Resource 3:
Improving Employer Engagement in CTE through TPM

Talent Pipeline Management® (TPM)

TPM RESOURCE GUIDE:
A Compendium for High-Quality CTE

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION

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Resource 3: Improving Employer Engagement in CTE through TPM

This resource describes how to use TPM to improve employer engagement in CTE. It is part of a set of resources that, when combined with the Introduction, make up the *TPM Resource Guide: A Compendium for High-Quality CTE*. This resource (1) provides an orientation to TPM as a framework for organizing employers and talent supply chain partnerships that create **shared value** for learners, education and workforce providers, and employers; (2) explains how TPM can be used to improve communication and promote shared understanding between employers and the CTE community; and (3) describes how TPM can be leveraged as a transformative approach for engaging employers in CTE program design, delivery, and improvement, especially in ways that expand equity and diversity.

TPM as a Transformative Approach to Organizing and Partnering with Employers

At its core, TPM is a systematic approach for getting employers to engage in collective action and it is a structured process of data collection and decision-making. The result is authentically employer-led education and workforce partnerships that are adaptive to changing needs, sustainable through activating an employer return on investment (ROI), and provide shared value creation for all stakeholders involved.

TPM is both a framework and a process. It is a framework in that it provides clear roles and direction for all stakeholders in the talent development ecosystem, with a particular emphasis on how employers need to get organized, at scale. TPM also provides a common language for employers and education partners to communicate. Finally, it provides a process for employers to repeatedly produce high-quality, primary source data about their workforce needs and challenges. TPM is the mechanism by which this information is shared with preferred and trusted partners, including CTE stakeholders, which results in co-designing a talent pipeline solution.

Individual employers, especially larger employers, may choose to implement TPM by themselves. However, there are many advantages for employers to work together including higher visibility, shared expertise and peer learning, streamlined solutions, and greater scale

(e.g., number of job openings) and leverage when working with education partners. As a result, employers, especially small- to mid-sized employers, may voluntarily elect to be part of a collaborative of employers that is staffed by a **host organization** of their choice. Host organizations are typically—but not exclusively—a business association like a chamber of commerce, sector association (e.g., a manufacturing partnership), or economic development organization. In our experience even large firms see the benefits of working in collaboration with other employers rather than going it alone.

Once organized, employers are guided through a six-strategy process that, when combined, makes for a talent supply chain approach. The six strategies are:

- **Strategy 1: Organize Employer Collaboratives—** A group of employers form an **employer collaborative** around one or more **shared pain points** and determine the critical **business functions** and occupations they will work together to address. Shared pain points can include improving the qualifications of new job applicants, reducing onboarding and training costs, improving retention, and increasing workforce diversity. Business functions can include workforce roles such as nursing, machining, and software development, which allows employers to focus on the core work requirements without getting caught up in the semantic minutia of differing job titles.

- **Strategy 2: Engage in Demand Planning—**The employer collaborative produces data on projected new and replacement positions for the targeted jobs based on their workforce planning activities and business assumptions. This information is primary source data and is specific to the collaborative; as a result, it will often stand in contrast to data pulled from government occupational projections or data produced by analyzing job postings.

- **Strategy 3: Communicate Competency and Credential Requirements—**In addition to collecting data on new and replacement positions, the employer collaborative develops a shared language to describe required and preferred hiring requirements for their target business functions or occupations. As part of this process the

employers in the collaborative revisit their current hiring requirements and revise them to be more competency- and skills-based. They also make important decisions about proxies such as required or preferred credentials and experience that could be constraining their ability to tap into available talent pools.

- **Strategy 4: Analyze Talent Flows—**The last part of the collaborative's data collection efforts include analyzing their current talent sourcing patterns and where they could get talent from in the future. This strategy involves employers looking at the education, training, and credentialing source for those workers who either applied or were hired so they know where their current workers come from. It also involves analyzing the capacity of current talent sources in order to answer questions like, "Can my current talent sourcing partners meet our projected demand given our current utilization of those sources (i.e., the number or percentage hired by the collaborative from those sources)?"

- **Strategy 5: Build Talent Supply Chains—**Using the primary source data organized by the collaborative through Strategies 2–4—and the pain points arrived at in Strategy 1—the employers make decisions about the type of talent pipeline that is best suited to their needs (i.e., **upskill** existing workers, recruit and onboard external hires, or both) and who they will work with to

co-design and implement their solution(s). This strategy begins the process of putting data into action and using it to co-design a talent pipeline that can meet the projected needs of employers while delivering a quality education and training experience to learners that results in employment. This part of the TPM system also allows for back-and-forth between the employer collaborative and their talent sourcing partners on things such as the required and preferred competencies and credential requirements and which partner—including the employer—is responsible for addressing them.

