



CAEL
Linking Learning and Work



CONTENT, COLLABORATION, COMMUNICATION, CAPACITY

PILLARS FOR STRATEGIC WORKFORCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT





As communities work to differentiate themselves in a competitive global economy, the need for alignment between economic and workforce development has never been more important. Successful communities are building this alignment pro-actively and through a coordinated, systematic approach. In our work with dozens of communities of all shapes and sizes, we see common alignment themes that communities must address as they work to create the alignment that drives economic growth. Every community can expand and focus **CONTENT**, increase **COLLABORATION**, improve **COMMUNICATION** and build **CAPACITY**. These elements – the “4 C’s” are what form the foundation of many of CAEL’s workforce alignment strategies.

The 4Cs framework helps communities of all sizes achieve economic impact regardless of industry focus or workforce and education assets. None of the C’s are domain of any particular stakeholder. Rather, they are organizing principles around which the range of stakeholders can rally – each lending resources and perspective to ensure that each “C” contributes to helping the entire Community to leverage its human capital to drive economic growth.

Let’s breakdown the components: Content, Collaboration, Communication and Capacity.

Content

Identify which industries and occupations are forecasted to grow. