Colorado Convener Guide

LAUNCHING AND SUSTAINING INDUSTRY-LED, SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

2017

Colorado Workforce Development Council

Sector Strategies

Cheerful Greetings,

This guide exists to empower local leaders to learn about convening and sustaining sector partnerships. We have a rich history of launching, growing and sustaining sector partnerships in Colorado across our 14 economic development regions and 14 key industries. From that history, a stellar cadre of business chairs and conveners have emerged with many mentoring emerging conveners as they enter this rewarding work.

Since 2005, the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) has been committed to providing technical assistance, including access to experts in coaching, mentoring, and facilitating the launch and growth of sector partnerships. We provide a resource library for conveners and chairs of which this guide is featured. The library is a combination of resources from the national Next Generation Sector Partnership Toolkit (of which Colorado is a founding member) and Colorado-specific resources. Learn more at www.colorado.gov/pacific/cwdc/sectors-strategies.

Please do not hesitate to ask for help from your peers and our state technical assistance team (STAT) – we are grateful for your leadership and honored to support you and your sector partnership. Welcome aboard!

Kind Regards,
CWDC Sectors Steering Committee
CWDC Staff
Colorado's Sectors Network

Positive Return on Investment

Partnerships are proven to provide greater economic opportunity, as well as shareholder profit. More than 750 businesses are actively involved in sector partnerships across Colorado. We annually survey the business members and the conveners to learn more about the impact sector partnerships are having. Current results include:

Across sector partnerships:
- 83% increased participation by businesses in target industry and region
- 65% increased participation by education, training and student/jobseeker support organizations (K-12, postsecondary, workforce programs, other)
- 83% shared data across support organizations
- 83% increased collaboration across partner organizations on talent development
- 83% experienced joint or shared decision-making across support organizations (education, workforce development, economic development, etc.)
- 78% implemented joint or shared projects across support organizations

Impact on job seekers:
- 65% increased student/jobseeker awareness of training/education programs

- 57% were involved with work-based learning opportunities (e.g. apprenticeships, internships)

- 52% were involved with the development of career pathways programs
- 78% enhanced existing or developed new training/education program(s)

Impact on businesses as a result of participating in a sector partnership:

- 65% experienced improvements in HR policies and/or employee development practices
- 50% feel they were positively branded in local market
- 33% formed new or enhanced joint ventures / B2B relationships

Scaling Sector Partnerships

2017

Launched two sector partnerships - construction and tech in region 3.

CWDC became an official National Next Gen Sector Partnership Affiliate and a Founding Partner.

Hosted Sectors Summit on accelerating work-based learning.

Launched State Technical Assistance Team (STAT) to bridge expertise from state agencies to local partners in order to accelerate sector partnerships.

2016

Launched a healthcare sector partnership in region 9; retail in region 3; and healthcare and value added agriculture in region 8.

Launched a sectors grant program.

2015

Launched Annual Impact survey measuring key performance indicators to facilitate the promotion of stories and key outcomes.

Began implementation of Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act - legislating sector partnerships and career pathways as the way of doing business by local workforce boards and partners throughout the economic development, workforce, and education systems.

Worked closely with Northern Colorado Manufacturing Partnership in hosting a series of first-of-its-kind skill panel discussions around the top 10 critical occupation in the region, in order to create sector partnership-driven career pathways in manufacturing.

2014

CWDC hosted Sectors Summit II: Growing the Talent Pipeline focused on sustaining existing sector partnerships and aligning them with the development of career pathways.

Continued to convene talent development system partners in the Aligning Career Pathways Committee. Partners provided guidance on the statewide Creating Career Pathways in Colorado: A Step-by-Step Guide.

Senate Bill 14-205 established publication of the annual Talent Pipeline Report and institutionalized the strategies of sector partnerships and career pathways as the way Colorado will work with industry, economic development, workforce development, and education to close the skills gap.

2013

Hosted a statewide Sectors Summit to convene regional teams to launch and grow sector partnerships.

Provided training, intensive coaching, and capacity building for local programs to design and implement sector partnerships.

Rolled out common statewide messaging, and begins developing a "dashboard" to track and measure performance of sector partnerships.

OEDIT launched remaining 5 Key Industry Networks.

CCCS and CWDC received technical assistance grant from Department of Education for career pathways.

2012

CDLE and CWDC integrated the concept of sector strategies into new state initiatives, local workforce planning, and proposals for federal funding.

Brought key stakeholders together to launch Career pathways initiative.

OEDIT launched Key Industry Networks for 9 of the 14 Key Industry Networks.

2011

Sector Strategies Steering Committee became a sub-committee of the CWDC to ensure alignment with CWDC's broader mission to convene workforce, education and economic development partners.

Colorado's statewide bottom up economic development plan, The Colorado Blueprint, was completed by the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT).

2010

Executive Order was signed to reconstitute the CWDC as the entity to align education, workforce, and economic development.

2009

Convened local workforce areas and their partners in industry, education, and economic development Sector Strategy Academies to learn from one another and from national sector practitioners.

2008

Commissioned industry analyses and reports in the fields of health care, energy, and manufacturing to document how local areas create sector partnerships in these critical industries.

Created a full-time staff position to lead sector partnership activities.

Repurposed WIA discretionary funds to create start-up grants, including guidance to local areas to establish sector partnerships. New grants are competitively awarded over the next three years.

2007

CDLE is accepted to participate in a Policy Academy on Sector Strategies organized by the National Governors Association.

Sector Strategies Steering Committee is established to guide policies and practical implementation of sector partnerships.

2005

The WELLS Center is launched through a $1,600,000 grant from USDOL to alleviate Colorado's critical shortage of healthcare professionals and build capacity for training. This is Colorado's first sector partnership.

Tangible Outcomes for both Rural and Urban Communities

Morgan Community College hosted a robotics camp in July for 5th - 8th graders in partnership with NECOM and FIRST Robotics Team #4386, the Mecha-Maniacs. Participants learned about electricity, motors, and biorobotics. Thirty-three students individually raced the robots they built during camp. When this camp was advertised, it filled up in 48 hours! Two robotics camps will be offered in summer 2018. TRAINcation, a 4-day bootcamp where industry leaders provide fun activities that emphasize the essential skills in the workplace took place in Fort Morgan and Yuma. Each morning highlighted a topic such as attendance, attitude, accountability, and ambition, and the afternoons were filled with visits to local manufacturers. Over thirty students participated in the event. - *Northeastern Colorado Manufacturer (NECOM)*

Partnered with the Youth Pipeline group, ACEC, and Front-Range Community College to sponsor the Cool Careers Camp in June that included touring local manufacturing sites. Sector funds were used to help sponsor it and it came out of the work done by the Youth Pipeline group. It is a small group of industry partners, but they are so engaged! - *CAMA Metro Manufacturing*

Eat Denver, an association of about 150 restaurants, reported an acute shortage of people who work in the back of the house. A member of the partnership from Emily Griffith Technical College connected with Eat Denver representative and jointly developed a "Culinary QuickStart Program" that is a four week long training. More than 70 participants went through the training in several cohort groups. Denver's Retail Grant provided tuition assistance for some of the participants. - *Metro Denver Retail*

Though a nascent partnership, we have already had lots of energy and passion in our working committees. Adams State partnered with CSU to deliver the agriculture program in the Valley, and beginning in the Spring semester, they will offer a Food Studies program. They also imported 30 metric tons of industrial hemp seed as a direct request of the group. - *Value-Added Agriculture San Luis Valley*

Introduced *See The Change* to seven school districts. This program brings physics to middle school students. This year, Rocky Ford School District found younger students were missing some key skills desired for this curriculum by the time they entered 6th. The district believes in the curriculum so much that they budgeted their own

dollars to bring additional *See the Change* learning to the elementary students. Manufacturers in the partnership are also offering tours to students. - *Southeast Colorado Manufacturing*

Over 200 parents and students came to Parents Night hosted by Woodward to find out more about Manufacturing. Eight school partners and 20 manufacturing companies were involved. - *Northern Colorado Manufacturing, NOCOM*