- **Strategy 6: Continuous Improvement—**After implementing a solution with preferred and trusted partners, the employer collaborative collects and uses agreed-upon performance data to identify **continuous improvement** opportunities. This includes reviewing both leading indicators, such as enrollment and completion data, but also lagging indicators that are important to employers, such as improving the yield rate of qualified job applicants and reducing turnover. Through TPM, both the employer collaborative and their talent pipeline partners are provided a process to analyze the data, identify root causes, test solutions, and scale what works, all with an eye toward improving the ROI for employers, learners, and providers.

Key Takeaways

A key differentiator for TPM is that it encourages employers to work together to achieve the scale necessary for establishing effective employer and CTE partnerships. TPM also enables employers to get together to get the facts straight prior to engaging their talent sourcing partners. The ability to get organized around shared workforce needs, produce primary source data about those needs, and work through a trusted intermediary to design a solution to meet those needs, is what makes TPM a powerful value-add to any CTE partnership.

TPM Improves Communication and Promotes Shared Understanding between Employers and CTE

TPM enables employers to get on the same page in terms of their most pressing needs and to take action in ways that result in an employer ROI as well as shared value for education partners and learners. It also is a useful framework for employers to develop a shared language and understanding as they collaborate as a team. What is more, TPM can help bridge the divide between employers and CTE by opening up new lines of communication with more consistent, higher quality data backed by stronger, more sustainable employer leadership. Below are just a few examples of how TPM, through improved communication, helps promote shared understanding between employers and CTE:

TPM organizes employers around critical jobs in well-defined geographic areas using trusted employer associations or other intermediaries.

TPM encourages employers to organize employer collaboratives when building a talent supply chain solution. TPM provides the collaborative with a structured process to clearly define their most pressing workforce pain points, their **critical jobs**, and the geographic areas they will start with when working alongside their education and workforce partners. TPM provides employer collaboratives an end-to-end process that engages the right professionals at the right time to clearly and consistently communicate their most critical needs and workforce priorities to their partners.

TPM encourages employers to use trusted employer associations, such as chambers of commerce, referred to in TPM as a host organization to implement the TPM process, aggregate their primary source data, facilitate decision-making among the collaborative members, and manage the resulting relationship with education and workforce partners. The host organization that is staffing the employer collaborative can serve as their spokesperson resulting in more consistent and higher quality communication from employers while also greatly reducing the time and cost associated with engaging employers in education and workforce partnerships.

TPM helps develop the information CTE professionals need in order to start partnerships and develop programs, or improve on existing relationships and programs.

TPM employer collaboratives do more than just identify their most critical jobs, they also provide critical information on projected job openings that can complement more traditional government **labor market information**. TPM also encourages employer collaboratives to use a shared language to describe similarities and differences in hiring requirements, including competency and credential requirements, which can be used as the starting point in building partnerships with schools and colleges or as an opportunity to improve on existing partnerships.

TPM provides an employer-led process for engaging CTE partners in developing talent pipeline solutions that serve as high-performing career pathways for CTE programs of study.

TPM provides guidance to employer collaboratives in how to develop a talent supply chain solution within and across companies. It also prepares them for how to work productively with their education and workforce partners to co-design talent pipelines with clearly defined roles at different stages of the pipeline and an agreed-upon set of performance metrics that communicate shared value creation.

TPM provides a comprehensive step-by-step process that employers can use in providing needed information to develop employer-led **career pathways** that include CTE programs of study. This process allows employers to be more proactive in working with schools and colleges to determine each other's respective roles. It also helps identify what employer roles or engagement opportunities are most important in producing results. In addition, TPM provides a framework for working with school and college administrators, state CTE agencies, and other partners to better align resources and incentives to improve the delivery and performance of career pathway systems and CTE programs of study.

Key Takeaways

TPM can be a powerful tool to help bridge the communication divide between employers and the CTE community. It can also promote shared understanding between the two sides. When leveraged in the right ways, TPM can scale and sustain employer engagement with CTE programs as well as significantly improve both the quality and level of that engagement. The result is saved time and resources with improved outcomes for all stakeholders.

