

CAREER PATHWAYS TOOLKIT:

An Enhanced Guide and Workbook
for System Development

ELEMENT THREE:

DESIGN EDUCATION AND
TRAINING PROGRAMS



#DOLU141A22202

MSG
MANHATTAN STRATEGY GROUP

CAREER PATHWAYS TOOLKIT:

An Enhanced Guide and Workbook
for System Development

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ELEMENT THREE: Design Education and Training Programs

Career pathways programs provide a clear sequence of education courses and credentials that meet the skill needs of high-demand industries.

Key Element Components:

- Identify and engage education and training partners.
- Identify target populations, entry points, and recruitment strategies.
- Review, develop, or modify competency models with employers and develop and validate career ladders/lattices.
- Develop or modify programs to ensure they meet industry recognized and/or postsecondary credentials.
- Analyze the State's and region's education and training resource and response capability.
- Research and promote work-based learning opportunities within business and industry.
- Develop integrated, accelerated, contextualized learning strategies.
- Provide flexible delivery methods.
- Provide career services, case management, and comprehensive supportive services.
- Provide employment assistance and retention services.

Introduction to Element Three

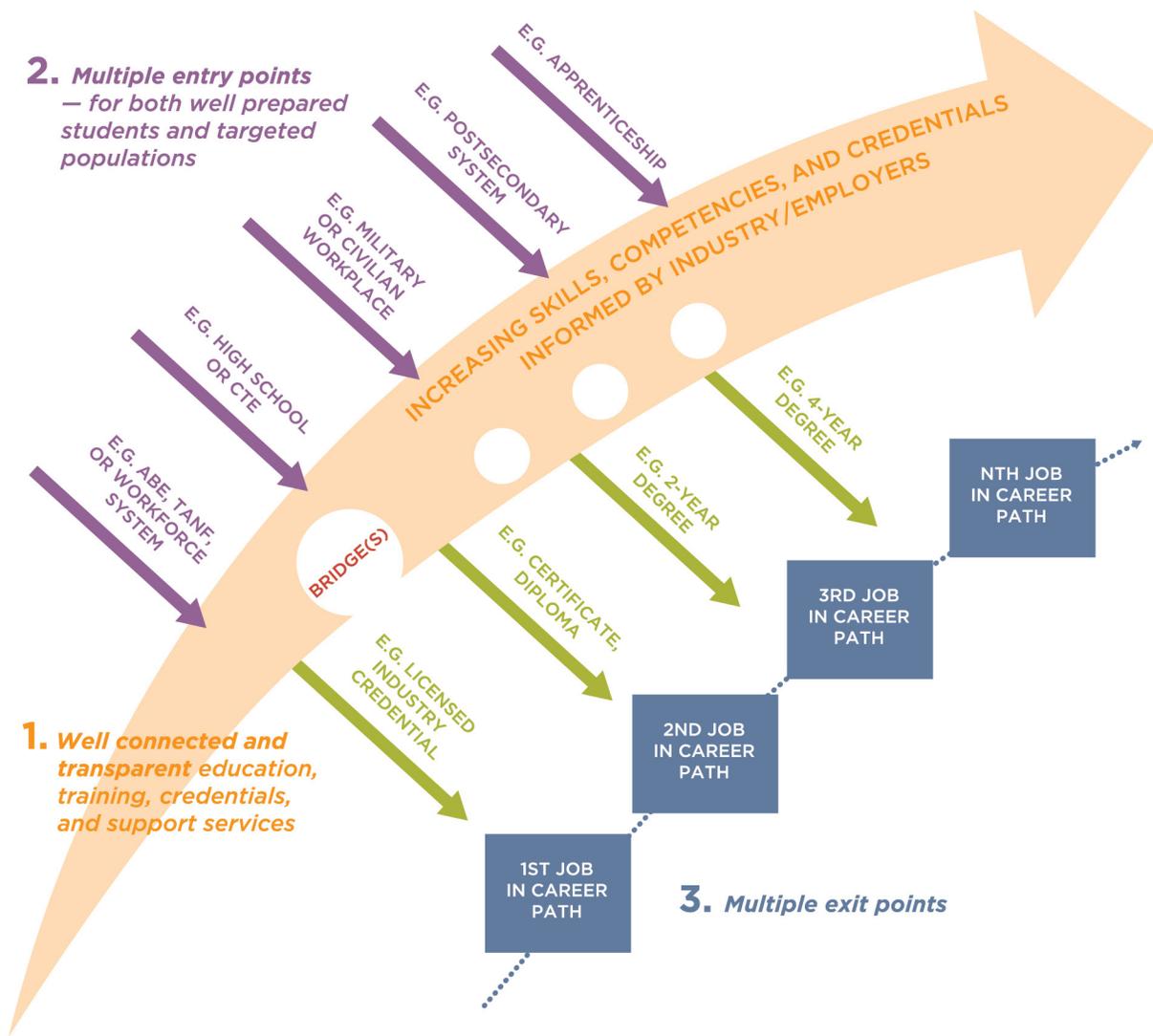
In a comprehensive career pathways system, education and training programs provide a clear sequence of education courses and credentials combined with continual, seamless support systems that prepare individuals, regardless of their skill levels at the point of entry, for postsecondary education, training, and employment. Likewise, the Career and Technical Education system (CTE) requires a clear sequence of courses that must align with postsecondary education and the workforce training systems in order for youth to benefit from a career pathways system. ED developed a crosswalk, [Aligning Career and Technical Education Programs of Study with Career Pathways Systems](#), to show how a comprehensive career pathways system promotes the development of structured pathways into and through postsecondary credentials.

As addressed in Elements One and Two, all the partners connected to the career pathways system work together to ensure that local education and training programs align with the skills requirements of growing and emerging industries while simultaneously meeting the education and training needs of diverse populations. WIOA strengthens this requirement. Therefore, designing these programs cannot be “business as usual” and requires “out-of-the-box” thinking to best meet the needs of employers and learners. CLASP has developed a depiction of a career pathways process (see graphic on next page).

Adults, youth, and nontraditional working learners often struggle to complete education and training programs that provide the necessary credentials for many growing careers. This is especially true for those who lack basic skills, including work readiness skills and English language comprehension. These populations often have other barriers to training and employment, such as transportation and the need for childcare. In addition, working learners have the added challenge of balancing jobs with education or training, which makes flexible training programs, such as evening/weekend and/or online classes, critical to their success. Designing training programs that accommodate these challenges ensures higher completion rates. When training and education programs do not accommodate the needs of adults, youth, and nontraditional students, they drop out.

Developing career pathways-oriented education programs that support the unique needs of targeted populations helps patch the “leaky pipeline” of learners prematurely exiting training programs.

Career pathways systems provide participants with multiple entry and exit points to accommodate academic readiness and on-ramping and off-ramping when necessary. The intent for career pathways is to lead to industry-recognized credentials that lead to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages and offer occupational advancement opportunities.



Center for Law and Social Policy. (2014). *Shared vision, strong systems: The alliance for quality career pathways framework version 1.0*. Retrieved from <http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/files/aqcp-framework-version-1-0/AQCP-Framework.pdf>

AN OVERVIEW OF THE DESIGN PROCESS

Although career pathways require new business processes to be inclusive of the partnership, the design of a curriculum leading to a pathway still requires a more traditional approach to identifying the skills and knowledge needed by the employer and creating courses and programs—a “pathway.”

The process begins by identifying and capturing the employer-based competencies required for successful job performance (refer to Component 3.3 of this element). As noted in the diagram on the next page, competencies are the basic building blocks of what ultimately becomes a program of study—a career pathway.

Steps in Career Pathways Progress



Designing programs requires organizing competencies into a logical sequence of information and experiences by applying teaching methodologies. These include lesson plans, instructional content, materials, learning experiences, resources, and evaluations, all designed to help the learner master the knowledge and skills required to attain and perform a job. The package of competencies and methodologies is the curriculum of a course. The curriculum itself may be delivered in multiple modalities, including a combination of experiential learning, classroom instruction, and e-learning.

Component 3.1: Identify and Engage Education and Training Partners

The education and training for a complete career pathways program may require multiple educational, service, and/or community-based organizations. In an effort to avoid duplication, the career pathways team should identify all potential education, training, and service partners within the team's service area, including secondary education. It is especially important, whenever feasible, to coordinate opportunities for dual enrollment between secondary and postsecondary education.

Dual enrollment or dual credit allows secondary students to enroll in courses at institutions of higher education and earn both high school and postsecondary credit for completing a class. The intent of the program is twofold: (1) to provide learners with opportunities for additional academic challenge and rigor, and (2) to offer an alternative educational setting that may stimulate interest and result in accelerated course completion options.

HOW TO: Determine the Strengths of Potential Training Partners by Asking About...

- Courses and curricula offered;
- Dual enrollment options;
- Credentials offered upon completion;
- Credentials and experience of faculty;
- Organization(s) that oversee, certify, or approve of the training;
- Funding capacity and budget;
- Curricula alignment with industry-recognized credentials; and
- Placement rate and earnings of graduates.

