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| **Emerging Professionals**  **New NIB Program Helps Agencies Meet Mission Goals**  **Overview**  Emerging Professionals, a new track in NIB’s Business Leaders Program, is an onsite, hands-on professional development program that targets high-potential employees who are legally blind for career progression. It is customized, meeting the professional development needs of each participant.  **Who Can Participate**  The program is most beneficial for employees who have mastered their current positions and are ready to expand job tasks and responsibilities and lead others. Four agencies that piloted the program in 2015-2016 designated direct labor employees working in manufacturing, supply chain, assembly and call centers.  **Location and Timeline**  The Emerging Professionals program is held at each participant’s place of employment and takes 8-12 months to complete. The program can be adapted for:   * Participant’s current skillsets and development needs * Agency ability to adhere to the program schedule * Unforeseen events that may require a temporary suspension of the program   Participants maintain their current positions and continue to meet job requirements while learning new skills and carrying out new responsibilities carved out of existing schedules. Human resources personnel and participants’ managers provide coaching and educational support to increase workplace knowledge and ability.  **Curriculum Structure**  The Emerging Professionals program uses multiple formats: shadowing, on-the-job training, apprentice-type experience, coaching and independent learning in three phases:   * Launch and program orientation * On-the-job experience and professional development * Capstone or final project   The program shapes participants’ productivity, overall performance, interpersonal skills, and agency-wide acumen in both their current position and the career track.  **Roles of NIB and Associated Agencies**  NIB staff from the Business Leaders Program aid in:   * Gaining agency-wide buy in * Clarifying roles and responsibilities * Setting up enrollment and launch * Establishing worksite experiences and delivering learning opportunities   Agencies implement the competency-based program with NIB-provided guidance and resources such as training modules and other leadership-related materials. Agency personnel will typically include the participant, human resources staff and the participant’s manager.  *Questions? Please contact Karen Pal, Business Leaders Program Director,  at 703-310-0515 or* [*kpal@nib.org*](mailto:kpal@nib.org)*.* |