Using TPM to Inform CTE Program Design, Delivery, and Improvement

As previously presented, TPM provides a framework and shared language for improving understanding and communication between employers and their education partners. In particular, TPM provides an important foundation for building employer and CTE partnerships, or improving upon existing partnerships. We now explore how specific TPM tools and resources can accomplish this at the state and local levels. We focus on three major CTE processes: (1) planning and needs assessment; (2) program development, approval, and funding; and (3) performance management and continuous improvement.

We also focus on how TPM can be used to promote equity in CTE programs. In particular, we explore how TPM can be used to establish or expand high-quality CTE programs that can close opportunity and achievement gaps for learner populations facing barriers to career and education advancement.

State and local planning and needs assessment.

Federal and state CTE policies place a strong emphasis on developing state and local CTE plans based on a comprehensive understanding of the needs of employers, students, and the communities served by CTE programs. In particular, the new **Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA)** is one of the most significant federal legislative changes introduced in Perkins V. Many states are leveraging this new federal requirement to improve state and local planning processes.

One major aspect of state and local planning and needs assessment is making sure that CTE programs are aligned to local workforce needs and are addressing in-demand jobs. State agencies, schools, and colleges historically have used state government industry and occupational projections as the basis for talking with employers, employer associations, and local economic development organizations about local and regional needs. Government LMI is a good starting point but it does not always reflect the current and emerging needs of local and regional employers and what jobs are most critical for their continued success and the economic development of communities and regions where they are located.

Another major aspect of state and local planning is identifying existing CTE programs that may already address in-demand jobs and determine whether the level of demand (e.g., number of projected job openings) matches up with the supply of students coming from existing programs. This supply-demand analysis is usually based on crosswalks between government-defined job taxonomies—projected job openings by **Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)** codes—and program classifications—program enrollees and completers by **Classification Instructional Programs (CIP)** codes—and is not informed by how one or more specific employers actually define their jobs, their level of demand, or where they typically source their most qualified job applicants from.

State agencies, schools, and colleges also convene employer advisory groups, work groups, or task forces to identify their needs and priorities, but many times they are not successful in fully engaging employers in this process. The employers involved are often a small sample of the employer community and it can be unclear what role they play in the organization or how deep their knowledge is of their company's or **industry's** needs. It is common for employers in these roles to be put in a position to react to government LMI and other resources instead of them generating and sharing information themselves.

In addition, many states are surveying employers and talking to industry associations to identify **industry-recognized credentials**, including industry certifications that should be addressed in program development, funding, and related performance metrics and incentives. Many times, schools and colleges use needs assessments and program planning processes to develop similar information for their programs. States, schools, and colleges differ in how successful they are in engaging employers to identify these credentials. The result is often a static list of credentials that was produced in a moment of time with relatively few employers validating them.

TPM provides a powerful framework and set of tools for employers to play a more proactive role in using their own data to identify in-demand jobs and provide employment projections for their most critical jobs at the local and regional levels. It can also be used to identify competency and credential requirements for these jobs, including industry-recognized credentials that are required or preferred in the hiring process. This higher quality data can be leveraged by states, schools, and colleges.

In addition, TPM can be leveraged by states, schools, and colleges to perform a more accurate supply and demand analysis. The TPM approach conversely does not rely on assumptions in traditional supply-demand analysis based on government job and program classification systems. It encourages employers to identify the programs from where they currently get qualified applicants. As a result, TPM can be used to better determine whether employers with critical in-demand job openings are actually hiring students from existing CTE programs. It can also help determine how much of the available talent they are effectively acquiring as well as the available or potential capacity of these programs to meet projected future demand.

Success Story:
Employer-Driven Data Influences State Healthcare Investment

Due to critical healthcare skills shortages in the region, the Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation organized the Hospital Workforce Collaborative using TPM. Traditional labor market data indicated that the lack of medical assistants was the hospitals' major pain point. However, data produced by the collaborative members themselves using the TPM framework revealed their greatest need was actually in developing and retaining nurses in six specialty practice areas; occupations that were not even reflected in traditional labor market information tools.

The collaborative of employers established a partnership with the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD). In addition to using the TPM framework to determine the focus of the collaborative, they used it to assess the facilities and resources needed to deliver specialty nursing training across the district's 10 community colleges. This planning process identified a need for additional simulation facilities and labs that can meet the needs of the employer collaborative and region.

Through coordination and support of the collaborative and business community, MCCCD was able to secure an appropriation of $5.8 million from the state legislature to develop a new clinical simulation facility. The leadership of the collaborative in the planning and need assessment process paid off.

