

## TRAINING SUPERVISORS TO SUPPORT REINTEGRATING VETERANS IMPROVES THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARD VETERAN WORKERS, WHICH ENHANCES WORKER WELL-BEING

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### BACKGROUND

- Veterans reintegrating into the civilian workforce can face challenges, such as false assumptions and stigma around their mental health. Such difficulties in the workplace can negatively impact veterans' stress levels and sleep.
- Previous training programs designed to increase supervisor support have shown improvements in supervisor and employee well-being, including improved sleep and reduced stress.
- This study examines whether a training program, designed specifically for the veteran population to increase supervisor support, would improve the well-being and overall transition for military veteran employees entering the workforce.

### RESEARCH CONDUCTED

- Thirty-five workplaces were recruited to participate in the 9-month intervention. In total, 982 supervisors and 189 employees participated.
- The 189 Veteran employees were matched with their direct supervisors to show couple-level impacts (e.g., how changes for one affected the other).
- Surveys were collected from Veteran workers at baseline, 3 months, and 9 months. Supervisors completed surveys at baseline and 9 months.
- Supervisors completed the Veteran Supportive Supervisor Training (VSST) program one month after finishing their baseline survey. The VSST is a computer-based training meant to improve supervisor support across four key domains: emotional (e.g., showing empathy), instrumental (e.g., providing tools and resources), work-family management, and role-modeling behaviors.

### RESULTS

- Participating in the VSST improved supervisors' attitudes toward veterans throughout the end of the 9-month study period.
- Supervisor participation in the VSST did not, on its own, positively impact veterans' sleep quality or stress levels.
- However, veteran employees whose supervisors showed more positive attitudes toward veterans had better sleep quality and improved stress by the end of the study period (9-month survey).

### IMPORTANCE

- This study contributes to our understanding of how to promote more positive supervisor attitudes toward veteran employees and improve workforce reintegration.
- The results also help us understand the conditions necessary to observe impacts of supervisor training on workers' well-being.



Summary based on the following paper:

Hammer, L.B., Brady J.M., & Perry, M. (in press). *Training supervisors to support veterans at work: Effects on supervisor attitudes and employee sleep and stress. Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology.*