



## Tools for Training Peer Coaches

This section of the toolkit offers various resources on how to use the MyBestBets web and mobile app to effectively guide students through a [step-by-step, data-driven process for postsecondary and career exploration](#). Peer coaches and their supervisors can also use many of these tools beyond the initial peer coach training to help plan and guide program activities such as conducting workshops for students or advising students on their college and job training options.

Peer coach supervisors and their staff can use the following resources to ensure that all peer coaches and other relevant staff, are highly trained in topics and skills critical to program success. Supervisors can use them to help train peer coaches and to strengthen their knowledge around select topics common to high school equivalency and other youth-serving programs.

### **Background Materials**

Peer coach supervisors can use these tools during an in- person peer coach training and outside of training to ensure that peer coaches understand key concepts they will need as they advise students and to practice effective advising skills.

1. [Landscape of HSE Programs](#) – This document provides staff with a general overview of the landscape of high school equivalency (HSE) programs in the US (what they are, whom they serve, etc.).
2. [What is a Postsecondary Program?](#) – This document defines what a postsecondary program is and describes the range of such programs offered, including two- and four-year college programs, shorter-term job training programs, and apprenticeship programs.
3. [Factors Students Should Consider When Exploring Postsecondary Programs](#) – This document highlights key issues peer coaches/advisors should discuss with students as they explore their postsecondary options – and before they enroll in one.
4. [Definitions of Postsecondary- and Career-related Terms](#) – JFF developed this glossary of key terms any peer coach, supervisor, or counselor/advisor should know related to the postsecondary and career worlds.
5. [Counseling Scenarios and Feedback Form](#) – These scenarios can assist in training peer coaches. This document is used during the “Counseling Scenarios” section of the Peer Coach Training, but it can also be used at other times to help peer coaches better understand the strategies and the skills needed to coach effectively. For example, peer coach supervisors and peer coaches can observe the peer coach in the “coach” role and provide constructive criticism on what worked, what could be improved, etc. The program can also start to build a library of its own counseling scenarios or adapt these as they see fit.



6. [MyBestBets Peer Coaches in Action: Scenarios and Strategies](#) – As part of their work, MyBestBets coaches must counsel students through the tasks and topics in the [MyBestBets](#) web and mobile app. TK Kerr, Program Assistant and Expert MyBestBets Peer Coach at Grace Outreach in New York City, developed this learning tool for MyBestBets coaches and their supervisors. Supervisors can use it to train and practice counseling scenarios with their program’s peer coaches. Peer coaches may reference the scenarios to learn about how to effectively advise students using MyBestBets. The tool contains three peer counseling scenarios that MyBestBets coaches may encounter (or ones like them) when working with students. Each scenario contains a peer counseling “opportunity” and an accompanying coaching strategy that becomes a successful case in using MyBestBets for career and postsecondary exploration.

## MyBestBets Materials

Peer coaching programs interested in or already using the MyBestBets app can use the following materials to help them succeed in: training staff to become MyBestBets coaches; integrating MyBestBets into your program; recruiting students; better understanding and reviewing students’ progress on the tasks in the app; troubleshooting; etc. Below are brief descriptions of each tool/resource:

1. [MyBestBets One Pager](#) – A one pager summarizing what the MyBestBets platform/app is and does, including how it helps students and coaches in the postsecondary and career exploration process.
2. [MyBestBets Poster](#) – A poster staff can use to recruit students for MyBestBets.
3. [Introduction to MyBestBets for Program Staff \(PowerPoint Presentation\)](#) – Use this presentation to introduce your peer coaching program staff to the purpose, flow, and content of the MyBestBets, as well as to give them an overview of the coach dashboard.
4. [Introduction to MyBestBets for Students \(PowerPoint\)](#) – Use this presentation to explain to students what MyBestBets is and does, and how it will help guide them through a process to create a postsecondary and career plan. The presentation also explains how a coach will guide them through this process.
5. [Key Questions for Integrating MyBestBets into Your Program](#) – A set of questions to help think about how to integrate the MyBestBets tool and process into a program. It asks program staff to plan how to set up the right supports for MyBestBets implementation.
6. [MyBestBets Tasks & Work Plan](#) – A tool listing all the tasks and subtasks in the MyBestBets platform. Next to each subtask, fill in details (integration with program activities, estimated time to complete, resources needed, and staff lead(s)) on how they plan to implement MyBestBets into their work and the program overall.