One of the big successes for GMDHP this year has been the introduction and adoption of apprenticeships in healthcare. Throughout this last year, we have explored what it would take to adopt the apprenticeship model for certain occupations. Working within each corporate structure to introduce the "apprenticeship" workforce solution has been quite challenging. Three hospital systems have been great champions. At Kaiser, a union environment was a little more receptive to adopting the concept for its medical lab technicians. They saw the need and implemented a program for four incumbent workers. At SCL Health, the concept of apprenticeships was widely accepted and they quickly began working on the details for an apprenticeship model for its certified nurse aide entry-level position. This model will be used for both internal and external recruiters. At Centura, the corporate structure was challenging. The need was apparent in several occupations because the demand far exceeded supply, but making this happen internally took effort. They are moving into developing a medical assistant apprenticeship, which will be launched later this year. Because of this sector work, we will impact the future of apprenticeships in healthcare. - *Greater Metro Denver Health Partnership (GMDHP)*

Training Manual

FEBRUARY 2017

Colorado Workforce
Development Council

The Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) is an official Next Gen Sector Partnership Affiliate and a Founding Partner. Colorado's experimentation and adoption of Next Gen Sector Partnerships contributed critical learning, best practices and tools that led to this national guide. CWDC is committed to using the Next Gen Sector Partnership model as their preferred approach to building regional, industry-driven partnerships with community support partners. As an affiliate and a founding partner CWDC actively supports the development of authentic and sustainable Next Gen Sector Partnerships by:

• Continuing to advance Next-Gen strategies,
• Adopting Next Gen-branded curriculum as their go-to resource for building successful partnerships, and;
• Providing (either currently or recent past) training, intensive coaching, and technical assistance on Next Gen Sector Partnership-Building from Next Gen faculty or staff.

To inquire about becoming a Next Gen Affiliate, e-mail info@nextgensectorpartnerships.com or learn more at www.NextGenSectorPartnerships.com. To learn more about the CWDC please visit www.colorado.gov/cwdc.

Building Strong Next Generation Industry Sector Partnerships

Why This, Why Now?

Sector strategies again? Really? No matter what organization or system you work in, you may have noticed a resurgence in the concept and practice of sector strategies (also called sector initiatives, sector partnerships, industry partnerships, among other names). You may also have noticed a new emphasis on industry-driven career pathways. Is this just rhetoric? What makes the dialogue about "demand-driven" strategies for workforce and education different now? Here are a few reasons:

- **People need good jobs:**
  Nothing is more important to ensuring that individuals can make real choices about their lives than access to a good job. Access to good jobs depends on two critical factors: first, industry sectors in a local economy must be stable and growing (thus adding jobs), and second, education and training systems must stay deeply attuned to the skill needs of those jobs so people get hired. A community's ability to grow its local economy and prepare individuals for job opportunities depends on how it responds to these two challenges. *Next Gen* industry-led partnerships offer a vehicle to address both.

- **What we've been doing is not enough:**
  For decades, in every community, a myriad (sometimes dozens) of educational institutions and workforce development programs have made it a practice to reach out to industry in an effort to understand their workforce needs through surveys, focus groups, skills panels or advisory boards. They spend many hours and public resources engaging with companies (more commonly referred to as "employers"), and yet only ever touch a small subset of companies in a target industry in their region. By failing to engage a true critical mass of companies in a target industry *and* by each engaging companies separately, programs and credentials are being developed with *incomplete information*, and that means students and jobseekers cannot truly make informed choices about training or education, nor can they have confidence they will get a job in the end.

- **Intensifying independent efforts is not the answer:**
  Some organizations around the country may misinterpret the renewed emphasis on "sector strategies" as a call to intensify their own employer engagement efforts, *especially* if they've successfully met or exceeded their own system's performance standards (i.e. numbers of jobseekers trained and placed into jobs). Why mess with success? Many regions across the nation are beginning to understand the consequences of *not aligning* their outreach efforts, and of *not coordinating* their training and education responses. In addition to not engaging a critical mass of companies, and therefore not getting a true understanding of an industry's skills needs, the consequence can be dire for jobseekers: 1) The labor market for critical occupations is under-supplied (which can cause companies to uproot and move away); or 2) the labor market is over-saturated (which means jobseekers spend their precious time and resources) going through a training that won't lead to a job. To add salt to the wound, this mis-step may also contribute to wage depression due to over-supply of an occupation in the labor market. No organization can feel good about these scenarios.

So why are sector strategies experiencing a renaissance? Because for decades engaging employers has proven more successful than not engaging them. That means now everyone's in the game, and for the above reasons, it means everyone needs to coordinate at significantly higher, more sophisticated levels. For a re-cap, check out this 8-minute *Why Sector Partnerships* Prezi video.

"The sector partnership approach is the most productive way to align the assets in your community toward a common goal and common business solutions. You will not get this working one-on-one with individual companies. The people at the table are the industry leaders and they best know their opportunities for growth, whether it is a workforce issue or a regulatory issue or an operational issue. They are the best ones to sit and discuss it." — JEN MILES, MOHAVE COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, AZ

Intended Audience

The best industry-led partnerships are *industry-driven and community-supported*: 1) Business members of a target industry make up an *inner* table. This is where businesses shape and drive an agenda, one that has a heavy (but not exclusive) workforce & education component. 2) Support partners from the community, including decision-making leaders from the essential partners of the workforce system (workforce development boards, JobCenters, Department of Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, etc.), education (including K-12, Career and Technical Education, community and technical colleges), as well as key economic development organizations and Chambers of Commerce, organized labor and apprenticeship programs, and other stakeholders. These support partners make up an *outer* table. They are the essential team of organizations that implement, with industry, the needed solutions and interventions to keep the industry strong and to get people jobs.

The Audience for this step-by-step is the set of these "support partners" necessary to make an industry-led partnership successful. This curriculum is ideally used in a "team setting", i.e. among members of a regional "support partner team" so that everyone is building skills and making joint decisions together.

"I participate because it grows my business. Since getting involved in organized efforts like this, I've grown my business 500-600 percent. I tell all my manufacturing peers and competitors to join: two hours working on your industry will only help your business."
— GRADY COPES, CEO, REATA ENGINEERING, METRO MANUFACTURING PARTNERSHIP, DENVER, CO

Module 1: The Step-by-Step of Building Strong Industry-led Partnerships

DEFINITIONS AND CORE PRINCIPLES

1. Sector Partnership Definition: Partnerships of companies, *from the same industry and in a shared labor market region*, with education, workforce development, economic development and community organizations. They primarily focus on the education and workforce training needs of an industry, but *Next Gen* partnerships also focus on other issues related to an industry's competitiveness. This ensures deeper, broader and longer-term industry engagement.

INDUSTRY-DRIVEN, COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED SECTOR PARTNERSHIP
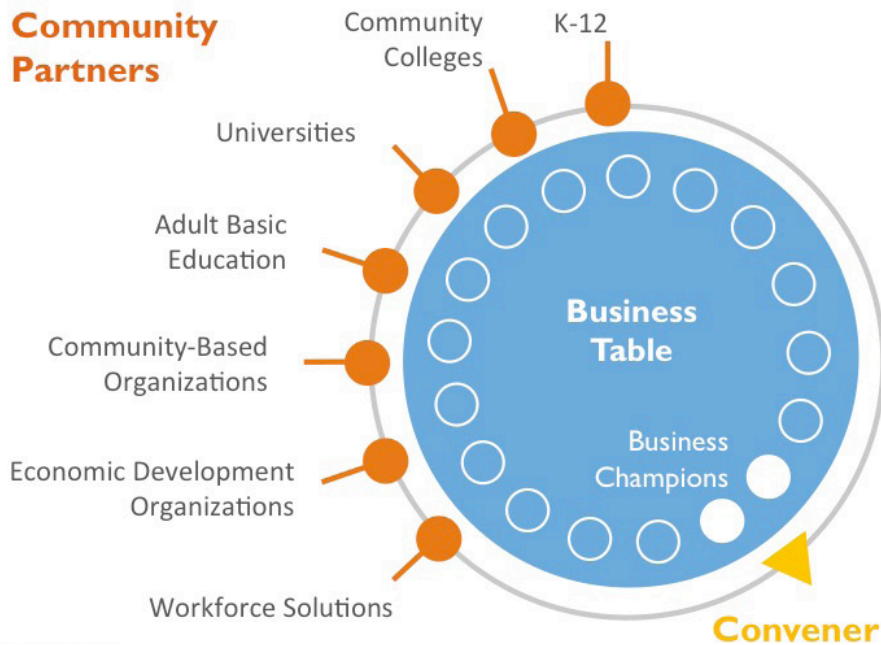
2. What works/What doesn't work: Sector partnerships must have an active convener. Workforce Development Boards are often well positioned to do this work, but an economic development organization, a community college, organized labor entity, or community based organization can also help support. The convener is responsible for coordination, administrative and implementation support. Often a sector partnership is co-convened and staffed by two organizations. No sector partnership is ever successful without members of **industry acting as leaders, advisors, champions and active partners.**

