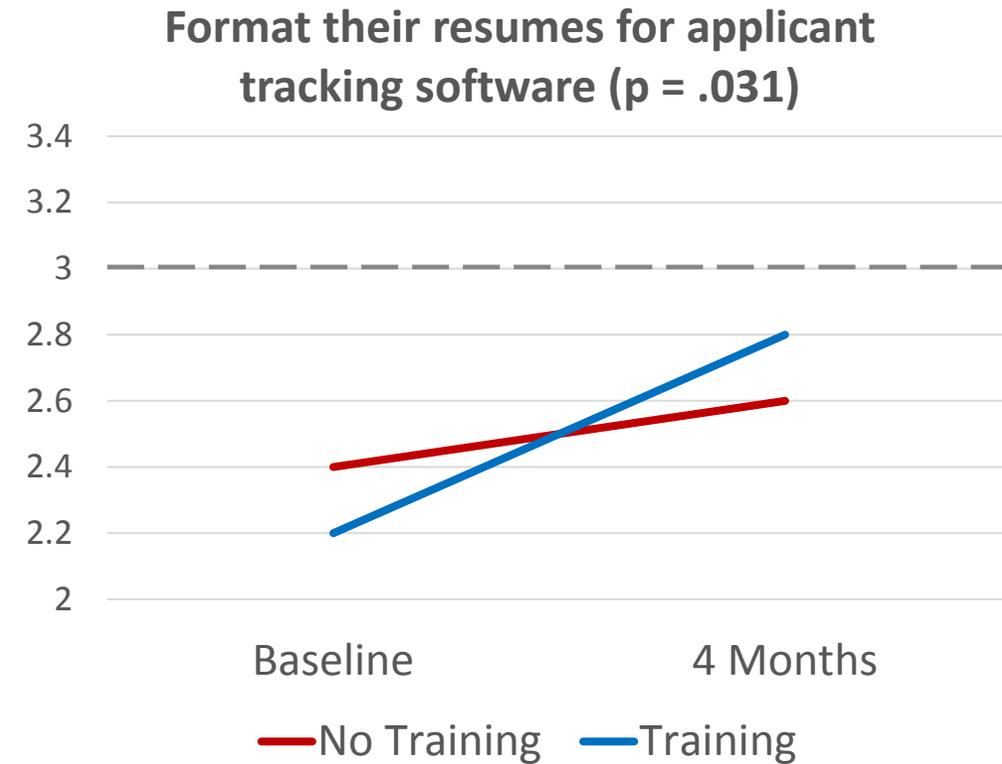
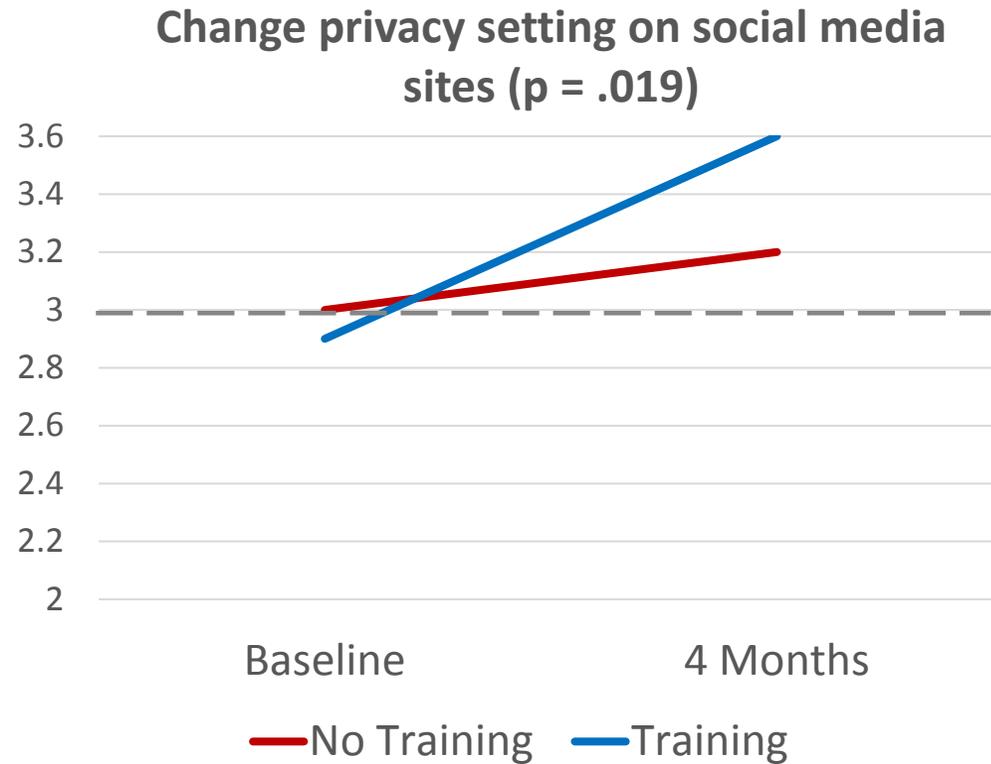
Outcomes - Preparedness