Component 3.2: Identify Target Populations, Entry Points, and Recruitment Strategies

The leadership team should explore opportunities to recruit special populations, which may include individuals lacking basic or work readiness skills, individuals receiving public assistance, individuals with a disability, and individuals who are English language learners. Career pathways programs are well suited to help these populations address their barriers and gain occupational skills that are in demand.

Career Pathways FYI: WIOA Definition of English Language Learner

An individual who has limited ability in reading, writing, or comprehending English language and—

- (A) whose native language is a language other than English; or
- (B) who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.

Career Pathways FYI: Americans with Disabilities Act Definition of an individual with a Disability

An individual with a disability is a person who has:

1. A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
2. A record of such an impairment; or
3. Is regarded as having such an impairment.

Build a Pipeline

Recruitment strategies for special populations require the help of a widespread collaboration of community organizations—especially community-based groups that serve specific populations. The team should consider designing a marketing/outreach strategy that uses the contacts of partners and marketing tools that reach the targeted population. For example, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and others are used effectively for reaching younger populations. Building Recruitment Strategies for Target Populations ([Worksheet 3.2a](#)) is a helpful tool included in this module to identify recruitment sources, customize the message, and develop the medium to reach each population.

Learn about the Target Population

Collaborating with local community-based organizations can help the team understand some of the characteristics and corresponding needs required by these populations. The more that is known about the client base, the better a career pathways program will be able to address barriers and increase the potential for program success.

HOW TO: Critical Information Needed to Identify, Select, and Serve Targeted Populations

- Economic status
- Residence and location
- Educational attainment
- English proficiency
- Literacy skills
- Work history
- Culture impacts

Consider Employability Skills

Employability skills are a critical component to college and career readiness and require integration into career pathways curricula and experiences, especially for select populations. Employability skills are general skills that most employers demand and typically fall into three broad categories:

- **Applied Knowledge**—the thoughtful integration of academic knowledge and technical skills put into practical use in the workplace;
- **Effective Relationships**—the interpersonal skills and personal qualities that enable individuals to interact effectively with clients, coworkers, and supervisors; and
- **Workplace Skills**—the analytical and organizational skills and understandings that employees need to successfully perform work tasks.

Visit ED's [Employability Skills Framework](#) for more information.

Multiple Program Entry Points

The career pathways system should provide courses and experiences that allow learners to begin from a point where he/she can succeed and build from. To make the best match between learner readiness and a specific set of courses requires assessing the learner. With multiple entry points, some learners may need basic skills, including reading, math, and work readiness skills. Other learners may have good educational skills and enter the pathway at a higher level. Additional personal assessments such as drug/alcohol use and a criminal background check may be necessary for some programs of study.

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: Potential Community Organizations to Collaborate With

- Minority-based, private, and nonprofits;
- Refugee organizations;
- Faith-based community organizations;
- Veteran organizations;
- Organizations serving individuals with disabilities;
- TANF organizations;
- Organizations serving dislocated workers; and
- Youth-serving organizations

PROMISING PRACTICE: Instituto del Progreso Latino

Staff members at Instituto del Progreso Latino in Chicago, Illinois, learned early on that to keep their adult population engaged in learning they needed an innovative curriculum approach. Contextualized basic skills courses allowed the Carreras En Salud program to combine academic instruction with technical training for the healthcare industry. Instituto's curriculum developers observed the workplaces of their employer partners, specifically looking at the duties, skills, and information required to perform jobs such as certified nursing assistant (CNA) and licensed practical nurse (LPN). These observations led to the production of a customized curriculum that met the needs of employers and had embedded in it the basic academic skills instruction that learners needed.

Instituto's success shows in its high retention rates (70 percent to 90 percent depending on the cohort) and the average wage increases of their LPN program completers (\$10 to \$25 per hour). Additionally, 88 percent of students complete their Vocational English Language Acquisition (ELA)/Pre-CNA courses and 77 percent advance to the bridge portion of the program. For more information, please see: <http://www.institutochicago.org/>.

3.2a BUILDING RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES FOR TARGET POPULATIONS

The leadership team may wish to identify target populations that will greatly benefit from the features of a career pathways program, such as bridge programs, multiple entry/exit points, and accelerated contextualized learning. The intent of this exercise is to identify the diverse target populations and devise a cross-agency recruitment strategy to reach these populations. The target populations may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Displaced homemakers
2. Low-income individuals
3. Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, defined in WIOA Section 166
4. Individuals with disabilities (adult and youth)
5. Older individuals
6. Previously incarcerated individuals
7. Homeless individuals
8. Youth who are in or have aged out of foster care
9. Individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers
10. Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers
11. Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act
12. Single parents (including single pregnant women)
13. Long-term unemployed individuals
14. Such other groups as the Governor involved determines to have barriers to employment

The first part of this exercise will help the team identify the organizations to collaborate with as a source of applicants for a target population. The team may wish to develop joint marketing materials as well as an intake and referral process to assure there is no wrong door for an applicant. The second part of this exercise will help to customize the marketing messages to reach the intended audiences. The marketing message may differ by target population. Make sure the benefit statement is clearly defined for each population. A cross-agency team of marketing staff may be created to assist in this effort.



Recruitment Sources

List all of the target populations you'd like to include in your pipeline. Underneath each one, check the box next to the recruitment sources you will be using.

Target Population:

Recruitment Sources (Check organizations you wish to include in your recruitment strategy):

- Private nonprofit organizations
- Community colleges
- Adult basic education
- Human service agencies
- Refugee organizations
- Unemployment compensation
- Faith-based organizations
- American Job Centers
- Secondary education
- Organizations serving individuals with a disability
- Secondary education/dropouts
- Veteran organizations
- Youth-serving organizations
- Other:
- Other:
- Other:

Target Population:

Recruitment Sources (Check organizations you wish to include in your recruitment strategy):

- Private nonprofit organizations
- Community colleges
- Adult basic education
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- Refugee organizations
- Unemployment compensation
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- Secondary education/dropouts
- Veteran organizations
- Youth-serving organizations
- Other:
- Other:
- Other:



Target Population:

[Empty text box for Target Population]

Recruitment Sources (Check organizations you wish to include in your recruitment strategy):

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- Secondary education/dropouts
- Veteran organizations
- Youth-serving organizations
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[Empty text box for Target Population]

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- Veteran organizations
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- Other:
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- Veteran organizations
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- Other:
- Other:
- Other:



Marketing: Message and Tactics

The marketing message may differ by target population. Make sure to clearly articulate a benefit statement for each population. *NOTE: Remember the importance of cultural sensitivity in drafting a marketing message.* A cross-agency team of marketing staff may be encouraged to assist in this effort.

Example

Target Population:

Low-Literacy Skills

Benefit Statement:

- *Gain the skills necessary for a good paying job*
- *A support system ready to assist in program participation*
- *Flexible schedule to accommodate family responsibilities*
- *Personalized programs to build on current skill levels*

Marketing Tactics:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brochures | <input type="checkbox"/> Websites | <input type="checkbox"/> Informational sessions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flyers | <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter | <input type="checkbox"/> Billboards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Video testimonials | <input type="checkbox"/> Blogs | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> YouTube | <input type="checkbox"/> Resource tables at community events | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook | <input type="checkbox"/> Local cable channels | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instagram | | |



Target Audience:

[Empty text box for Target Audience]

Benefit Statement:

[Empty text box for Benefit Statement]

Marketing Tactics:

- Brochures
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- Twitter
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Component 3.3: Review, Develop, or Modify Competency Models with Employers and Develop and Validate Career Ladders/Lattices