WHAT WORKS WELL (AND NOT SO WELL)

What works well	What doesn't work so well
Clusters of companies	Individual firms
Employers as partners	Employers as customers
Industry-driven	System- or institution-driven
Regionally-based	Statewide top-down or too local
Existing industry strength or emerging specialty	Wishful thinking
Industry competitiveness/growth	Workforce only
Opportunity-focused	Problem-driven
Employer priorities first	Target populations first
Champion-driven	Representation-oriented
Coalitions of the willing	The futile search for consensus
People and relationships	Organizations and jurisdictions
A disciplined, replicable process	A mysterious, unique occurrence

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do you define the scope of a target industry? Is it really okay to prioritize industries? How big is too big? How small is too small? Doesn't this conflict with a needed focus on target worker populations? Does this really work in rural areas? Aren't metro areas just too complex for this type of model? How does all of this align with coordinated business service efforts? What about career pathway programs? What about realistic expectations of staffing up a good partnership? So many questions! Click here for some answers to FAQs.
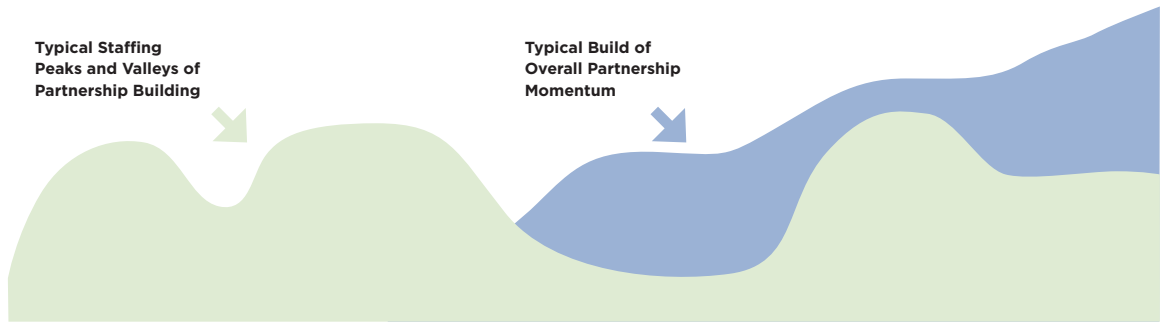
LIFECYCLE/BIORHYTHM OF AN INDUSTRY-LED PARTNERSHIP

There are natural ebbs and flows of building a sustained, industry-led partnership. These align with the inherent intensities of building a comprehensive "community support team" who will be poised and ready to help implement the priority actions and solutions areas that an industry group identifies as important. The ebbs and flows also apply to the process of building the team of companies ready to partner together. It is important to understand when commitments of time and resources might be more concentrated over the life cycle of a partnership, and when you might feel like the partnership is finally chugging along. The Lifecycle and Biorhythms graphic below is another way to understand this.

It may surprise you that the most intense staffing and energy is needed in the first step of good industry partnership building: creating a true regional support team. Making the case that the single best employer-engagement strategy is in fact public program coordination, and then taking concrete steps to achieve such coordination is hard. This is messy, and no one truly has the authority to bring partners on the ground together (e.g. not a workforce area director, a college dean, nor a Chamber president). Catalyzing the coming together of a regional team of these stakeholders, and facilitating toward agreement about common target industries is a break-through in and of itself. Agreeing to clear roles and responsibilities to formally coordinate support for those target industries is another huge win, and the point-of-entry to sector partnership building.
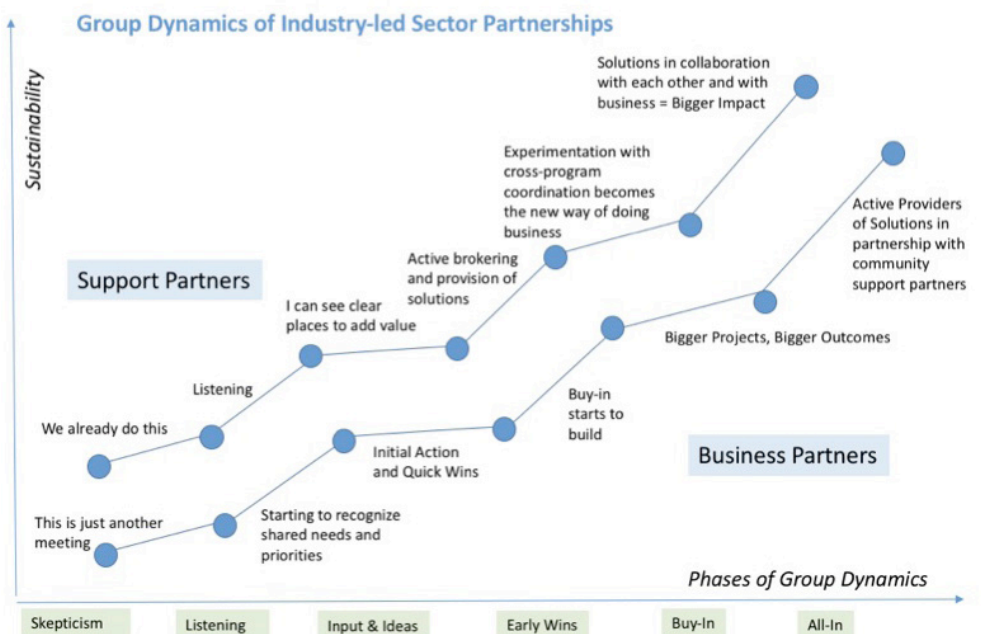
NEXT GENERATION
SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Life Cycle and Biorhythms of Industry-led Sector Partnerships

Build a Regional Sector Support Team	Prepare to Launch	Launch	Move to Action	Sustain and Evolve
• Get into the data • Agree on sector(s) to target • Identify a neutral convener	• Build a list of CEOs • Identify and cultivate co-chairs • Identify location and date	• Get industry talking • Focus on shared priorities • End with commitments	• Build CEO-let task teams • Focus on early wins • Support partners organized around priority areas	• Establish an organizational home • Keep business in the driver's seat • Create a process for continuous improvement and feedback

Typical Staffing Peaks and Valleys of Partnership Building

Typical Build of Overall Partnership Momentum

From there, following good process, recruiting industry champions to help set up the official "launch" of an industry partnership, inviting companies to attend, and facilitating them to an industry-driven action agenda can quite honestly be easy. Post-launch, staffing requirements pick back up. Ideally, your industry group identified between 3 to 5 areas for action, most being workforce and education related, but some focusing on other issues (like transportation, technology or needed policy changes). It's the convener's (or co-conveners') role to now plug the "support team" in appropriately to start moving into implementation. Using a workgroup or task force structure here is important. Each priority area should be a taskforce, made up of majority industry members, facilitated by a trusted support partner, and inclusive of the most relevant support partner organizations to the priority area.

This begins the real "norming" phase of an industry partnership, where both public and private partners are learning to work together successfully, and where diverse support partners across education, workforce and economic development are syncing up their strengths, assets, weaknesses and gaps into a strong support team. Conveners are keeping industry engaged and motivated, and a cadence of regular meetings and projects starts to take hold. Another way to think about this is to envision the turning points in the development of a Partnership where real collaboration and buy-in begins to take hold. See the below graphic: Group Dynamics of Industry-led Partnerships.