- **Rating scale of 1 to 5**
 - 1 = very unprepared
 - 2 = unprepared
 - 3 = somewhat unprepared
 - 4 = prepared
 - 5 = very prepared
- **Total score across 9 items (p=.009)***
 - 3 items were not significantly different between the training and no training group and six items were significantly different
- **How prepared are you to help consumers...**
 - Research job opportunities online
 - 3.9 vs 3.9
 - Post resumes to online job boards
 - 3.5 vs 3.4
 - Address issues of disability disclosures on social media sites
 - 3.1 vs 3

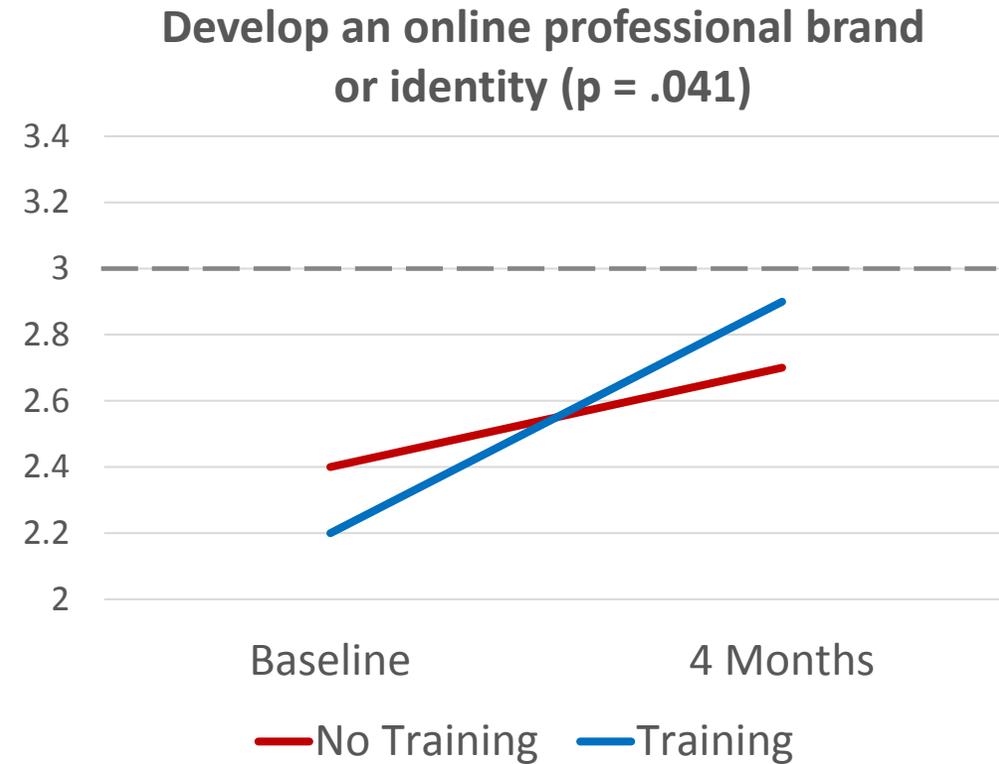
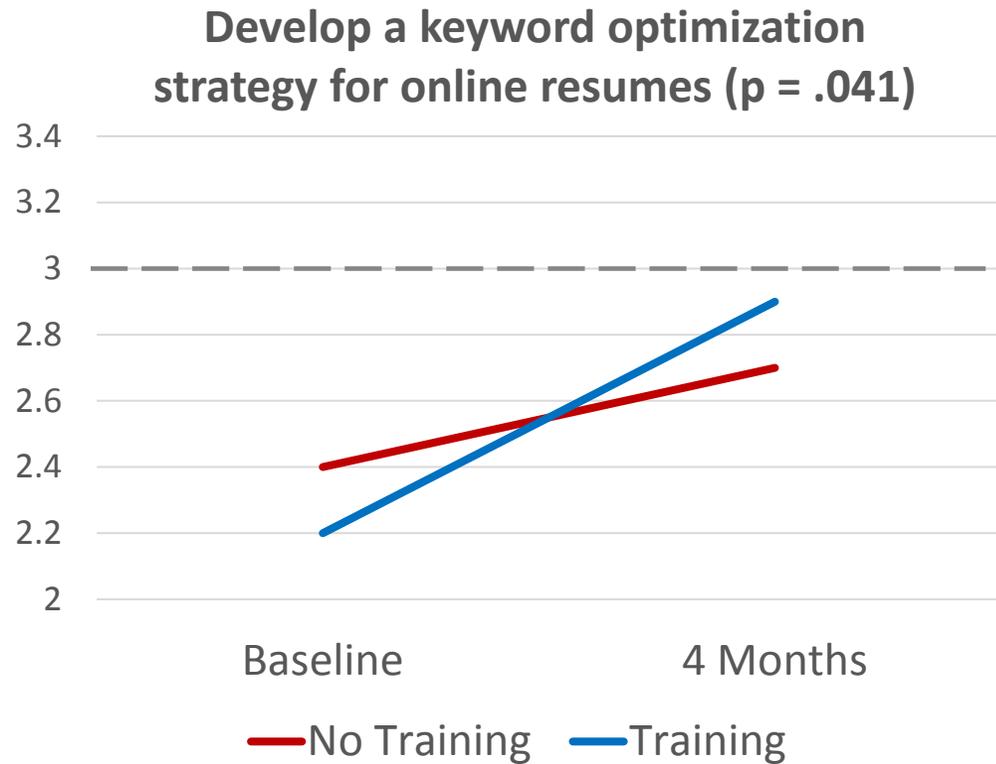
How prepared are you to help consumers...