COMPETENCY MODELS

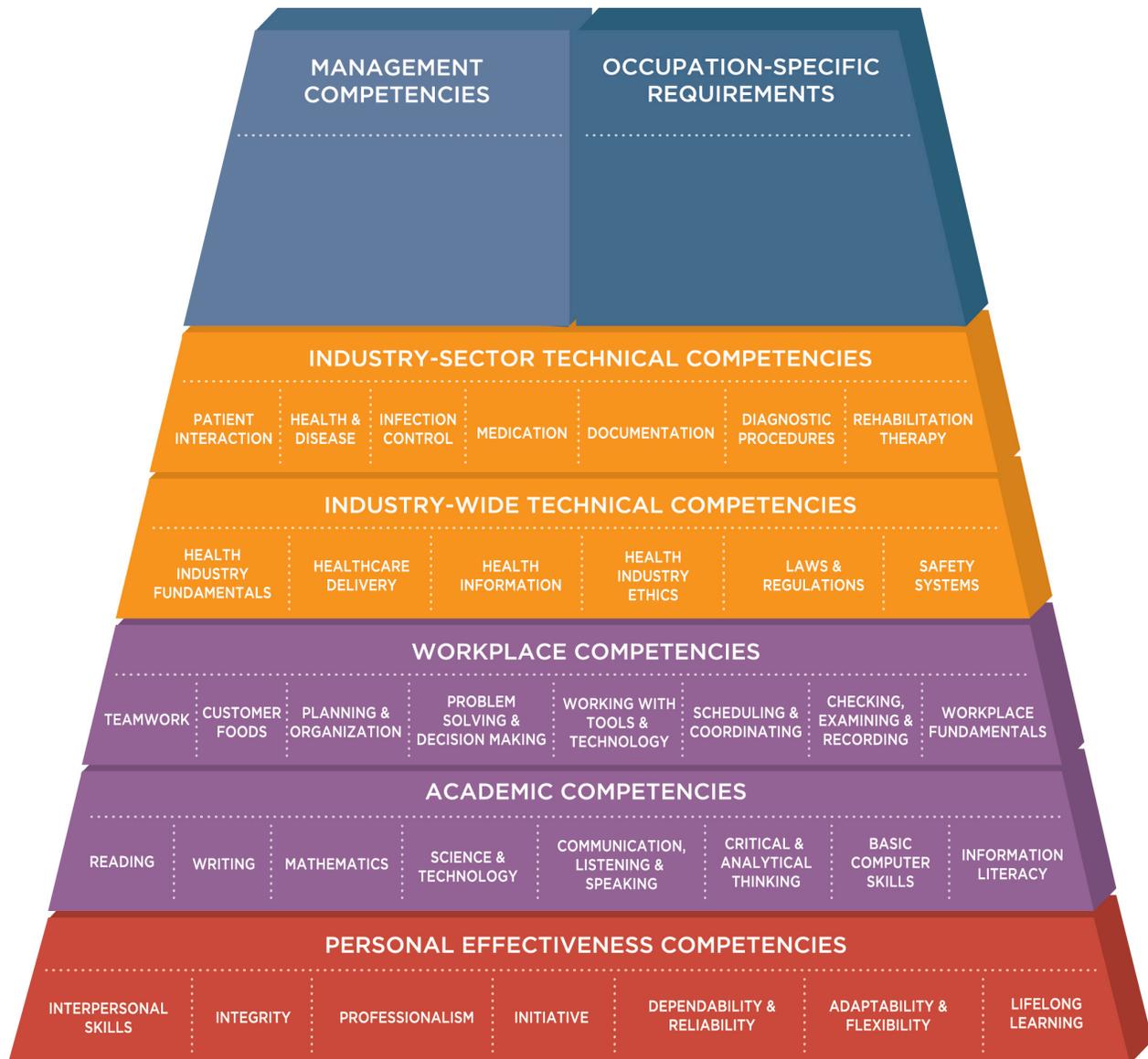
An industry competency model is a collection of competencies, skills, and knowledge that together define successful performance in a particular industry or cluster of related occupations. Competency models articulate the business and industry requirements that are essential components for the development of curricula, skill assessment instruments, and certifications. Competency models, as a basic building block, also facilitate the development of the courses and ultimately the career pathways and career lattices that provide the framework for career advancement.

The Competency Model Clearinghouse, developed by USDOL, provides tools and resources for building competency models (from scratch or by modifying existing models), as well as developing career ladders/lattices based on competency models. The Competency Model Clearinghouse has multiple other helpful resources, including an [FAQ](#), a [Guide for Developing Competency Models](#), a [Technical Assistance Guide](#), [User Guides](#), and a resource to assist State staff in [communicating workforce needs](#). Additionally, there are four critical worksheets available to download in PDF, Word, or Excel: [Identifying Credential Competencies Worksheet](#), [Curriculum Analysis Worksheet](#), [Employer Analysis Worksheet](#), and a [Gap Analysis Worksheet](#). All worksheets are customized specifically to the career area selected.

HOW TO: Steps in Building Competency Models

- Educator reviews the existing competency models in the database as a reference point with employer;
- Employer identifies the critical work functions or tasks in the workplace for a specific job;
- Employer and educator engage subject matter experts (SMEs) currently performing the job tasks;
- SMEs identify the most critical and frequently performed tasks;
- SMEs identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities it takes to perform tasks; and
- Employer and educator validate competency model for the specific job.

Employers are crucial in developing competency models for selected occupations within their local and regional industry sectors. USDOL has compiled a database of employer-approved competencies that can serve as a good starting point when developing a competency model for a particular sector. The team can ask local employers to validate a competency model drawn from the database and suggest changes based on the unique requirements for their businesses. The example on the following page depicts a competency model from the allied health field.



CareerOneStop. (n.d.). Competency model clearinghouse. Retrieved from <http://www.careeronestop.org/CompetencyModel/>

In addition to validating an existing competency model, the employer and educator may wish to conduct a job profiling or job analysis session in which they verify the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to successfully perform “critical work functions” or tasks in the workplace. This may provide more information on the specific skill sets required for the employer’s work site. In general, competency models include foundational skills that include personal effectiveness, academic competencies, workplace competencies, and industry-wide competencies.

Once employers have informed and validated the competencies related to the selected occupation, they may wish to continue the process for higher-level jobs in their organization. Educators may now engage employers in the next step—program development.

HOW TO: Critical Questions to Ask Employers When Building Competency Models

- Which of these competencies are needed for entry-level jobs?
- Which of these competencies are needed for each step in the career progression?
- Which competencies build upon each other and lead to the next step in the career progression?
- Which of these competencies are lacking within the current labor force and need skill-building opportunities for workers and job candidates?

Industry Competency Model Initiative

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) collaborates with other Federal agencies and workforce development experts from industry, labor, and education to document the skills and competencies required in emerging and economically vital industries. The goal is to ensure that workers have the knowledge and skills needed for success in jobs with good pay and advancement opportunities. The industry models support workforce development efforts by serving as resources to:

- Identify employer skill needs in changing and emerging industries;
- Provide business services that support human resource functions such as recruitment, selection, and performance evaluation;
- Develop or evaluate a competency-based curriculum;
- Identify credential requirements for certifications and licensure; or
- Support career exploration and guidance.

The Web-based Competency Model Clearinghouse (CMC) provides ready access to these industry-validated models and a collection of resources to support their use.

Competency Model Clearinghouse

Search the *Resource Database* for links to competency models, work process schedules for registered apprenticeship, and examples of competency-based, industry-recognized credentials

Visit *Get Started* to learn more about competency models and the resources and tools available on the site

Visit *Industry Models* to view numerous competency models and building blocks models of foundational skills

Visit *Models in Action* to read about competency-based initiatives and innovative uses of competency models

Use the *Tools* to build or customize a model for a specific industry or geographic area or to develop a career ladder/lattice showing how credential attainment leads to upward mobility

The screenshot shows the website interface with a navigation bar (Get Started, Industry Models, Models in Action, Tools, Find Resources), a main banner for 'Get Started', and three content columns: 'Latest Industry Models', 'Do It Yourself', and 'What's New'. Each column lists various models and provides a 'View More' button. A footer section includes 'Explore & Find', 'Our Sites', 'Help', and 'Connect with Us'.

Industry Competency Model Initiative

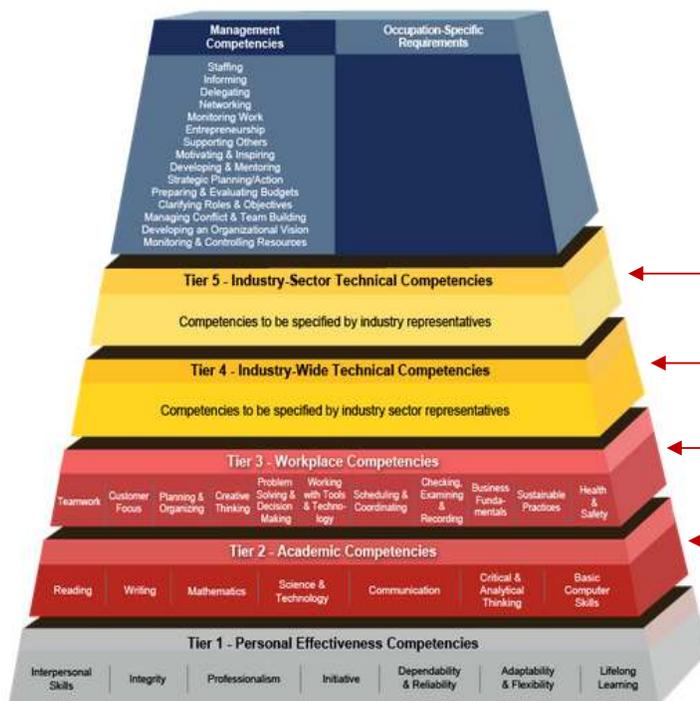
Industry Competency Models

Industry competency models are a resource for showing the cross-cutting competencies that are essential for success in an industry or industry sector. Industry competency models are based on a tiered Building Blocks framework. The pyramid-shaped graphic depicts how competencies become more specific as you travel up the tiers of the pyramid. The tiers of the model are divided into blocks representing the skills, knowledge, and abilities essential for successful performance in the industry or occupation represented by the model.