Group Dynamics of Industry-led Sector Partnerships

Sustainability

Solutions in collaboration with each other and with business = Bigger Impact

Experimentation with cross-program coordination becomes the new way of doing business

Active brokering and provision of solutions

Support Partners

I can see clear places to add value

Listening

We already do this

This is just another meeting

Starting to recognize shared needs and priorities

Initial Action and Quick Wins

Buy-in starts to build

Bigger Projects, Bigger Outcomes

Active Providers of Solutions in partnership with community support partners

Business Partners

Phases of Group Dynamics

| Skepticism | Listening | Input & Ideas | Early Wins | Buy-In | All-In |

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NEXT GENERATION
SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

STEP 1 BUILD YOUR REGIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

Launching a Next Gen industry partnership often represents a break from tradition. It challenges the status quo, requires a much deeper level of employer engagement, demands a much greater commitment to collaboration, and can deliver remarkable results. But, it does require that you make the case for a new approach, not just a tweak to existing efforts, to prepare people for a very different kind of partnership. Those who answer the call for a new approach will become the core of your regional support team. Your very first step in building a sustainable industry-led partnership is to build your non-employer "support team" of education, workforce, economic development, and other key stakeholders such as elected officials, organized labor, community-based organizations or others who have a stake in building stronger partnerships with the industry sectors that drive your regional economy. You may also have a few private sector leaders who will naturally "get" this approach and who can help make the case to the broader team that this is important. Add them to the team. But be clear: this step is about getting on the same page, agreeing to shared target sectors, and clarifying roles and responsibilities among non-industry support partners. This is a critical step that happens before you ever engage industry in an industry-led sector partnership

After Action Review: *Build Your Regional Support Team*

1. Do key stakeholders in our region (from education, workforce development, and economic development) recognize how sector partnership(s) can act as the shared table where they can work with businesses from a targeted sector, understand their needs, and collaborate with other public partners to develop responsive/coordinated solutions? Are we willing to agree on at least one target sector through which we can begin experimenting and operating via this shared table approach, vs. operating via multiple independent employer engagement efforts in the targeted sector in our region?
2. Have we agreed on clear roles and responsibilities on the sector support team? Who is the lead "convener", or co-conveners?

STEP 2 DEFINE THE SCOPE OF INDUSTRY FOCUS

Once you have pulled together your support team, work together to look at regional labor market data to determine which sectors merit your collective action in launching a sector partnership. In other words, look for sectors that:
• Are drivers of your regional economy with a significant number of total jobs, higher-than-average wages, or a rate of concentration in your region that is higher than state or national averages;
• Are the targets of multiple employer engagement efforts in your region. Odds are that if multiple support partners are reaching out to businesses in a given sector, it's a sector that would benefit from a more coordinated approach.

As you determine the scope of your industry-led partnership, keep in mind the strong benefits of "working definitions." A common pitfall at this early juncture can be paralysis by analysis, where the perfect becomes the enemy of the good. In other words, as you identify the sector or sectors as the focus for your efforts, remember that you are developing a working definition that is always evolving to some degree, especially at the margins. That goes for the specific industry segments that you target, and the geographic scope of your partnership.

TOOLS

Find these tools in the toolkit on www.nextgensectorpartnerships.com:
• Universe of Connections Diagramming Exercise + Guiding Discussion Questions
• Building Your Non-Industry Support Team – A Sample Work-session

TOOLS

Find these tools in the toolkit on www.nextgensectorpartnerships.com:
• Getting the Scope Just Right
• How to Use LMI – Guideposts
• Sample Regional LMI Profiles for OR's Regions
• Industry Readiness Worksheet
• Aspen's Targeted Industry Sector Worksheet

After Action Review: *Define the Scope of Industry Focus*

1. Has our regional team jointly agreed on which industry sectors merit our collective action in launching a sector partnership? Did we use LMI data, combined with our on-the-ground knowledge about industries, to make these selections? Which sector is first? Or next?
2. Has our regional team discussed and agreed to the not-too-small, not-too-big geographic footprint for our sector partnership?

STEP 3 **PREPARE TO LAUNCH**

Every industry-led partnership will look and feel different. It will be unique depending on the industry of focus and home region. Regardless, there are a tried-and-true steps to launching a partnership to consider. As a sector support team, here are four steps:

STEP 1: Discuss and agree which one organization, or pair of organizations, is well positioned to be the lead convener/co-convener of the new Partnership. Who has credibility with companies in the target sector? Who can devote some staffing to this effort? Who can neutrally facilitate the partnership's process, leaving their own organizational agendas behind? (For example: Chambers or Associations must leave behind goals of increasing membership; colleges must leave behind goals of immediate curriculum advising; workforce investment areas must not immediately focus on how to increase their performance metrics).

STEP 2: As a team, confirm that all other partners will be in a strong support role throughout the partnership's life, and that they will be in "listening" mode during meetings with employer partners, "action" mode once implementation of priority areas and goals begins.

STEP 3: Start brainstorming and discussing who the companies and CEOs are in your region/ community. Discuss who each support partner knows personally. Decide which top three CEOs might be best chairpersons for the partnership. Discuss and decide who will do outreach and recruitment for each.

STEP 4: Decide on the date, time and location. Ask chairpersons what date and time will make the most sense for companies, and suggest that the launch meeting be hosted at one of their facilities, which sends a clear message that this is an industry-owned effort. Now draft an invite and get Chairpersons to sign it. Get the invitations out with at least 3-4 weeks-notice and conduct follow up phone calls to make sure you get the critical mass you want at the Launch.

After Action Review: *Preparing to Launch*

1. Have we identified and successfully recruited at least one (3 or 4 even better!) CEOs in our region and target industry who will sign the invite letter and welcome everyone to the Launch?
2. Have we picked a date, time and location that will work for everyone (ideally locating the meeting at a business facility)?
3. Have we collectively created an invite list of C-level leaders of companies in our target sector and region to invite to the Launch? Did we get the invite out one month in advance, and do appropriate follow ups?

TOOLS
- Preparing to Launch Worksheet
- How to Choose a Champ – Industry Champion Profile
- Talking Points to Recruit Champs
- Sample Launch Invite Letter

STEP 4 LAUNCH

There is no one right process to use in the employer launch meeting. However, do spend time on this choice, and choreograph how it will play out. Choose a disciplined process that allows the collective employer voice to emerge, and choose a good facilitator who can pull it off. This first meeting is the hook --employers must see a reason to commit to a next step. Based on years of experience with many different processes, this curriculum offers a set of design criteria and a preferred approach. Whatever approach you choose, it should be designed to have employers identify opportunities for sector growth, priority requirements for capitalizing on these opportunities, and employer champions for those priorities, who are willing to take a next step after the launch meeting. It is essential that by the end of the meeting, there is a shared product (priority opportunities, requirements, and champions) that is the employers'-- and not anyone else's--agenda. To this end, it is best if community partners are good listeners during this meeting, giving employers the opportunity to be heard.

After Action Review: *Launch*

1. Did we engage a critical mass of business leaders at the launch meeting?
2. Did the launch meeting result in a set of shared priorities that business leaders feel a sense of ownership over?
3. Did employers commit to specific next steps after the meeting?
4. Did we make time for non-industry support partners to debrief after listening at the Launch meeting? Did we balance enthusiasm to jump in with solutions with the need to let industry-led task forces further define needs and early wins in the next 2-4 weeks?
5. Are we ready for next steps, including sending an executive summary of the meeting out to business members asap, and setting up short task force calls?

STEP 5 MOVE TO ACTION: ORGANIZE THE AFTERMATH AND BEGIN IMPLEMENTATION

The priority opportunities and requirements you identified during the "launch" meeting are a starting place for an action plan: a strategy that lays out a clear set of goals, outcomes, and actions to advance the partnership's shared priorities. To move from ideas to action, organize focused conversations (either in-person or over the phone) with employer champions who volunteered for each priority area. Focus these smaller groups on defining success (e.g. "What are we trying to achieve? How will we know when we're successful?") and identifying any immediate opportunities for "quick wins" (e.g. "What can we accomplish in the next 60 days that will help advance this priority? How can we get started?").

Pay attention to which employers start to emerge as leaders in these conversations, showing particular passion or helping to focus the group and bring clarity to the discussion. These are the leaders you may want to ask to be lead champions down the road.