7. [MyBestBets Student Password FAQ](#) – Document describing how to change/retrieve a student password in MyBestBets.
8. [MyBestBets Employer Research: Strategies for Identifying Employers to Interview](#) – PowerPoint slides with tips on how to find employers to interview for MyBestBets.
9. [Sample Postsecondary and Employer Interview Notes](#) – A set of notes from a student’s completed postsecondary and employer interviews for MyBestBets. MyBestBets students do not need to write such extensive answers. However, their answers should be long enough to answer each question clearly and completely.
10. [Help Using MyBestBets](#) – A resource for how to get help with any issues using MyBestBets. It includes instructions on how to find Frequently Asked Questions and information for contacting a MyBestBets team member for further assistance. However, please note that on every screen in MyBestBets you will find a “Feedback” tab you can click on to email questions and screenshot any issues in MyBestBets.
11. [Scaffolded Lessons to Support Blended Counseling with MyBestBets](#) – MyBestBets was designed to be used in a blended learning environment - meaning that it is meant to be used as a tool that supports both online and face- to-face activities. Use these scaffolded lessons to support how you counsel and coach students through MyBestBets.

## **Materials for an In-Person Peer Coach Training**

Peer coach supervisors should set aside significant, uninterrupted time to orient and train peer coaches onsite once they are hired. Given the various responsibilities of peer coaches, an 8- to 16-hour training is recommended (this can be 1-2 days, or over the course of a few weeks). The peer coach supervisor is responsible for planning and delivering the training, which should be as interactive as possible, offering opportunities for individual and group work/activities. Current peer coaches may also be trained to assist in training delivery.

## **Peer Coach Training Logistics**

- Room setup is flexible, but there must be enough table space and chairs for all participants, and room for group icebreaker activities.
- The training room should have a screen and LCD projector or smart board for presentations, poster/chart paper, and markers.
- Each participant will need a pen and device (desktop, laptop, iPad) with Internet access. This is especially critical for Training Day 1.
- Trainers should ask participants to fill out pre- and post-training surveys to assess the training’s effectiveness.



- Trainers should encourage participants to take notes during the training to document tips, observations, questions, and any “light bulb” moments they have. Below are training materials you can use/adapt for a peer coach training, with brief descriptions for some.

**Day 1 of the Peer Coach Training typically covers the following topics and activities:**

- Pre-training Survey for participants to fill out
- Welcome and Icebreaker – The purpose of doing an icebreaker is to model ideas of ones peer coaches can use when they lead group and/or workshops for students.
- Overview of the roles and responsibilities of peer coaches and their supervisor
- Review of the [Peer Coach Training Manual](#)
- Walkthrough of the MyBestBets platform (at least 1.5 hours to allow time for peer coaches to explore the platform)
- Time for peer coaches and other relevant staff to plan the integration of MyBestBets into the program, using the [Key Questions for Integrating MyBestBets into Your Program](#) and [MyBestBets Tasks & Work Plan](#).
- Overview of common program challenges (such as low or inconsistent attendance or other obstacles to students graduating) and best practices that help to address them.
- Practice role playing counseling scenarios and strategies for how best to address them, including time for discussion.

**Below are materials you can use as is or adapt for this day (Day 1) of your Peer Coach Training:**

1. [Peer Coach Training Agenda for Days 1 & 2](#)
2. [Pre-training Survey](#)
3. [Peer Coach Training Manual](#)
4. [Introduction to MyBestBets Training Presentation \(for students\)](#)
5. [MyBestBets One Pager](#)
6. [MyBestBets Poster](#)
7. [MyBestBets Tasks & Work Plan](#)