Each competency is described by key behaviors or by examples of the critical work functions or technical content common to an industry. A competency describes a behavior, but does not attempt to describe a level of performance, or competence. Not every worker in an industry needs the same level of performance in a competency area.

A *competency* is the capability to apply or use a set of related knowledge, skills, and abilities required to successfully perform “critical work functions” or tasks in a defined work setting.

Building Blocks Model



The upper tiers represent the specialization that occurs within specific *occupations* within an industry.

Information on occupational competencies is available through O*NET OnLine <http://www.onetonline.org/>.

← Tier 5 contains competencies specific to a sector within an industry.

← Tier 4 contains industry-wide competencies.

← Tier 3 – Workplace Competencies represent motives and traits, as well as interpersonal and self-management styles.

← Tier 2 – Academic Competencies include cognitive functions and thinking styles.

← Tier 1 – Personal Effectiveness Competencies are often referred to as "soft skills".

Tiers 1 through 3 form the foundation competencies generally needed for entry and success for most jobs in the workplace. These competencies represent ‘soft-skills’ that most employers demand.

Tiers 4 and 5 show the cross-cutting industry-wide technical competencies needed to create career lattices within an industry wherein a worker can move easily across industry sub-sectors. Rather than narrowly following a single occupational career ladder, this model supports the development of an agile workforce.

Visit the Competency Model Clearinghouse www.CareerOneStop.org/CompetencyModel for more information.

Career Ladders and Lattices

At the heart of effective career pathways programs are career ladders and lattices that describe the passageways by which individuals can ascend from entry-level jobs to higher-level jobs within an occupational area. Career ladders/lattices often coincide with the previous step in developing competency models. Within the Competency Model Clearinghouse, there are also robust materials on [developing career ladders/lattices](#), including [examples](#) and a [tool to build custom ladders/lattices](#). Career ladders and lattices help people visualize and learn about the job options as they progress through a career. Using these competency models, educational institutions design incremental training modules as a sequence of courses leading to industry-recognized credentials or certificates. Often, these credentials are added together—also known as “stacked”—so that they progressively lead to a diploma or degree.

Participants may complete one or more certificate/credential program linked together within the career ladder. In general, each “rung” on the ladder (often marked by an earned certificate or credential) leads to the opportunity for employment within a certain set of occupations associated with the career ladder.

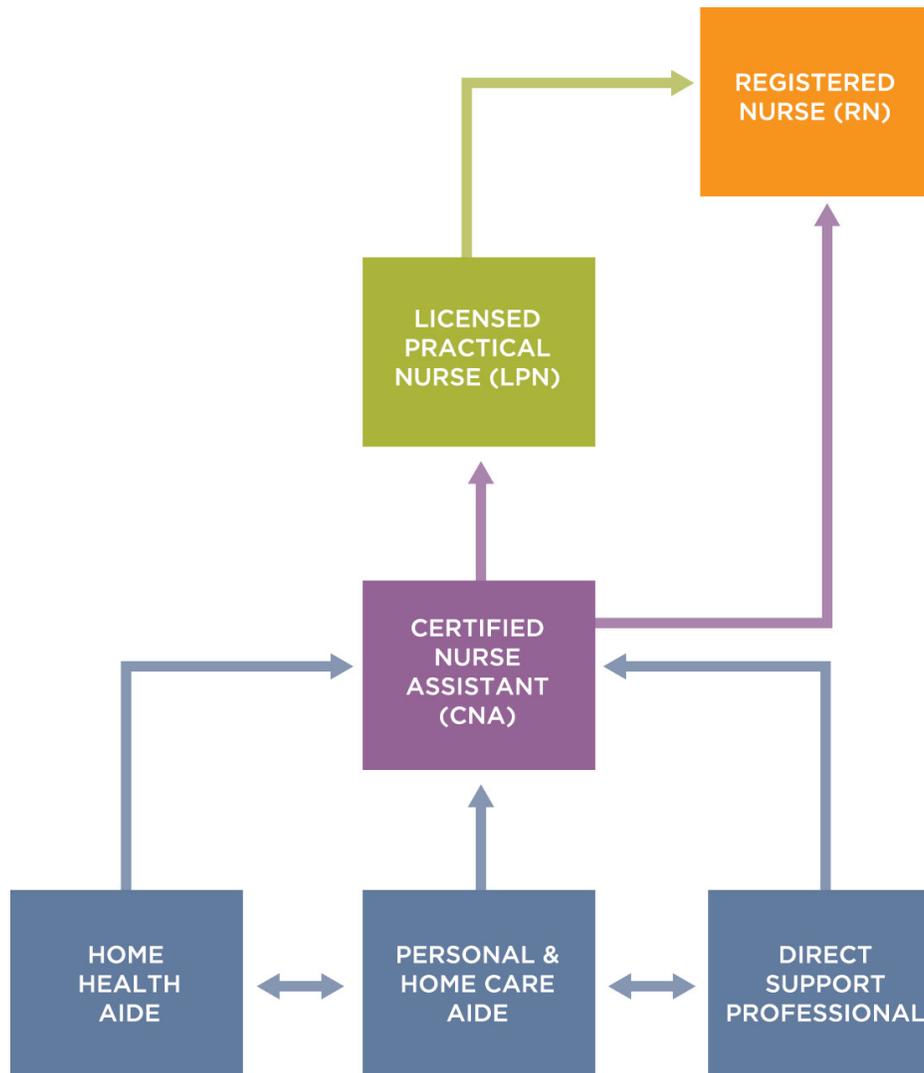
Optimally, participants are able to “enter” and “exit” the career pathways ladder over the course of their careers, periodically “stacking” or earning additional certificates and credentials leading to positions of increased responsibility and higher wages. An example of the career ladder for a registered nurse appears on the following page.

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: Career Ladders/Career Lattices

Career ladders/lattices are a group of related jobs that may comprise a career. They may include a pictorial representation of job progression in a career and detailed descriptions of the jobs, education, and experiences that facilitate movement between jobs.

Career ladders display only “vertical” movement between jobs.

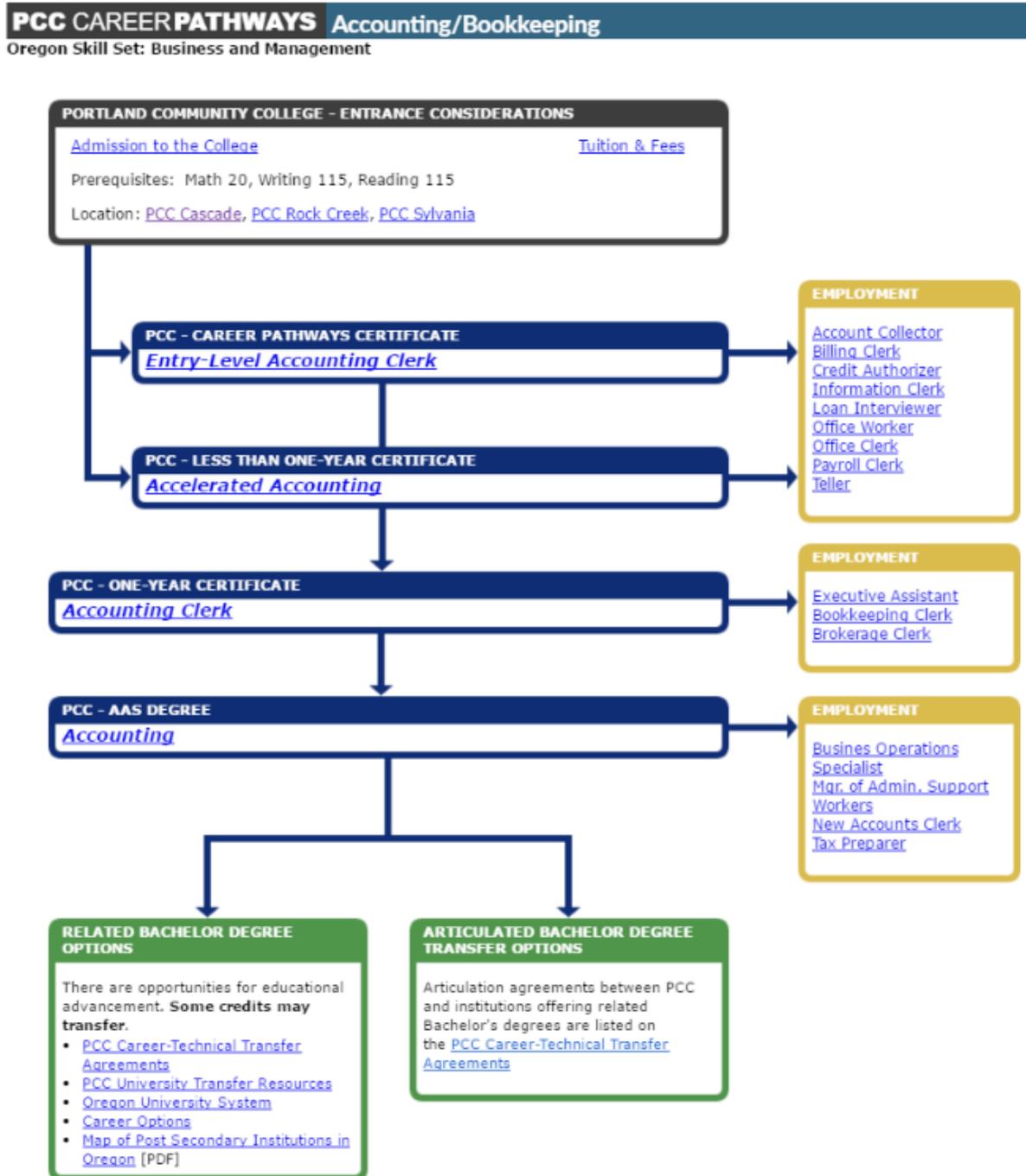
Career lattices show both vertical and lateral movement between jobs and may reflect more accurately today’s complex career paths.