The program boasts a potential for graduating up to 300 students by 2021, doubling the current number of nursing students in the region. Combined with an increase of at least five new programs and multiple tracts for upskilling existing working nurses, the potential for growth of the healthcare workforce in Arizona is extraordinary.

https://www.forwardontalent.org/stories/hospital-workforce-collaborative/

Key Takeaways

TPM can strengthen the comprehensive local needs assessment (CLNA) by:

Strategy 1: Establishing employer collaboratives that can actively participate in the needs assessment process and identify the most critical in-demand jobs at the state and local levels.

Strategy 2: Providing more up-to-date and detailed information on projected job openings for these jobs and the lead times for filling them, that can be used in establishing local program of study priorities.

Strategy 3: Providing detailed information on hiring requirements, including competency and credential requirements that can be used to identify industry-recognized credentials and define the competencies and credentials addressed in CTE programs of study.

Strategy 4: Providing a new and more accurate approach to supply-demand analysis and determining which existing CTE programs are actually supplying qualified talent for in-demand jobs within their local areas and the capacity of these programs to meet projected future demand.

Program design and implementation.

Federal and state policies, including state and local needs assessments, also place a strong emphasis on developing and implementing CTE programs that address employer and other stakeholder needs. Oftentimes the local needs assessments are used when forming advisory groups as well as informing state policy such as program approval and renewal. They also put a strong emphasis on leveraging other public and private funding and support necessary for program success.

First, advisory groups are strongly encouraged or required by schools and colleges in order to initiate a new CTE program or renew an existing one. Many times, these advisory groups represent a variety of stakeholders in addition to employers, such as students, alumni, parents, faculty, administration, and representatives of other education organizations. How pronounced the employer role is and how influential they are in the decision-making process varies across advisory groups. These advisory groups engage employers and other stakeholders in:

- **Identifying Employer Needs.** Gathering and analyzing information on employer needs either directly from employer members or through industry, economic development, and workforce agencies and organizations. They address what jobs are in greatest demand and what are the competencies and credentials required.

- **Developing Curriculum and Supporting Professional Development.** Developing curriculum to address the most important competencies required by employers and improve learner success and providing the necessary professional development for faculty and instructors to deliver the curriculum.

- **Securing Program Funding and Resources.** Obtaining the necessary public and private funding and resources necessary for program success. This includes accessing direct funding and in-kind contributions from employers and other partners.

- **Organizing Work-based Learning Opportunities.** Gaining the commitment of employers to provide meaningful **work-based learning** opportunities (e.g., internships) to learners in the program.

- **Marketing Programs and Outreach to Learners.** Building program awareness among major stakeholders and recruiting learners to enroll in those opportunities. Advisory groups can help secure career awareness and career exploration commitments from employers and other stakeholders, such as company tours, mentorships, job shadowing etc.

Second, federal and state policy also emphasizes the need for a rigorous local and state process for reviewing, approving, and renewing programs for state and local funding. This process is designed to ensure that programs are able to meet both employer and learner needs and have the capacity and sufficient commitment from key stakeholders to be successful. Some state policies place a strong emphasis on whether there is sufficient employer engagement and commitment, including:

- **Labor Market Demand.** Is there sufficient labor market demand for the program, including the number of projected job openings validated by employers in the local area?

- **Employer Commitment and Support.** Is there sufficient employer commitment and support as evidenced in advisory group participation and resource commitments, such as funding and work-based learning opportunities?

TPM can play an important value-added role in making the CTE program design and implementation process more employer-led and built on higher quality data directly from employers themselves. State agencies, schools, and colleges vary in their success in engaging employers in program design and implementation as well as gaining sufficient employer commitments necessary for the long-term success of programs. These efforts are made more difficult by the same employers being asked to participate in multiple advisory groups addressing similar program needs. In addition, the very same employers may be asked to participate on advisory groups of other related education and workforce initiatives that frequently involve the same schools and colleges, including sector partnerships of local workforce boards.

Through this employer-centered approach, employers are organized into a collaborative—hosted by an organization of their choosing—that can serve as the employer committee for one or more advisory groups and sector partnerships that employer collaboratives choose to work with. TPM is

systematic in how it uses information to co-design talent pipelines that are consistent with career pathway models and provides the context for coordinating school and college programs and complementary initiatives.

TPM also provides systematic processes for gathering forecasting data for critical in-demand jobs and competency and credential requirements that are essential for designing programs. It establishes the role of employers at different stages of the pipeline and clarifies what the employer commitment is and the resources they bring to the partnership, which is often required in program approval and renewal processes (see Figure 1: Basic Value Stream Map).