There will be a tendency at this point for community partners, with the best of intentions, to take over and drive action, not wanting to impose on the employers. While well-intentioned, this is a formula for failure. If community partners exert themselves too much, employers will begin to step back and disengage. At this critical moment, community partners must give space for the employer voice to emerge and solidify their engagement as partners, not customers.

TOOLS
- Suggested Meeting Set-up
- Sample Launch Agenda
- Detailed Launch Facilitation Guide
- Simulations – Facilitating a Launch Meeting
  1. A 45-minute Youtube video of a 2016 facilitation training in Hawaii, simulating a launch meeting with businesses
  2. A more in-depth series of videos from 2013 provided by the Colorado Workforce Development Council

TOOLS
- The Taskforce Model
- Influence Map + Tipping the Scales Assessment – Getting the Right People to Do the Job
- Roles/Responsibilities
  1. Industry Champs
  2. Broader Industry Partners
  3. Conveners
  4. Core Support Partners
  5. Broader Community Partners
- Sample Implementation Plan

After Action Review: *Move to Action*

1. Have we established task teams around employers' priorities? Are task teams primarily made up of employers, with support partners brought in selectively?
2. Have we identified lead employer champions who are taking an active role in transforming ideas into action?
3. Have we achieved clarity around outcomes and strategies in key areas for action?
4. Are support partners beginning to see where they can add value on key priorities? Is there a mechanism to begin engaging them in task team responses, while still ensuring that employers continue to drive the agenda and set strategy?
5. Have we achieved any "quick wins"?
6. Do we have a date set for the next Full Partnership Quarterly meeting?

COLLECTIVE IMPACT AND SECTOR STRATEGIES

The 2011 Stanford Social Innovation Review article *Collective Impact* prescribes the approach to situations which "require many different players to change their behavior in order to solve a complex problem," and where "a group of important actors" from diverse organizations must "abondon their individual agendas in favor of a collective approach."[1] Kania and Kramer identified five conditions for achieving collective impact on any issue: a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication and backbone support functions (such as convening partners, conducting needs assessments, developing a shared strategic plan for aligning efforts, selecting success metrics and designing an evaluation). These conditions mirror the same critical success factors of good sector partnerships. The uniqui advantage of the sector partnership approach, in the best cases, is that the common agenda in framed by an invested 3rd party: the voice of industry. When used effectively, this means that individual partner organizations who acknowledge and embrace using the "pull" of industry demand to guide their services to workers and jobseekers can almost immediately find projects to collaborate on, and can significantly reduce ramp-up time involved with complex mission alignment.

[1]*Woolsey, Lindsey. 2015. "Applying 'Next Generation' Business Engagement Practices to Opportunity Youth, Pew Charitable Trusts*

STEP 6 **SUSTAIN AND EVOLVE**

Long term success of an industry-driven partnership depends many factors, but a few rise to the top, including following through on actions, keeping businesses in the driver's seat, continually finding the right staffing and support mix for coordination, and operating in the spirit of continuous improvement.

Let's consider that sustainability of your partnership (and hopefully multiple partnerships) depends on having a shared vision of how multiple systems will operate together, as well as a shared understanding of how to apply and coordinate independent resources into collective impact. The best industry sector partnerships are in fact posterchild examples of how Collective Impact principles can play out in regional community.

After Action Review: *Sustain and Evolve*

1. Do key stakeholders involved understand the enduring value of our sector partnership?
   a. Companies recognize the sector partnership as a place to address big opportunities for shared competitiveness, a single table at which to work with public entities, and an opportunity to share costs related to needed solutions;
   b. Educators recognize the sector partnership as a venue for faster understanding changing industry needs and a vehicle to build industry-driven career pathway systems;
   c. Workforce developers recognize the sector partnership as a way to strategically focus time and resources toward high-impact solutions for industry and workers, a wholesale (vs. retail) approach to serving employers, and a way to create highly customized and therefore highly accurate training solutions for employers;
   d. Economic developers recognize the sector partnership as a place for focused work with key industries, a meaningful venue for working with education and workforce development, and a tool to understand the strengths and opportunities of driving industry sectors.
2. Have we considered what organizational home is right for the partnership that ensures that the partnership continues to be industry-driven and action-oriented
3. Have we developed a process for periodically assessing progress, revising priorities, and refreshing our partnership's agenda?

TOOLS
- Red Flags (When you're about to hit a roadblock)/ Green Lights (When you're in the clear and moving ahead)
- Funding Considerations for Mature Industry-led Partnerships
- Organizational Shifts for Long-term Systems Linkages
- Aspen's Asset Spiral Concept
- Developing Leaders, Building a Movement

Module 2: Coordinating Business Services & Outreach

The best next gen sector partnerships succeed because their conveners and support partners operate on an assumption that they will get more bang for their public dollar buck if they coordinate together to engage with their most critical industry sectors, and then in response coordinate to ensure that industry and jobseekers in the community get what they need. It should be obvious that the first half of this equation is coordinated outreach to businesses. It should therefore also be noted that any efforts to coordinate or streamline business outreach in an area should not be done in isolation of sector partnership efforts, nor vice versa.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Most states and local areas face two persistent challenges in their industry engagement efforts:

1. **Incomplete Information:** Outreach to industry done independently never achieves true understanding of a labor market region's industry needs. Without some level of critical mass engagement of companies/businesses in a target sector, the information received about their skills needs is incomplete. No single organization acting on their own can achieve critical mass engagement or input. Surveys and focus groups are not enough, and leave education and training entities with a narrow slice of needed information.

2. **Messy, Redundant and Burdensome Outreach:** Outreach to industry done independently is messy. Why? Because everyone is doing it. Multiple points of contact are made with businesses from each organization. Universities, colleges, and career tech education advisory boards/committees conduct their own outreach and engagement. Economic development organizations at the regional, city, county levels have their own reasons for outreach. And within the Workforce system, at least a half dozen individual programs have business outreach or business service functions. Why are they all doing this separately? Because each organization and program has a slightly different reason for engagement (based on slightly different target population missions, performance criteria, etc). Redundancy, however, is a reality. And the additional risk is employer fatigue. If in every community, up to a dozen entities are asking employers about their needs or to offer input or to provide sponsorship for something, the same employers tend to get hit multiple times, no program ever builds a critical mass of companies, and companies get what they need in piece-meal fashion. This is the challenge inherent in the "many tables and many knocks" approach in which most regions operate (see the Many Tables, Many Knocks exercise in the tools section below).

RESPONSE AND CRITICAL DECISIONS

Some areas, states and economic regions already thinking hard about how to coordinate and streamline the many tables (where businesses may already be convened as a group) or at least points of contact (the "many knocks") with businesses. Your sector partnerships should not be excluded or parallel to these conversations and processes, but integrated into them. How will this occur? Consider these three general categories and questions for moving this conversation in the right direction:

TOOLS
- Journey Mapping Group Exercise
  1. Discuss: What's the employer experience with our programs? What do employers say about us?
  2. As individual program leaders, take 5-10 minutes to write down or draw the path a business person takes when working with your program (i.e. point of engagement, referrals, follow-through, etc), and clearly state what services employers receive.
  3. Discuss: individual paths, strong and weak points, points of redundancy, if any.
- Many Tables, Many Knocks Exercise

---

1. **Outreach Coordination and Consistent Methodology:** Do businesses know what to expect when engaging with any one of our programs? Do we have a shared vision and criterion for high quality business services? Is there really such a thing as a single Point of Contact? If not, what gets us closer to the benefits of a single POC? How do we move toward consistent, high quality, shared methodologies in services (e.g. OJT services, customized training services, job candidate recruitment & assessment services, etc)? Do we use the same terms and job descriptions for business service reps, job developers, business outreach specialists, etc?

2. **Shared Marketing or Common Branding:** Do we have shared goals and methodologies that we can message and market to businesses? Have we mapped and assessed our individual business service strengths? How can we at least begin that process, and apply it to shared marketing/referral protocol? Can we jointly use testimony of business relationships that have been successful to market our services? How do we do that as a unified front, vs. independent (confusing) entities? Can we create a shared marketing plan?