Example of a Career Lattice for a Registered Nurse**HOW TO: Questions to confirm that programs align with the skill needs of the industry**

- Are the competency lists accurate and/or have they changed recently?
- Are the skills still critical for the occupation and are there job vacancies in the occupation?
- Does the progression of courses and learning experiences match learning on the job and make sense within the industry?
- Are the ladder and the curriculum complete, accurate, and up to date, with the right skills?
- Do the learning labs match equipment and processes within the industry?
- Are the credentials and certificates accurate and reflective of industry standards?

Career Pathways Road Map: Accounting/Bookkeeping

Another example of a career pathways road map for a profession from Portland Community College in Oregon is provided below:



Portland Community College. Road map: Accounting/bookkeeping. Retrieved from <http://www.pcc.edu/pathway/?id=340>

Component 3.4: Develop or Modify Programs with Industry-Recognized and/or Postsecondary Credentials

Constantly Check in with Employers

Continued guidance from employers during the design process is necessary to confirm that the courses and programs will meet the skill needs of local/regional industry sectors.

Types of Credentials and Definitions

Many different agencies, organizations, and industry associations award credentials. Understanding the different characteristics of each type of credential and the “doorways” they provide to those who earn them is important.

A credential attests to a specific qualification or competence. Third-party organizations with relevant authority or jurisdiction (i.e., accredited educational institution, an industry association, or an occupational or professional association) award credentials to individuals. One important source of information on credentials is the [CareerOneStop’s certification database](#). The resource section has more information about finding and learning about credentials.

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: Recognized Postsecondary Credential

The term “recognized postsecondary credential” means a credential consisting of an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

Postsecondary credentials are extremely critical when they are a prerequisite to licensure. Many occupations require a postsecondary credential from an accredited body before an individual can take an exam leading to licensure. This can be especially difficult when the licensure body requires the credential to be from a postsecondary school in the United States. Many foreign-educated workers cannot demonstrate they have the prerequisite skills without returning to a postsecondary education agency in the United States. Provided here is an example of how Maryland reached out to immigrants living in the United States to assist them on the pathway to licensure in this country.

PROMISING PRACTICE: Welcome Back Center of Suburban Maryland

The Welcome Back Center of Suburban Maryland is an innovative model that builds on the personal and professional assets of immigrants living in the United States to: further address health professional shortages; diversify the health workforce; provide economic opportunities to underutilized individuals as they return to work in the health field; and enhance health outcomes of the entire community. In 2006, the Latino Health Initiative (Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services) launched the Foreign-Trained Health Professionals Program to facilitate the Maryland health professions licensure

process. In 2010, this program became the Welcome Back Center of Suburban Maryland, one of several centers comprising the national Welcome Back Initiative network. The Center provides a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated approach to effectively address the needs and decrease the challenges and barriers foreign-trained health professionals encounter in Maryland in obtaining their licenses.

Partners include an array of State and local organizations and employers, including the Montgomery Works One-Stop Career Centers; the Maryland Hospital Association; the Governor's Workforce Development Board; Montgomery College; the County Department of Economic Development; and Holy Cross, Shady Grove, and Washington Adventist hospitals.

The Center uses a successful model of services that provides:

- Guidance and support, including individualized case management;
- Academic training, including English as a Second Language instruction and board exam preparation;
- OTJ exposure to the U.S. healthcare system and mentoring at Maryland hospitals and other healthcare facilities;
- Pre-employment services for health-related jobs, career development support, and job readiness training; and
- Leadership development for culturally competent leaders.

Types of Career Pathways-Related Credentials

Educational Award

Certificate: A formal award certifying the satisfactory completion of a postsecondary education program.

Degree: An award conferred by a college, university, or other postsecondary education institution as official recognition of the successful completion of a program of study.

Diploma: An award signifying the completion of a course of study.

Apprenticeship Certificate

An award certifying the completion of an apprenticeship program. USDOL or a State apprenticeship agency issues apprenticeship certificates. The apprenticeship system offers two types of credentials: (1) certificate of completion of an apprenticeship program, and (2) interim credentials such as pre-apprenticeship.

Certification/Personnel Certification

A certification indicates that the individual has acquired the necessary attributes (based on a formal study) to perform a specific occupation or skill. Personnel certifications are granted by a third-party nongovernmental agency (usually an industry association or industries) and are time limited. The certification process requires an examination process that shows that the individual has mastered the required industry standards, and it may be renewed through a recertification process or rescinded for ethical violations and/or incompetence.

License/Occupational License

An occupational license is typically granted by a Federal, State, or local government agency; is mandatory in the relevant jurisdiction; is intended to set professional standards and ensure safety and quality of work; is required in addition to other credentials; is defined by laws and regulations; and is time limited. Violation of the terms of the license can result in legal action.

Industry-recognized Credentials

These are either developed or endorsed by a nationally recognized industry association or organization and are sought or accepted by companies within the industry sector for purposes of hiring or recruitment. Having credentials be industry-recognized ensures potential employers that holders of the credential have the core competencies needed by employers for industry jobs. USDOL's [Certification Finder](#), also available on CareerOneStop.org, allows users to search by certification name, keyword, code, organization, industry, or occupation.

Stackable Credential

“A part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time to build up an individual’s qualifications... typically, stackable credentials help individuals move up a career ladder or along a career pathway to different and potentially higher-paying jobs.”

Portable Credential

This credential is “recognized and accepted as verifying the qualifications of an individual in other settings—either in other geographic areas, at other educational institutions, or by other industries or employing companies.”

Source: USDOL Guidance Letter (TEGL-15-10) published December 15, 2010. Retrieved from https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=2967

Component 3.5: Analyze the State's and Regions' Education and Training Resources and Response Capabilities

A survey or review of the available education and training resources that currently exist will expedite identifying what will be required to meet employer needs.

Identify the Gaps in Training Resources

- Do adequate training facilities (classrooms and lab space) exist?
- Are there adequate and appropriate educational staff to advise, counsel, and tutor?
- Are there employer work-based learning sites, training spaces, equipment, and materials available?
- Do instructors have appropriate credentials?
- Is there appropriate equipment for hands-on instruction?
- Are training slots available for occupations requiring a specific number of supervised hours on the job prior to licensure (e.g., clinicals for registered nurses and supervised practicums for psychologists)?
- Are there adequate supplies, books, e-learning options, and tools available?

Component 3.6: Research and Promote Work-Based Learning Opportunities within Business and Industry

Work-based learning may be the oldest type of formal learning. Experienced workers frequently demonstrate appropriate work tasks for new employees (“show them the ropes”). There are many different types of work-based learning opportunities that will be featured here.

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: WIOA Definition of On-the-Job Training

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING—training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that—

- A. provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job;
- B. is made available through a program that provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant, except as provided in section 134(c)(3)(H), for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training; and
- C. is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, taking into account the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant, and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate.

On-the-Job Training (OJT), while defined specifically in WIOA for program participants, also generally refers to any type of learning, both formally structured or informally, whereby a learner or entry-level employee learns the knowledge and tasks of a specific job by doing the job. Usually the learner is under the supervision of an experienced employee or supervisor. Formal OJT indicates that the learner is following a curriculum or lesson plan with steps/levels of learning and with recognized points of success.

Registered Apprenticeship is an employer-driven model that combines OTJ learning with related classroom instruction that increases an apprentice’s skill level and wages. It is overseen by a regulatory or certification organization and has been approved by the organization or the State/Federal Government. Employers and labor groups, individual employers, and/or employer associations jointly sponsor apprenticeship programs. The process is most often operated under the USDOL, ETA, Office of Apprenticeship, which registers apprenticeship programs and apprentices. USDOL’s Office of Apprenticeship has developed the [Quick-Start Toolkit: Building Registered Apprenticeship Programs](#) to help states support the development of Registered Apprenticeship programs.