TPM also provides an approach for co-designing programs of study in ways that engage employers more deeply in **competency and curriculum mapping** and clarify the roles of both employers and schools and colleges providing education and training and conducting assessments. These mapping processes go beyond traditional advisory group actions. They enable partners to better align learning outcomes—and their preferred demonstration—to employer hiring requirements and identify when those learning outcomes are addressed in the talent pipeline and by which partner (see Figure 2: External Pipeline Competency Mapping Tool Example).

Figure 1: Basic Value Stream Map

EXTERNAL TALENT PIPELINE (i.e., new hires)   INTERNAL TALENT PIPELINE (i.e., upskilling existing workers)

SUPPLIER RESPONSIBILITY   EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITY

ROLES: CAREER AWARENESS & GUIDANCE | CAREER EXPLORATION | CAREER PREPARATION & PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING | ONBOARDING | CAREER COACHING | UPSKILLING | RETENTION
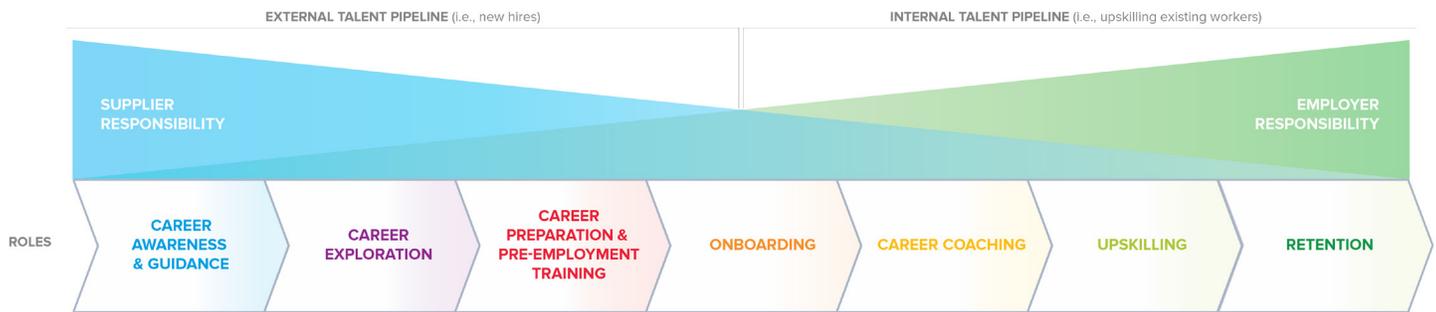
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Figure 2: External Pipeline Competency Mapping Tool Example

Competency Hiring Requirements (CHR)	Learning Outcomes (LO)	Tier 3 Providers	Tier 2 Providers	Tier 1 Providers	Collaborative Employers
CHR1	LO1		x		
CHR2	LO2		x		
CHR3	LO3			x	
	LO4			x	
CHR4	LO5				x
	LO6				x
	LO7			x	

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Success Story:
A Community College Maximizes Industry Relevance

In Northern Kentucky, a manufacturing partnership used TPM to identify Gateway Community and Technical College as a preferred provider of machinist talent. The TPM framework enabled the employer collaborative to better organize and communicate their hiring requirement as part of the program design and implementation process. Equipped with this data, Gateway was able to transform a traditional machinist program into an employer-led enhanced operator program.

Using the competency and skill-based hiring requirements agreed to by the collaborative, the employer partners were able to engage in a competency and curriculum mapping process with Gateway. In addition to improving alignment, the partners were able to identify numerous areas of duplication where employers were better positioned to cover as part of their onboarding processes. The result: reduced time and cost in delivering the program. By employers using the TPM framework to define and prioritize the competencies needed to meet industry requirements, Gateway was able to target its coursework to give students the right level of information in the most efficient timeframe. From there, employers could provide more targeted onboarding processes to get employees to full productivity in an effective and efficient manner.

As a result, the newly minted operator program went from a one-year completion time to 14 weeks, and the cost was cut by close to half (from $5,000 to $2,588). With a focus on competency-based learning, program completers were able to finish the program well-equipped to meet the employers' needs. After several iterations of continuous improvement, one thing has not changed: employers drive the curriculum conversation from beginning to end to ensure Gateway provides students training for the most relevant industry skills.

Read the full story: https://www.forwardontalent.org/stories/scjohnson/

Key Takeaways

TPM can strengthen CTE program design and implementation by:

Strategy 1: Establishing employer collaboratives that can serve as employer advisory groups or employer committees of larger advisory groups for multiple schools and colleges and related education and workforce initiatives, such as sector partnerships.