How prepared are you to help consumers...



How prepared are you to help consumers...



Background Research – Policies

- VR administrators provided feedback about agency policies and use (2013, n = 41)
 - Agency supports social media use by staff
 - 34% “yes”
 - 37% “on a limited basis”
 - 29% “no”
 - 61% of agencies did not have any policy to guide social media use
 - Respondents indicated that agencies were moving towards more access



VR Policies (22 agencies represented)

- **Policy types analyzed**
 - 14 agency specific
 - 8 state level
 - 2 guidelines
- **Policy Themes (6 themes, 23 sub-themes)**
 - *Policy description (n = 20)*
 - Justification, scope, oversight
 - *Administrative controls (n = 19)*
 - Account management, approvals, reviews, policy adherence, evaluation
 - *Prohibited Uses (n = 18)*
 - Confidentiality and personal use violations
 - *Security (n = 13)*
 - Technical support, passwords, security
 - *Public engagement (n = 17)*
 - Ethics, professional use, disclaimers, public perceptions, releases, public records
 - *Posting guidelines (n = 17)*
 - Accessibility, general, frequency, responding to the public

Policy Scope - Justifications

- **Justifications for social media use (n = 15)**
 - Agency communication strategy (n=9)
 - Consumer engagement with agency (n=7)
 - Market agency to the public (n=7)
 - To gather feedback about the agency (n=4)
 - Increase VR agency transparency (n=3)
 - Broadcast emergency information (n=2)
 - Engage employers (n=2)
 - **Consumer job seeking activities (n=1)**

Connecticut Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

“providing job seekers with current job seeking skills”

Helping consumers “establish a professional online presence”

Using “current employment practices in a digital era”

Research Implications

- **Policies are incomplete**
 - 2 policies covered themes in a comprehensive way.
 - Most policies were framed in terms of agency vs counselor uses
- **Counselors are unprepared (n = 1447)**
 - Approximately 30% of counselors feel prepared to assist consumers with improving online reputation and professional development activities
 - Training can improve preparedness
- **People with disabilities are not coached in contemporary job search skills.**

Implications

- Staff need access to training that outlines strategies for using social media tools in practice
- Policies need to reflect and support growing social media trends

Toolbox Elements



Counselor-Consumer Communication

~ Email, text messaging, video chat, web conferencing



Online Career Development

~ Building an online presence using social media, managing your online presence, active online job search



Ethics



Monthly blog posts

~ New and emerging job search tools and strategies