Pre-apprenticeship programs are designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in Registered Apprenticeship programs. These programs have a documented partnership with at least one Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor, and together they expand the participant’s career pathways opportunities with industry-based training coupled with classroom instruction. Pre-apprenticeship programs are intended to explore occupational opportunities while bridging the gap of an individual’s basic skills (including English language learners), leading up to an opportunity to enter an apprentice occupation. USDOL has released

a [Pre-Apprenticeship Guide](#) that offers information and resources to help community-based organizations and other workforce intermediaries build and sustain quality pre-apprenticeship programs. [Pre-Apprenticeship: Pathways for Women into High-Wage Careers – A Guide for Community-Based Organizations and Workforce Providers](#) supports the expansion of apprenticeships and the diversity of apprentices.

Internships and paid/unpaid work experience provide a learning experience where the individual works on real job tasks. They are often of short duration and an individual may move around within an organization trying different tasks.

Incumbent Worker Training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (including a group of employers) to retain a skilled workforce or avert the need to lay off employees by assisting the workers in obtaining the skills necessary to retain employment. In accordance with WIOA, the employer or group of employers must pay for a significant share of the costs of training.

Customized training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer or group of employers, conducted with a commitment by the employer to employ all individuals upon successful completion of training. The employer must pay for a significant share of the costs of the training.

Transitional jobs are time-limited work experiences that are subsidized for individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or who have an inconsistent work history. These jobs may be in the public, private, or nonprofit sectors. Transitional jobs can be effective solutions for individuals to gain necessary work experience that they would otherwise not be able to get through training or an OJT contract.

Job Shadowing is an initial experience where the individual follows a regular employee through a day to gather information on the job and the work setting. It is typically unpaid and is a good way to expose individuals (including youth) to various occupations.

Youth mentoring, as defined in WIOA, must last at least 12 months and defines the mentoring relationship. Youth mentoring may take many forms, but at a minimum must include a youth participant matched with an individual adult mentor other than the participant's case manager since youth mentoring is above and beyond typical case management services.

Mentoring is a more complex relationship between an individual and an experienced employee. The mentor observes the mentee's performance and will routinely comment on it and make suggestions, teach, or give constructive feedback.

PROMISING PRACTICE: Apprenticeship in South Carolina

South Carolina took a comprehensive approach to expanding Registered Apprenticeships in the State. By offering employers a modest \$1,000 tax credit per apprentice and establishing Apprenticeship Carolina, an apprenticeship marketing and employer assistance office within the State technical college system, South Carolina has made it easier for employers to design and launch apprenticeship programs tailored to their companies' needs. For more information, please see: <http://www.apprenticeshipcarolina.com>.

Component 3.7: Develop Accelerated, Contextualized Learning Strategies

Career pathways programs offer a clear sequence of education coursework and/or training credentials aligned with employer-validated work readiness standards and competencies. Education and training programs are structured with enough flexibility in design to meet the needs of working learners and nontraditional students. WIOA encourages integrated education and employment opportunities to build upon adult, youth, and nontraditional students' transferable skills and workforce readiness.

There are a number of helpful resources available for teachers, curriculum designers, or program managers in developing accelerated, contextualized learning strategies. They are included here:

- The [Contextualization Toolkit: A Tool for Helping Low-Skilled Adults Gain Postsecondary Certificates and Degrees](#) is designed to connect adults who have limited reading and math skills with postsecondary credentials leading to jobs paying family-sustaining wages. It compiles practices developed and implemented by community colleges in the national Breaking Through initiative.
- [ABE Career Connections: A Manual for Integrating Adult Basic Education into Career Pathways](#) is an overview of strategies to create partnerships and connect basic skills training to local career pathways.
- [ACES \(Academic, Career, and Employability Skills\)](#) is a guide for adult basic education programs in providing effective contextualized instruction integrating postsecondary education and training readiness, employability skills, and career readiness at all levels.
- [I-Best Planning Resources](#) hosts several resources to help programs understand key Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) principles such as team teaching, collaborative planning, student success, and placement.
- [Designing Contextualized Instruction](#) is a Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) adult career pathways online course. This course will take approximately two hours and 30 minutes to complete. The course helps teachers understand contextualized instruction and its supporting research base and discover how to use the contextual model of instruction to develop adult career pathways.

Bridge Programs

It can be difficult to train and employ individuals with multiple barriers to employment, such as insufficient education and/or work experience, limited English proficiency, low-level academic skills, and/or lack of work readiness skills. In addition, other barriers such as childcare, transportation, and/or housing may exist. The accumulation of barriers make these populations more at risk of failing to complete the training programs that are necessary for them to acquire jobs where they can earn family-sustaining wages.

The use of bridge programs is a powerful and effective strategy to overcoming multiple barriers. Bridge programs serve to build the foundational skills of individuals whose academic skills do not meet the minimum requirements of a degree or certificate program. Bridge programs allow learners to start from their current skill level and provide them with the extra instructional time to develop the basic skills they need to begin the training program. In some states, local adult education providers may offer pre-bridge classes to their students that

contextualize their basic skill instruction to the occupational language of a career pathways program. Career pathways bridge program development often focuses on specific populations.

There are a number of useful resources that already exist to assist in designing bridge programs that are included here:

- [Bridges to Careers for Low-Skilled Adults](#) is a step-by-step guide to developing bridge programs. The Women Employed institute published the guide in 2005. The guide covers designing the program, building a bridge partnership, building and sustaining employer relationships, developing program curriculum, targeting student services, and placing students in jobs and college.
- [Creating a Successful Bridge Program: A “How To” Guide](#) is another useful tool developed under the Shifting Gears Initiative. The guide includes many interactive tools and worksheets to support the development of bridge programs.
- [Developing Effective Bridge Programs](#) is a LINCS adult career pathways online course. The course will take approximately two hours and 30 minutes. The course includes three modules: (1) Understanding Bridge Programs; (2) Laying the Foundation; and (3) Developing the Curriculum.

Targeted groups could include public assistance recipients, English language learners, refugee populations, veterans, individuals with a disability, at-risk and disconnected youth, dislocated workers, incumbent workers, formerly incarcerated, or other uniquely defined groups.

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: WIOA Definition of Integrated Education & Training

The term “integrated education and training” means a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. The articulated career pathways should include short-, moderate-, and long-term training and education programs to match the availability of different students (especially working learners and those balancing adult responsibilities) and include multilevel employment opportunities at different points of certificate or degree attainment.

PROMISING PRACTICE: Washington State I-Best Program

In an effort to be more deliberate in adult literacy and job training, Washington State college leaders developed a model that integrates adult basic education and ELA courses with technical training aligned to State career pathways. Research shows that relatively few English language learners transition to workforce training from basic skills courses. English language learners typically take a patchwork of credit and noncredit courses, disconnected from industry-recognized training and credentials. The State addressed this problem by developing the I-BEST program, concurrently pairing ELA and adult basic education instructors with professional-technical instructors who provide basic education and workforce skills training. The I-BEST model provides a mechanism for accelerating learning while simultaneously preparing students for work and higher-wage positions to contribute to Washington State’s economy. For more information see: <http://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/programs-services/i-best/>.

Progressive and Modularized: The education/training program is structured so that each course builds upon the next, with individuals moving through competency sets, building and attaining new skills as they go. Modules are taught in manageable “chunks” so individuals with varying levels of proficiency can accomplish them. A chunked curriculum is one that has been broken down into smaller units, each of which is stackable and linked to other modules in a series that culminates in an industry-recognized credential.

Accelerated: Many adults may have attained some of the knowledge and skills required to achieve their career goals through life experiences. Programs should maximize instruction time by ensuring they do not sit through classes that teach skills they already know. These programs give credit for demonstrated prior learning. Results of administered skill assessments can be used to target and align skill remediation goals with career pipeline objectives. Offering a self-paced training curriculum in education and training programs is a good option for allowing working learners to accelerate their educational completion and degree attainment.

Contextualized: Research indicates that individuals (both adults and youth) learn best when the skills or knowledge are directly relevant to real work. Contextualized instruction embeds traditional academic content (e.g., reading, writing, mathematics) within the content that is meaningful to learners’ daily lives or interests. Information is usually related to general workplace skills or a specific field or trade. The most successful examples are adult literacy courses that teach reading, writing, or math within the context of an industry sector such as construction, allied health, or service and hospitality.

Contextualized instruction is also another opportunity to engage employer partners. Employers may be willing to provide workplace learning experiences such as job shadows, internships, and pre-apprenticeships to support learning within a work setting. Making work a central context for learning will also help students attain work readiness skills.

Multiple Entry/Exit Points: Individuals are assessed so they may enter a program of study at a level they can succeed at based on their skill levels and personal situation. Some individuals will leave after attaining a certificate or diploma (e.g., CNA) while others may continue their education along a career pathway to acquire higher-level skills (e.g., LPN or registered nurse).

English Language Acquisition Program: Many new immigrants and some Americans may not possess English language skills sufficient to benefit from occupational skills training. In these instances, a unique teaching strategy is necessary to gain the skills needed to compete in America’s workforce and earn a family-sustaining wage.