Strategy 3: Providing detailed information on hiring requirements, including competency and credential requirements that can be used to define those addressed in CTE programs of study.

Strategy 5: Providing a co-design process for developing programs of study that clarifies the roles and commitments of employers and CTE partners, including work-based learning.

Performance management and continuous improvement.

In more recent years, federal and state CTE policies have established performance metrics and incentives for schools and colleges to promote and reward successful performance. They have also worked with schools and colleges to set performance goals on these metrics as a foundation for continuous improvement.

Under Perkins V and related state policies, CTE programs are expected to show results for a variety of outcomes at the secondary and postsecondary levels. States have some flexibility in which measures to emphasize and whether to use additional measures to address their own priorities or requirements associated with other funding streams. In addition, several states are experimenting with financial incentives that provide funding to schools and colleges based on enrollments as well as performance (i.e., performance or evidence-based financing). For example, some states are exploring incentives for the attainment of industry-recognized credentials or for completion of work-based learning.

One major challenge in employer and CTE partnerships is how to use a balanced and aligned set of performance metrics that reflect the needs of all partners, including employers. Program performance and accountability metrics rarely factor in employer-facing metrics that address their key pain points. TPM provides a framework for establishing a balanced set of demand- and supply-side metrics. Through TPM, employers can work with CTE partners to co-design not only programs, but balanced scorecards that reflect metrics that are important to CTE programs and systems as well as employers (see Figure 3: Example Aggregate Performance Scorecard). These balanced scorecards are particularly useful in that they communicate value to the employer customer in ways that can sustain their engagement and commitment to the partnership. This moves the employer from an advisory role to a direct beneficiary with data and evidence to back it up.

Figure 3: Example Aggregate Performance Scorecard

| Shared Pain Point Measures	Performance	Relative to Expectations	Trend
Percentage of applicants from talent providers that meet requirements	55%	🔴	↓
Average number of days to fill open positions	128 days	🔴	↓
Percentage of hires retained in first year of employment	75%	🟡	↑
Percentage of recent hires from targeted, undersourced populations	35%	🟡	↑
Percentage of employees completing career advancement programs	30%	🟡	↑
Driver/Transition Measures	**Performance**	**Relative to Expectations**	**Trend**
Percentage of employees in entry-level jobs enrolling in career advancement programs	50%	🟡	↑
Number of learners who complete education and training programs	75	🟢	—
Number of learners enrolled in education and training programs	95	🟡	—

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TPM scorecards coupled with data produced through ongoing talent flow analysis can also provide important feedback on which CTE programs are serving as the actual supply of talent—not the theoretical supply—for employers in a collaborative and with what results.

In addition to keeping score, TPM provides a framework for using performance data to engage in continuous improvement (see Figure 4: Example Performance Scorecard for Tier 1 Training Providers). Data is not just useful for accountability purposes, but for ongoing conversations between partners on how to improve the relationship in ways that manifest themselves in better outcomes for employers, providers, and learners.

TPM scorecards allow employers and their CTE partners to avoid chasing solutions in search of a problem, but to instead focus their attention on key points in the talent pipeline that need to be investigated and improved on through a commonly used improvement model (see Figure 5: TPM Continuous Improvement Process). This also means employers in the collaborative may need to look more closely at themselves in order to identify a possible breakdown in the talent supply chain partnership. This includes revisiting their data and how they communicate that data to partners as well as their role in supporting learners and onboarding new workers. In TPM, continuous improvement opportunities can be found on both the supply side and the demand side.

Figure 5: TPM Continuous Improvement Process
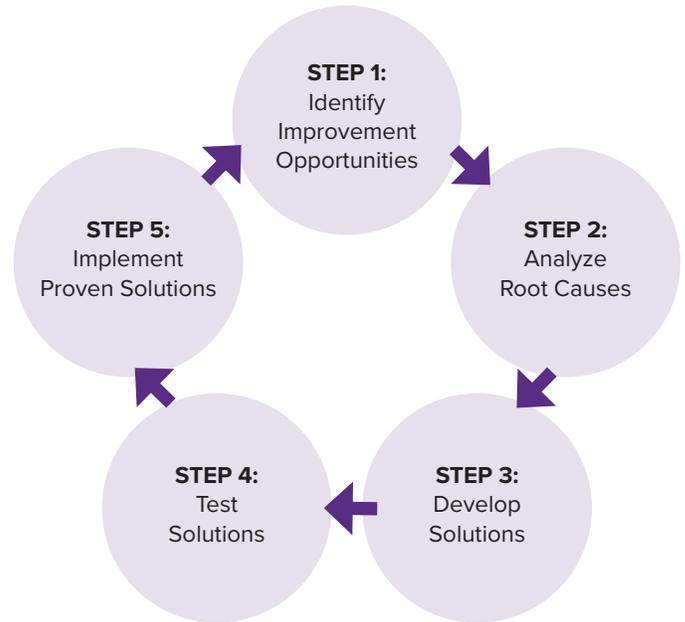
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Figure 4: Example Performance Scorecard for Tier 1 Training Providers