3. **Staff Development:** How have we already improved in this area? Do we hire for the same qualities and skills across any of our business outreach positions? Do we reward coordination across staff performing these functions across programs and agencies? Do we expect joint accountability and outcomes across them? How can we scale up consistent, like-minded training for business outreach staff across our organizations? How do we ensure that staff directly providing services to jobseekers and students are fully connected to business outreach staff, so the final product (qualified job applicants) matches business service promises?

Now consider: Where does your sector partnership (or future partnerships) fit in? What is their potential role for bringing coordination to your disparate business outreach services, or how do you bring your existing business outreach coordination efforts into play to benefit your sector partnership(s)?

Your Sector Partnership Regional Support Team:
- Workforce Development Board, Job Center
- Community/Tech Colleges
- Adult Education
- K-12 Education
- Economic Development/ Chambers

The Multiple Workforce Programs conducting outreach to Businesses:
- Veterans
- Older Workers
- Youth
- Voc Rehab
- Employment Department
- Temporary Assistance to Need Families

The Many other Organizations also conducting outreach to Businesses:
- City, county, regional economic development organizations
- City, county, regional Chambers
- City, County government
- Universities
- Private k-12, private post-secondary

Module 3: Serving Jobseekers and Students on the Frontline

A general agreement from the decades of practice nationally in the field of sector strategies is that business engagement tactics may actually not change dramatically depending on the target population. This may sound counterintuitive, but fundamentally, regardless of the particular job-seeker, a deep understanding of demand remains the most important factor to placing any individual into training, an education program, and eventually into a job.

Continuum of Participant Support

RECRUITMENT ▶ ASSESSMENT ▶ TRAINING ▶ CAREER COACHING ▶ JOB PLACEMENT ▶ RETENTION

On-going and dynamic: Case management, Customized life supports

THE CORE STRATEGY: ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF INDUSTRY DEMAND

For any target population, engaging employers authentically in order to understand demand is still the core strategy. Over-reliance on "push" tactics to move particular target population individuals into the labor market cannot compete with using the market's "pull" to appropriately and adequately train, prepare and place people into jobs (i.e. a sector strategy). For some target populations, what changes the most from other populations is the type, level and duration of training and preparation to make them ultimately qualified and valuable the first day on the job. Some need "longer runways and stronger pathways"[1] along the full continuum of support on the way to a job. This is where the expertise of organizations whose mission it is to serve hard-to-serve populations should come into play.

Regardless of type of jobseekers, everyone needs to be provided accurate, clear and realistic information about job choices, job market saturation levels, entry and advanced wage levels, needed skills and abilities to perform well, and advancement opportunities and timeframes. This requires service providers to understand demand at a complex level, and to continually check and update their understanding. A sector partnership is an effective mechanism to do this, but one that requires practice.

Simply put, we will serve all jobseekers better through demand-driven approaches. The key is figuring out how the flow of information and strategic direction provided by the demand side flows directly into the hands of frontline staff working with individual jobseekers.

[1] Fischer, D. *Innovations in the Field, Young Adult Sectoral Employment Project, JobsFirst NYC,* September 2014.

Module 4: Connecting Industry-led Partnerships to Career Pathway Systems

A career pathway system aligns education and training institutions, and engages them in a continuous conversation that is led by industry to ensure that jobseekers and students move seamlessly through and among support programs, educational institutions, training opportunities, and work-based experiences to build skills and credentials that meet industry demand and prepare them for jobs and careers. Industry-led partnerships are strong vehicles for building industry-driven career pathway systems, providing a forum for productive and ongoing collaboration with industry and among workforce, education, training partners, and other community partners.

TOOLS
- Definition of Career Pathway Programs vs. Career Pathway Systems
- 2016 Revised Step-by-Step Toolkit created by the State of Colorado
- Toolkit created by U.S. DOL (2016)

CAREER PATHWAY SYSTEMS VS. CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAMS

A career pathway program offers a clear sequence of stackable credits and credentials, combined with support services, that enables students and jobseekers to secure industry-relevant skills, certifications, and credentials and advance to higher levels of education and employment in high demand occupations. A career pathway system is made up of multiple career pathway programs that span educational institutions, workforce and support service partners. These programs are all oriented around a shared understanding of the needs of industry. Often, tools like career pathway maps are used to talk with students and job seekers about how they can progress through education and training experiences to obtain employment that meets his or her goals.

Every education and training organization has a distinct choice of operating in a "closed systems" or and open & connected system. The former can be easier to manage and control, but the latter reflects the actual needs of students and jobseekers, who cannot be assured otherwise that the program or door they walk into is the one that will provide a true path to a job or career.

After being in the workforce, a person may choose to go back for more credentials to make an upward or lateral career move.

Module 5: Success Metrics of Next Gen Sector Partnerships
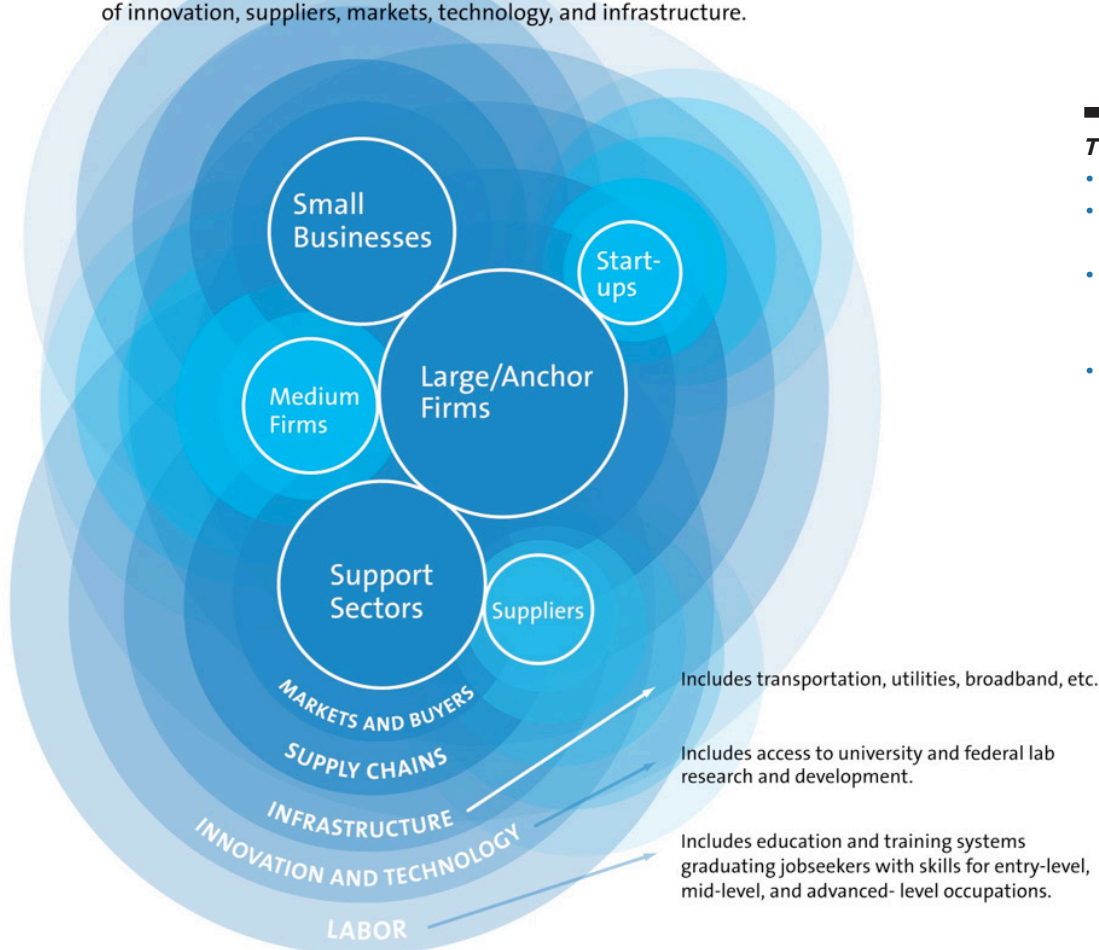
THE BIGGER PICTURE
Sector Partnerships as Keystones to Economic Growth and Career Pathway Systems-Building

The previous module emphasizes how sector partnerships can and should act as a vehicle for harnessing the power of industry in a regional economy in order to accurately inform the education and training offerings to that region's workers, jobseekers and students. In the best cases, sector partnerships are therefore the way to build connected career pathways to good jobs. So are sector partnerships all about education and training? They should not be.