8. [MyBestBets Peer Coaches in Action: Scenarios and Strategies](#) – Supervisors can use this tool to train and practice counseling scenarios with their program’s peer coaches. It contains three peer counseling scenarios that MyBestBets coaches may encounter (or ones like them) when working with students. Each scenario consists of a peer counseling “opportunity” and an accompanying coaching strategy that becomes a successful case in using MyBestBets for career and postsecondary exploration.
9. [Counseling Scenarios & Feedback Form](#) – Scenarios of students who need guidance from a peer coach on a particular issue (e.g., not knowing which careers to explore). This document is used during the “Counseling Scenarios” section of the Peer Coach Training, but it can also be used at other times to help peer coaches act out a typical scenario of working with a student—and the skills needed to do this effectively. Peer coach supervisors and peer coaches can observe the peer coach in the “coach” role and provide constructive criticism on what worked, what could be improved, etc.
10. [Site-based Plan Outline](#) – This tool enables peer coaching program staff to think through and establish plans for different program elements before the program year/cycle begins. It provides supervisors and their peer coaches with a roadmap for the work they will do over the course of the year, including how they will incorporate the MyBestBets platform into their work.

**Day 2 of the Peer Coach Training typically covers the following topics and activities:**

- Welcome and Icebreaker (different from Day 1)
- Introduction to Workshop Planning and Facilitation – This can include modeling of an effective workshop and time to provide feedback about what worked well and what else would have been helpful.
- Closing Activity – For example, you could have participants form a circle and very briefly describe their hopes for the upcoming year.
- Post-training Survey for participants to fill out.

**Below are materials you can use as is or adapt for this second day (Day 2) of your Peer Coach Training:**

1. [Sample Workshop Topics](#)
2. [Dos and Don’ts of Workshop Facilitation](#)
3. [Workshop Planning Template](#)



4. [Workshop Evaluation Form](#)
5. [What Did You Do Yesterday? Activity](#) – This handout helps peer coaches see how they spend their time in a typical day, so they can think about how to improve their time management.
6. [Creating a Weekly Plan](#) – Peer coaches can use this document to plan their week and help organize their time.
7. [Post-training Survey](#) – Peer coach supervisors should use this post-training survey to assess how successful the training was, and plan improvements for future trainings.

## **Workshop Design & Facilitation Tools**

Some schools and programs may not conduct workshops for students, but the ones JFF has worked with have found them to be beneficial. Some schools or organizations have program coordinators lead workshops on a number of topics (e.g., developing professional skills, time management, leadership skills), while others have peer coaches assist them or lead the workshops themselves. Workshops may be integrated into a class that already teaches employability skills in your organization or school. JFF often sees schools and programs incorporate workshops into their college readiness classes or internship/Work Progress Program (WPP) activities.

### **Below are helpful resources for planning, conducting, and evaluating workshops:**

- [Sample Workshop Topics](#) – Sample workshop titles that peer coaches and/or their supervisors can use to plan workshops for students.
- [Dos and Don'ts of Workshop Facilitation](#) – A guide for peer coaches and their supervisors as they prepare to lead workshops, including workshop facilitation tips.
- [Workshop Planning Template](#) – A template that peer coaches and their supervisors can use to plan workshops, including how to outline planned activities and prepare for materials and space needed. The third page of this template has a chart to delegate responsibilities to staff before the workshop, while the last page has a chart to plan post-workshop activities.
- [Workshop Evaluation Form](#) – A handout that enables workshop participants, including peer coach supervisors, to give peer coaches feedback on their facilitation of the workshop.



### **Sample Workshop: Time Management Workshop – See below for resources:**

1. Workshop Activity – [What Did You Do Yesterday?](#) – Peer coaches can use this activity in a time management workshop to help students create a visual of how they spend their time in a typical day.
2. Workshop Handout – [Creating a Weekly Plan](#) – Peer coaches can use this handout for a time management workshop to help students create a weekly plan (schedule their activities week by week).

[Resources for Advising Students of Diverse Backgrounds and Identities](#) – This document contains a table of organizations, initiatives, and websites with information and resources on how to effectively advise and assist your diverse students on issues such as immigration status, gender discrimination, college scholarships, etc. The table is categorized by resources for:

- Undocumented and Other Immigrant Students
- LGBTQIA Students
- Black Students
- Native American Students
- Latinx Students
- Asian Students
- Students with Disabilities
- Female Students/Women
- Religious Students
- International Students