Tier 1 Provider	Measure	Level	Relative to Expectations	Trend
Community College A	Percentage of applicants from talent providers who meet the requirements	85%	🟢	↑
University B	Percentage of applicants from talent providers who meet the requirements	60%	🟡	↓
University C	Percentage of applicants from talent providers who meet the requirements	40%	🔴	↓

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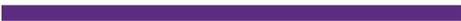
TPM also provides a framework for aligning public and private incentives. In TPM, incentives come in many different forms and go beyond the usual funding incentives provided on the public side (e.g., competitive grants). Private sector incentives can include priority access to work-based learning opportunities, access to equipment and facilities, scholarships, and of course direct funding, just to name a few. As previously stated, these incentives can be powerful signals of employer commitment that can then be used to facilitate program approval and renewal.

Many of these incentives are controlled by the employers themselves and can be aggregated and coordinated by the host organizations and negotiated with CTE partners. What makes TPM different is that both employers and their partners are encouraged to tie incentives directly to their agreed-upon performance metrics. In other words, incentives drive performance. TPM provides a useful framework for employers to organize the right mix and level of incentives to offer, and for CTE practitioners to help identify which types of incentives are most in demand and result in improved performance on both supply and demand side metrics.

States also provide important incentives for schools and colleges, including funding. Many states have established performance-based incentives linked to specific Perkins-related performance measures. Some of these incentives are managed by state CTE agencies. In addition, states have key data systems that can support data collection of key employer-facing and school- and college-facing measures as well as the data for supporting evidence-based continuous improvement.

Success Story:
Saving Time, Saving Money, Getting Needed Talent

In a 2015 search to hire 100 electric line workers and gas line workers, Consumers Energy received 4,000 applications. After the screening process, just 50 applicants were deemed qualified for these available jobs. Consumers Energy determined that they needed to see a dramatic improvement in the performance of their talent sourcing process.

Working with the Michigan Energy Workforce Development Consortium, Consumers Energy identified early on what success would look like in terms of improved hiring and retention as well as reduced cost. They also used the TPM framework to successfully project demand, identify competencies, and map trusted sources of talent for these jobs.

Better armed with their own data on critical jobs, Consumers Energy identified three preferred providers of talent with whom to co-design talent supply chain solutions. With these providers as their sole source of entry-level talent for these critical jobs, Consumers Energy partnered to build more relevant training facilities, increase face time with students, and provide in-depth input on course curricula for those career paths—including identifying and eliminating outdated training practices. Based on this refocused engagement approach with preferred providers of talent, Consumers Energy has hired more than 100 employees from each of the three talent sources.

But was the partnership successful in improving performance and achieving an ROI for Consumers Energy? The answer is a resounding yes. After successfully implementing a talent supply chain solution, Consumers Energy boasted a 98% retention rate for hires brought in through their established talent pipelines. What is more, those new hires required minimal remediation or additional training resulting in a cost savings of $30,000 per hire. Beyond the metrics, Consumers Energy has the added comfort of knowing that, so long as the talent supply chain is continuously updated and maintained, they have access to a pipeline of talent to meet current and changing jobs projections and needs.

Read the full story: https://www.forwardontalent.org/stories/consumers-energy/

Key Takeaways

TPM can strengthen CTE performance management and continuous improvement by:

Strategy 5: Providing a framework for aligning public and private performance measures and incentives, and demonstrating shared value creation for all partners.

Strategy 6: Providing a framework for using both public and private data to monitor performance and support evidence-based continuous improvement.

Expanding equity and diversity.

In addition to informing CTE program design, delivery, and improvement, federal and state policies are also used to promote equity and diversity in CTE. In particular, these policies promote high-quality CTE programs that can close opportunity and achievement gaps for student populations with barriers to education and career advancement. Employers can play a major role in helping schools and colleges establish high-quality CTE programs that are capable of achieving these results.

TPM enables employer and CTE partnerships to expand opportunity for a variety of student and worker populations, including CTE special populations. First, TPM encourages employer collaboratives to include workforce diversity as a major talent pipeline challenge with a focus on expanding career opportunities for targeted populations and demographics.