PROMISING PRACTICE: NY I-BEST and Immigrant Bridge Programs

LaGuardia Community College has designed a college bridge program based off the Washington State I-BEST program. The LaGuardia program is for low-literacy immigrants to improve language and literacy that will allow for enrollment in degree and credential programs. This program utilizes Adult Education funds. The New York City Immigrant Bridge Program provides individualized career plans, contextualized English for Speakers of Other Languages, and job readiness preparation for college-educated immigrants.

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: WIOA Definition of English Language Acquisition Program

The term “English language acquisition program” means a program of instruction—

- A. designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language; and
- B. that leads to—
 - (i) (I) attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and (II) transition to postsecondary education and training; or
 - (ii) employment.

Component 3.8: Provide Flexible Delivery Methods

A variety of individuals will be participating in the career pathways education and training programs. These include recent high school graduates, high school dropouts, incumbent workers, dislocated workers, public assistance recipients, adult learners, youth, part-time workers, formerly incarcerated, individuals with a disability, English language learners, and recently returning veterans. Many of these individuals will be parents. The normal college and university schedule—semester coursework with limited summer offerings—does not meet the urgency that nontraditional students have to obtain a credential and find a job.

Flexibility in program offerings means more than class schedules. It also includes e-learning and work-based learning that allows students to progress at their own speed based on their abilities and time availability. Computer-based or web-based lessons allow the learner to study at times that fit their schedules.

PROMISING PRACTICE: Flexibility Means Access and Retention

Ensuring student success can be as simple as providing training programs that are flexible, accessible, and offer certain supportive services. Owens Community College (OCC), located in Toledo, Ohio, recognized early on that providing accelerated instruction in accessible locations would increase enrollment and retention rates at the campus. In 2007, OCC opened up the Learning Center at the Source, a One-Stop Career Center in downtown Toledo. Understanding the need to quickly get low-skilled adults into the workforce, OCC created accelerated basic skills courses that included two levels of remediation in one class. Accelerating the instruction and providing the course in satellite locations allows OCC to provide instruction during the day, evenings, or weekends, making the program more accessible to working adults and parents.

Additionally, OCC instituted enhanced supportive services coupled with modest scholarships for eligible adult students. Students are assigned advisors who have smaller caseloads than most advisors on the campus, and they are required to meet frequently to discuss their academic progress and address any issues that might impact their participation in the training. Eligible students also receive a \$150 scholarship for two semesters and are supported with direct access to financial aid, one-on-one tutoring, and assistance with common barriers, such as lack of transportation and childcare.

For more information, please see:

http://www.workingpoorfamilies.org/pdfs/Ohio_Stackable.pdf.

Several useful strategies for flexible delivery methods:

- Offer non-semester-based classes;
- Offer classes in the evening and on weekends;
- Offer alternative locations for training, including offerings at employer work sites;
- Offer credit for prior learning;
- Provide flexibility around course completion when learners encounter unforeseen barriers;
- Provide reasonable accommodations for an individual with a disability;
- Develop alternative options, such as web-based training for individuals who may lack easy access to education and training facilities, but who can complete online coursework from home computers; and
- Develop mobile training sites for individuals in rural areas who may lack access to home computers and/or broadband Internet connections.

Component 3.9: Provide Career Services, Case Management, and Comprehensive Supportive Services

Program design should include appropriate services for populations that may not be able to participate in employment and training because of barriers such as the need for childcare, food, and stable shelter. For some, attending training requires much more than academic support. For those, additional assistance in the form of transportation to attend training as well as transportation to and from childcare becomes a necessity. For others, tutoring may be necessary in order to keep pace with other learners. Customized services provide the special guidance and support necessary to meet the unique needs of each individual and may require cross-agency partners.

WIOA identifies these activities as career services. WIOA career services are organized into three categories:

1. **Basic Career Services**—services made available to all participants of a one-stop delivery system.
2. **Individualized Career Services**—services provided to program-eligible participants in order to succeed along a career pathway.
3. **Follow-up Career Services**—services necessary to obtain and retain employment.

[Integrating Career Counseling and Planning](#), a LINCS online course, is intended for adult educators, administrators, coaches, case managers, transition specialists, career counselors, and others working with adult learners seeking to transition to the next step along a career pathway. The course features three modules: (1) Career Counseling and Planning Programs; (2) Individual Career Development Plan Process; and (3) Transition to Employment and Postsecondary Education.

Many of the career services identified in WIOA are provided by multiple partners and are described in more detail in the highlighted text box on the following page.

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: WIOA Career Services Include

Basic Career Services

- (i) eligibility determination;
- (ii) outreach, intake, orientation to services;
- (iii) initial assessment;
- (iv) labor exchange services;
- (v) referrals to and coordination of activities;
- (vi) provisions of workforce and labor market statistics;
- (vii) provisions of performance information and program cost on eligible providers of training;
- (viii) information on local performance accountability measures;

- (ix) availability of supportive services or assistance;
- (x) information on filing claims for unemployment compensation; and
- (xi) information on applying for financial aid for training and education programs.
- (xii) **Individualized Career Services** services, if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment, that consist of—
 - (I) comprehensive assessment;
 - (II) development of an individual employment plan;
 - (III) group counseling;
 - (IV) individual counseling;
 - (V) career planning;
 - (VI) short-term prevocational services;
 - (VII) internships and work experience;
 - (VIII) workforce preparation activities;
 - (IX) financial literacy services;
 - (X) out-of-area job search assistance, relocation assistance; and
 - (XI) English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.
 - (XII) **Follow-Up Career Services** - including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in workforce development activities authorized under this subtitle who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of the employment, as appropriate.

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI:

Learner support may include:

- **Case management**—overall navigation services to appropriate providers of service;
- **Career advisement**—assessment and academic planning;
- **Academic supportive services**—school adjustment, personal tutoring, and time management; and
- **Supportive services**—childcare, transportation, and housing assistance.

Case Management is an overarching process that may directly arrange for or provide services that allow a learner to participate and complete a program of study. Case management is more a process than a service and typically includes non-instructional activities such as navigation to and arrangements for academic, career, or personal counseling, financial aid, childcare, housing, and other financial assistance that can be critical to the success and continued engagement of the individual in pursuing their career pathways component. American Job Centers serve as an important case management option throughout a career pathways trajectory; however, other agencies, such as educational institutions, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations, may also serve this role.

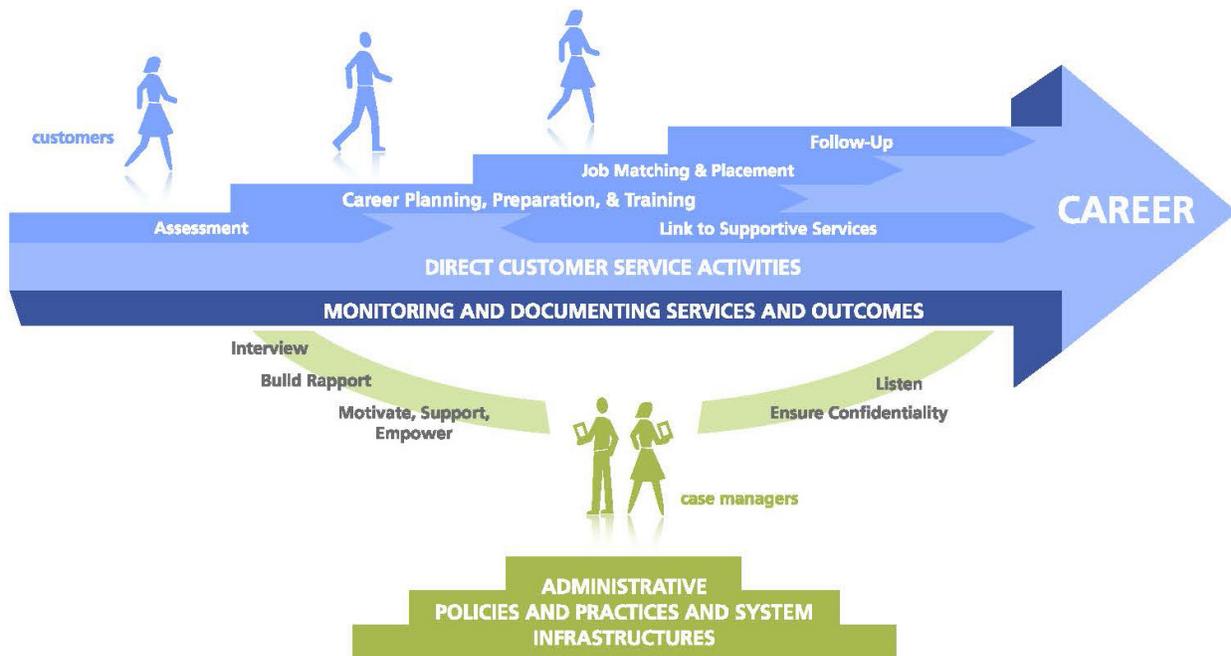
Although the case manager functions as the “point person” for managing and directing services, the case manager may provide a service directly or refer the learner to another service provider for a specific service. Regardless of who provides the service, the case manager is responsible for ensuring the learner is receiving the necessary services outlined in their career plan/individual employment plan. The case manager monitors the learner’s progress through the career pathways experience and receives regular feedback from appropriate agency staff and the learner. A good example of the critical activities that a case manager performs is available in an [Issues Brief](#) prepared by Mathematica Policy Research under a technical assistance contract with USDOL/ETA.