Consider that the very act of convening businesses (drawn from a target industry cluster in a region) has powerful repercussions on that cluster's growth. How? Even in today's global economy, businesses still cluster together geographically because they share assets. They share technologies, infrastructure, supply chains, markets and buyers, and labor. When businesses in a cluster connect and interact, they innovate. When they innovate, they leverage new markets, create new products, and enter new joint ventures. And that in turn creates new jobs. That's economic growth. Do not therefore underestimate the value of a well-run sector partnership on growing your region's economy.

Industry Cluster
An industry cluster consists of large and small firms in a single industry. Firms in industry clusters benefit from synergies of association related to shared labor, sources of innovation, suppliers, markets, technology, and infrastructure.

Includes transportation, utilities, broadband, etc.

Includes access to university and federal lab research and development.

Includes education and training systems graduating jobseekers with skills for entry-level, mid-level, and advanced- level occupations.

TOOLS
- More testimonials
- Intro to Sector Partnership Metrics PPT
- Colorado's 2016 Key Performance Indicator Survey sample
- 25 Ways to Tell Your Sector Partnership Story

NEXT GENERATION
SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Sector partnerships operate at the nexus of career pathway building and economic cluster development, simply based on their structural definition. They are a shared table of companies, drawn from a like industry in a like geography, who come together to prioritize and act on their top shared issues and opportunities. Talent is always a top (but not exclusive) action area, in every industry and every geography. When the right education and training support partners collaborate with that table, career pathway systems are built. When companies network and act on other issues (like supply chains, shared technologies, or new markets), their cluster thrives and even adds new jobs. This is the essence of Next Gen sector partnerships: they are the keystone that connects a community's ability to both grow its local economy and prepare individuals for job opportunities in that economy.
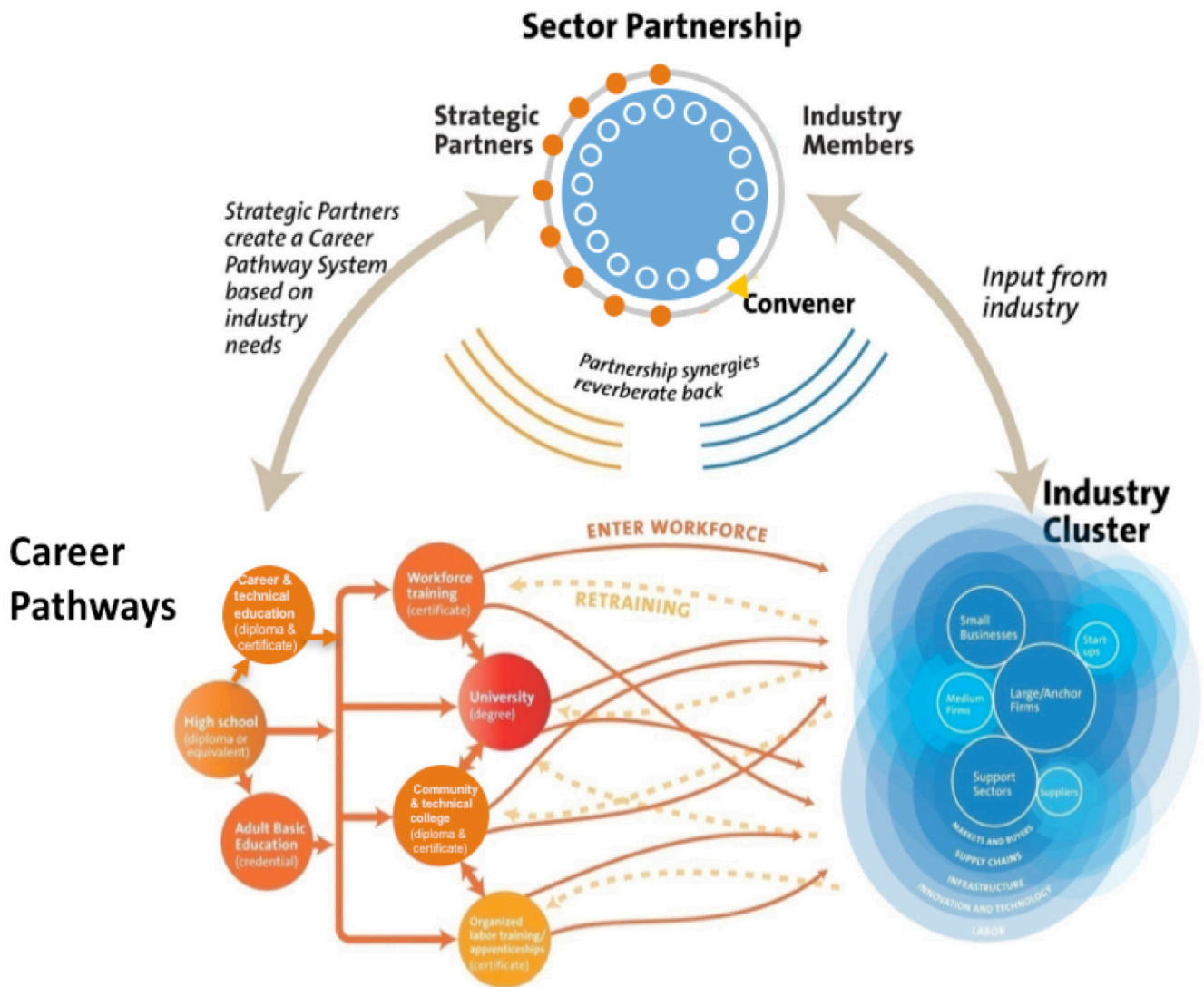
Because sector partnerships are designed to stabilize and grow a target industry sector in a labor market region, and ensure jobseekers and students in that community are qualified to access its jobs, *every sector partnership must find ways to measure its impact in each area: the target industry and jobseekers.* Business partners donate time and financial investments. They need to know what results from their efforts. Support partners (often reliant on public resources for their operations) re-purpose staff, leverage resources and internal expertise, and contribute their own credibility to partnerships. They too must know the return on their investment. Investors and elected officials also have a strong interest in understanding impact.

CATEGORIES OF MEASUREMENT

Next Generation sector partnerships measure success across three categories of metrics: 1) Impact on Business and Industry; 2) Impact on Jobseekers/Students; and 3) Impact on use of Public Programs/Resources. They also distinguish between process metrics and impact metrics. Here's a way to think about these:

	Impact on Business/ Industry	Impact on Jobseekers/ Students	Impact on Public Programs/ Resources
Sample Process Metrics	• Breadth of Business Engagement (#s) • Company referral rates • Levels of in-kind/$ investment by Biz	• New or revised training programs • Increased work experience openings • Direct engagement of industry in curriculum development and teaching	• Shared staffing across organizations • Joint projects/grants supporting sector partnership
Sample Impact Metrics	• Increased joint ventures, new products, ideas • Improved access to skilled workforce • Improved internal HR or other operations	• Reduced time-to-hire upon graduation • Increased rates of retention and advancement post-hire • Increased earnings	• Evidence of shared funding streams • Evidence of joint accountability/ shared outcomes

STATEWIDE RESULTS

At-Scale Results

Where states have adopted strategies that help create strong, local sector partnerships, results are magnified. In Colorado:

BUSINESSES

82% of partnerships have businesses that have developed new or enhanced ideas for new products and/or markets

91% of partnerships have businesses that have found support in finding employees with the skills and experiences their business needs

82% of partnerships have businesses that have developed new recruitment practices

STUDENTS AND JOBSEEKER

71% of partnerships increased student/jobseeker awareness of training/education programs.

62% of partnerships experienced increased program alignment across secondary, post-secondary, and/or workforce programming.

67% of partnerships enhanced existing or developed new training/education program(s).

Colorado Sector Partnerships

Over 20 sector partnerships spanning all 14 economic development regions of the state.