Second, TPM also encourages employer collaboratives to establish goals and performance metrics consistent with many CTE performance measures, such as percentage of hires from targeted populations and percentage of targeted populations enrolling in and completing programs. These metrics ensure that other performance measures and related incentives (e.g., preferred provider designation) do not have any unintended consequences for expanding opportunity and equity when implementing and managing talent pipeline partnerships.

Third, TPM encourages employer collaboratives to work with education partners to develop talent pipelines based on career pathways that can produce results based on these metrics, including the delivery of coaching and support services that contribute toward long-term success.

Finally, TPM promotes a continuous improvement process that can help identify root causes associated with persistent gaps in opportunity and success and can promote proven solutions to address them at every stage of the talent pipeline.

Success Story:
Building A Diverse Talent Pipeline

UpSkill Houston, an initiative of the Greater Houston Partnership, focuses on building the Houston region's talent pipeline for good jobs that require education and skills beyond a high school diploma and less than a four-year college degree. In the country's fourth most populated city—considered among the most racially and ethnically diverse—expanding the talent pipeline and attracting people to high-demand careers is critical for industries that drive the region's economy.

UpSkill Houston worked on various collaborations with community organizations, public workforce systems, and employers to attract and screen potential employees. Using the TPM framework, one company sought to increase its workforce diversity by developing an employer-led, Women in Construction program to provide on-the-job training for 20 women to become pipefitter helpers. This program graduated 80% of the women enrolled, and these graduates are still in the construction field today. Other companies have since replicated the program recognizing women are more likely to be retained with increased representation in the field.

Read the full story: https://www.forwardontalent.org/stories/greaterhoustonpartnership/

Key Takeaways

TPM can promote equity and diversity in employer and CTE partnerships by:

Strategy 1: Establishing employer collaboratives that can focus on expanding diversity and equity in talent pipelines.

Strategy 5: Establishing balanced public and private metrics and incentives as well as a process for developing programs of study within talent pipelines, that achieve results.

Strategy 6: Using an evidence-based continuous improvement process that can be used to identify and address root causes of the opportunity and achievement gaps among learner populations facing barriers to career and education advancement.

Recommended Actions in Using TPM to Improve CTE Systems and Processes

State and local CTE agencies and programs, and their employer partners, should take the following actions:

1. **Is TPM Right for You?** TPM is a useful framework to build mutual understanding and a shared language between CTE programs and their employer partners. It can be used to stand up new partnerships or to enhance existing ones (e.g., sector partnerships or advisory boards). It provides a structured process for getting employers organized and having them produce consistent and granular information about their workforce needs. It also provides them with tools to partner more effectively in designing, delivering, and improving a career pathway program.

   Work with business associations and economic and workforce development agencies to explore implementation of TPM within your region or throughout the state.

   Questions to Consider:

   a. As a CTE practitioner, what is your current employer engagement strategy and, if it is an advisory board, what is the role employers are expected to play and what professional role do participants represent?

   b. As an employer, have you been or are you currently involved in a CTE program, and what was that experience like?

   c. Would TPM be a useful framework to promote mutual understanding and shared language between CTE partners and employers, and if so, in what ways?

   d. How, if at all, is TPM different from what strategies you may have used in the past, or are currently using?

   e. Can TPM be a useful organizing framework for CTE partnerships at the state, regional, and/or local level?

   f. Is TPM right for you?

   g. If so, what additional information do you need to start your TPM journey, and would you benefit from organizing a TPM Orientation or participating in a **TPM Academy**?

2. Utilize TPM Best Practices and Tools. Use TPM best practices and tools to improve CTE systems and processes to build or expand high-quality CTE programs of study that achieve an ROI for all stakeholders, including diversity and equity goals.

Questions to Consider:

a. When planning a CTE program, what is the source of information used to align with employer demand, and is it sufficient?

b. Would TPM be a useful framework in the CLNA process, and, specifically, what information could TPM provide that would be useful to you?

c. Can TPM be helpful in designing and implementing a CTE program? Which TPM strategies in particular would you wish to leverage during this process?

d. In what ways can TPM be used to improve curriculum, credential, and assessment alignment as well as the design and delivery of work-based learning and career counseling?

e. Does TPM offer anything new in terms of thinking about performance management, ROI, and continuous improvement, and is that useful or relevant to you and your organization?

f. Is diversity, equity, and inclusion a priority for your program or organization and in what ways can TPM be used to address that priority?

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