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: Case Management Services May Include

- **Conducting Assessments:** review the participant’s strengths and assets, needs and challenges, interests, and goals through a variety of assessments. Include discovery as well as interest, skills, and aptitude assessments.
- **Career Planning:** analyze the participant’s skills, interests, and other assessment results, examine current LMI, and help develop an employment plan.
- **Linking Customers to Supportive Services:** coordinate access to other services that a customer may need to achieve his or her employment objectives.
- **Job Matching, Placement, and Follow-Up:** review the résumé, help the participant develop interviewing skills, or provide links to job leads.

The diagram on the following page is a graphic depiction of the case management process prepared by Mathematica Policy Research.

FIGURE 1: THE COMPONENTS OF CASE MANAGEMENT



Laird, Elizabeth and Holcomb, Pamela. Issue Brief - [Effective Case Management: Key Elements and Practices from the Field](#). Mathematica Policy Research, 2011.

Although case management is a universal term for directing and coordinating services to an individual, some providers use other terminology to describe the same process. Common process terms used are case conferencing, integrated service teams, and integrated resource teams (IRTs). For example, the IRT model is effective in delivering coordinated services in USDOL's Disability Employment Initiative. The IRT brings together relevant public and private service agencies on behalf of the customer to coordinate services and resources in a comprehensive manner. A good example of an IRT model is Minnesota's Disability Employment Initiative Grant, described in the following promising practice.

PROMISING PRACTICE: Minnesota Disability Employment Initiative Grant

The Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant to Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development has found utilizing the IRT strategy extremely helpful in addressing the needs of their youth customers with disabilities. The IRT is a vehicle that is driven by the customer with a disability's specific needs and draws in additional service providers from across multiple systems. It explores at an individual level potential models for system-wide partnering because it allows organizations to become knowledgeable about each other, such as staff contacts and resources and services that address specific challenges, while benefiting from the formation of networks that engage IRT members working with, and on behalf of, an individual youth with a disability.

In the case of DEI, IRT members may include vocational rehabilitation service counselors, teachers, school counselors, parents, or other providers, depending upon the needs

and goals of their youth participants and their transition from school to postsecondary education or work experience. Minnesota uses the Guideposts to Success in conjunction with their IRT to provide a holistic approach to the participant's goals and has found that its DEI youth thrive with the use of the IRT.

The success of the IRT model drove more IRTs to form, often initiated without assistance from the Disability Resource Coordinator, as an important tool in resolving a particular youth challenge or to achieve a specific goal. Minnesota has conducted more than 252 individual IRTs over a two-year period. The IRT approach can translate the leadership team partnership process to the individual customer level to explore and implement career pathways that encompass a spectrum of WIOA and non-WIOA partners and engage them intermittently as the individual passes through various stages of their career trajectory.

Additional information on IRTs is available on Workforce3One, Disability and Employment Community of Practice: <https://disability.workforcegps.org/>. Information on the Guideposts to Success is available at the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth website: <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/guideposts>.

Regardless of the process for delivery of services, career services are provided by multiple agencies. The basic and individualized career services described in WIOA are very comprehensive. For the purpose of providing training services, agencies may wish to think of what career services fall within career advisement, academic support, and supportive services.

Career Advisement consists of providing career information, academic assessments, and career counseling; developing an academic plan (selecting a career pathway); and providing financial information on the costs as well as identifying resources that may be available to offset those costs.

Providing career information ensures that individuals with limited knowledge of the labor force will receive appropriate information to make an informed career choice. An effective program design includes an assessment of each individual's skills (academic skills, "soft" or work readiness skills, and technical skills), abilities, and interests. It considers an individual's previous experience, current life situation, salary expectations, previous training, and degrees, diplomas, certificates, and/or credentials. Career and academic assessment helps individuals determine their current situation and spells out the requirements of a career plan going forward to meet an ultimate career goal. Career planning will support an individual's journey through the pathway, and provide "road maps" outlining the education, training, and credentials the learner must complete. An educational institution or a case manager at a private nonprofit organization or at an American Career Center may conduct career planning.

For youth, many states have required individualized learning plans (ILP) or career plans. ILPs start with a student, working with a school counselor, identifying their career interests, personal strengths, and work values. Schools that require an ILP typically provide students with access to computer-based interest and skills inventories; however, tools similar to those used by most schools are readily available for free on the Internet. USDOL provides several free career exploration tools in both paper and computerized formats at: <http://www.careerinfonet.org/explore/>.

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI FOR YOUTH: ILP/Career Plan Definition for Quality ILPs Developed by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth and its Partners

- A document consisting of: (a) course-taking and postsecondary plans aligned to career goals; and (b) documentation of the range of college and career readiness skills that the student has developed.
- A process that enhances the relevance of school and out-of-school learning opportunities and provides the student access to career development opportunities that incorporate self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management skill-building activities.

Academic Supportive Services are designed specifically to retain participants in their selected career pathway. Individuals who are English language learners and/or who lack college readiness skills frequently drop out of college, as the obstacles appear overwhelming. Academic supports are available to lessen the burden and arrange for tutoring or other services that may retain the participant in their career pathway.

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: Academic Supportive Service May Include:

- Providing the opportunity to participate in groups called learning communities or cohorts where they may interact with other students who share some of the same challenges;
- Assisting in learning how to study most effectively through workshops on study skills, test strategies, note-taking strategies, and time management;
- Providing career-specific courses for individuals needing language assistance;
- Providing for or arranging for tutors;
- Providing learning labs where one-on-one computer-based tutoring may be offered;
- Providing dropout prevention strategies and counseling to address barriers and help improve student success; and
- Providing special accommodations for an individual with a disability, such as an increase in test time or readers for an individual who is blind.

Supportive Services alleviate many of the obstacles that would lessen an individual's ability to participate in a career pathways program of study. Supportive services provide the basic needs of food, shelter, transportation, and childcare. In addition to an individual's basic needs, the need for financial literacy and digital literacy are critical for a learner to participate in training and/or employment

CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: WIOA Definition of Supportive Services

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES.—The term “supportive services” means services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under this Act.

Component 3.10: Provide Employment Assistance and Retention Services

Employment Assistance is a final component of providing support to participants and occurs following or near the end of training and education. WIOA identifies employment assistance and retention services as the third and final career service category. Its focus is on assisting participants to prepare to seek employment, get a job, and to manage their careers after employment with the option to engage in continuing education and career planning. Employment assistance may include job-seeking skills such as skills identification, identifying the hidden job market, cover letters, résumé preparation, Internet applications, interviewing techniques, and thank you letters. Finally, providing continued career and education planning after placement can provide the participant with options to move forward along a career pathway.

Partner organizations such as American Job Centers or community-based organizations may provide the employment assistance in the career pathways collaboration. The organization responsible for case management services should refer the participant to the appropriate organization.

Retention Services reflect the idea that although getting a job is an important goal, keeping a job is the ultimate goal. Retention services may include job-keeping skills such as problem solving, following work direction, necessary communications with supervisor and coworkers, appropriate interpersonal relationships with supervisor and coworkers, and balancing work and family. For some populations, retention services may include a job coach or a mentor who can intervene at critical junctures of an individual's employment. Retention services can also include a job accommodation for an individual with a disability.

HOW TO: Provide Employment Assistance

Employment assistance and retention may include--

- Workforce readiness preparation (e.g., résumé writing, cover letters, job interviewing skills, and soft skills training).
- Pre-employment connections to the industry (e.g., internships, co-op programs, work/study programs, work experience, and job shadowing).
- Job search assistance (e.g., navigating job banks as well as techniques in searching the hidden job market).
- Job retention skills (e.g., taking direction, job-appropriate behaviors, problem-solving techniques, and attendance).
- Special accommodations (e.g., reading software for the blind, OTJ coaching, and workspace modifications).

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

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For more information on credentials please see: <http://www.careeronestop.org/EducationTraining/KeepLearning/GetCredentials.aspx>

Extended definitions of credentials are found in Attachment 2 of TEGL 15-10, the "Credential Resource Guide" (pp. 2-5) <http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL15-10a2.pdf>

For more information on apprenticeships please see: <http://www.doleta.gov/OA/>

For more information on and an example of contextualized learning please see: Klein-Collins, R. (2006). *Building blocks for building skills: An inventory of adult learning models and innovations*. Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED509915>