Acknowledgements

APPENDIX: 2017 NEXT GEN SECTOR PARTNERSHIP ACADEMY TEAM TIME WORKSHEETS

Many Tables, Many Knocks
A Group Exercise to Diagnose Fragmented Industry Engagement

This exercise is best done as a regional team of workforce development programs, education and training institutions, economic development organizations and others whose work involves engaging with industry in their local communities.

Step 1: Journey-mapping the Employer Experience
As a group, discuss and brainstorm *all* the experiences (good and bad) that employers have with your programs, or with the public "system" generally. What do they say about us?

As individuals, take a few minutes to write down or draw the path a business person takes when working with your program(s): point of engagement, referrals, follow-through, what services exactly do they receive. Now think again about "what employers say about us," and offer additional thoughts to the above brainstormed list.

> Some real examples of what we think employers say about us: *Didn't I just talk to you? Wait, who are you? There are so many of you. No communication, inefficient, waste of taxpayer dollars. Inconsistent. This is just a workforce thing. If I provided services like yours' to my customers, I'd be finished.* Or on the flipside: *Wow, that was just what I needed. I just didn't know you could do that.*

Now as a group, brainstorm *all* the experiences we have with them! What do we say about them, good and bad?

> Real examples of what we say about them: *They are "employers" (i.e. we forget they are actually businesses first). Deep pockets and short arms. Unrealistic and unwilling. Bottom-line driven, not big picture. The don't know what they really want or need. They are afraid of us.* Or on the flipside: *Our programs only exist because of them, we owe them more. They can act as incredible partners and investors.*

Step 2: Mapping the Many Tables
Identify the "tables" or groups, venues, and other gatherings where businesses are brought together in that industry. It might help to just pick one target sector to think through first.

These "tables" might be groups, boards, councils, forums, task forces or associations, convened by colleges, workforce boards, Chambers, economic development organizations, community based organizations, etc. Or maybe employers self-convene for a particular purpose.
  • List them, or draw them out for your region or community.
  • Try to answer: What is the purpose of each table? Is there overlap? Are there gaps? What types of businesses are involved? How well is each table serving its intended purpose?

Step 3: Mapping the Many Knocks

Now think about the many "knocks" that employers/businesses get from public or community organizations/programs. These are the points of individual engagement or outreach, some for business service purposes, others for job development purposes.

- Try to list them all out – who is doing this? What programs and positions or people?
- Try to answer: What's the purpose of each engagement or outreach effort? Is there overlap? Gaps? Redundancy? Or a risk of employer fatigue?

Step 4: Imagine your Ideal Alternative

First, discuss what's come up for you in mapping out the many tables and many knocks. What does that tell us about the ideal alternative in our region: is there a single point of contact, a common or shared table, a way to gain access to a critical mass of employers, streamlined information gathering, a true fitting-together of our services based on our individual strengths?

Paint the *ideal* picture in terms of *outcomes* for industry and for jobseekers or students you serve. Do not hold back! Shoot for the moon here.

Step 5: Create your Real Alternative

Now discuss what is *feasible*. What is the realistic alternative? Consider your region (is it one county, or five? Is it rural or metro?). What are the elements of an improved level of business outreach coordination? What are the manageable first steps to get there? What has come out of this conversation that hadn't come up as a group before?

Preparing to Launch a Next Gen Sector Partnership

This worksheet is designed to help teams think through key actions, roles and responsibilities for creating new sector partnerships.

1. Have we built a sector support team?
- Do key stakeholders in our region (from education, workforce development and economic development) recognize how sector partnership(s) can act as the shared table where they can work with businesses from a targeted sector, understand their needs, and collaborate with other public partners to develop responsive and coordinated solutions?
- Are we willing to agree on at least one sector through which we can begin experimenting and operating via this shared table approach (vs. operating via multiple independent employer engagement efforts)?
- Have we agreed on clear roles and responsibilities on the sector support team? Who is the lead "convener" or "co-convener"?

2. Have we defined the scope of industry focus?
- Has our regional team jointly agreed on which industry sectors merit our collective action in launching a sector partnership? Did we use LMI data, combined with our on-the-ground knowledge about industries, to make these selections? Which sector is first? Or next?
- Will the scope of our partnership make sense to business and industry? Will businesses likely share common opportunities and challenges? Does the geographic scope we've identified follow the footprint of the industry? (Beware of falling into the trap of scoping your partnership around jurisdictional boundaries or service areas if they aren't likely to make sense to business).

3. Who are our business champions who could sign an invitation letter and/or host the first launch meeting?
- Who are or could be business chairs, individuals who could help convene other sector employers for a launch meeting? Remember to focus on 'civic entrepreneurs'; a certain kind of leader who not only has decision-making authority at his or her business but who also understands that the long-term success of his/her company is linked to the broader prosperity of the community.

4. Who are or could be employer participants that would be invited to a launch meeting?
- Which sub-sectors, and which employers within those sub-sectors, should be invited?

NEXT GENERATION
SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Next Steps

Target Sector: _____

Action	Timeline	Who's Committed?
1. Reach out to potential business champions and recruit champions to sign invitation letter/host launch meeting		
2. Build invitation list of employers from target sector		
3. Send out invitation and conduct follow up phone calls		
Other?		

Building Momentum & Sustaining Your Sector Partnership

This worksheet is designed for teams who have successfully launched a sector partnership and are working to build the momentum and sustain the partnership.

1. Moving from Ideas to Action

- Have you formed "task teams" around priorities areas? Are business leaders actively participating in those task teams?
- Have task teams clarified outcomes, strategies, and action steps? Have you identified opportunities for "quick wins"?
- Have you established lead employer champions to play active roles in transforming partnership ideas into a written action plan?
- Have you started to bring in community partners to support implementation of partnership priorities? Are they clear on their roles and responsibilities in supporting the partnership?
- Is your convener working with your sector support team to ensure that the partnership is adequately supported (i.e. meeting notes go out in a timely fashion, action plans are kept up-to-date and used as a communications tool, meetings are well-facilitated etc.)?
- **If the answer to any of these questions is "no," what is needed to help your partnership move from ideas to action?** This could include:
  - Facilitating task team meetings to flesh out a written action plan
  - Identifying quick wins and mobilizing support partners to support implementation
  - Making the ask of some employers to step into a leadership role for a task team or for the partnership overall
  - Other?

2. Sustaining & Evolving

There is no single, right way to sustain a sector partnership. Sustainability looks different depending on the partnership's priorities, the leadership and convening teams, and the public partners involved. These questions are designed to stimulate your thinking about what sustainability can look like and what it will take to achieve.

For Conveners

- Has my organization made any changes away from dependency on stop gap, soft money to support sector partnerships?
- Has my job description informally changed as a result of convening a sector partnership? Has it formally changed?
- Has my organization adopted the sector partnership approach as standard way of engaging and partnering with employers in critical industries? (Or is this an unusual, "unique occurrence"?)
- On a regular basis, do I map out partnership activities and members to identify new ways for individuals to contribute?
- Do I lead employer partners through a re-assessment of opportunities and requirements as needed, at least once a year?
- Have I documented the partnership's activities and successes in order to define and communicate the value of the partnership?

For Sector Support Team

- Am I actively involved in developing solutions to priorities identified by the sector partnership in collaboration with other public partners?
- Do I, or my program, contribute in-kind, staff time and/or direct financial support for the partnership's activities?
- Have I, or my program, changed how we engage with employers as a result of participating in a sector partnership?
- Have I, or my program, formalized commitments to the partnership via signed agreements or MOUs?

For Employers
- Have I considered how I'll stay involved as a leader but also delegate to others in my company?
- Have I engaged others in my company in the sector partnership?
- Am I acting like a partner or a customer in this relationship? Am I, and is my company, part of the solution?
- Am I taking full advantage of the informal benefits of the partnership, such as company-to-company networking, in addition to the formal benefits based on our shared priority action areas?
- Is my company directly contributing in-kind or financial resources to the partnership, or proactively assisting with identifying financial resources?

Next Steps
1. What are our next steps to ensure the partnership stays action-oriented and continues to build momentum?

2. What are our priorities in ensuring our partnership is set up for sustainability?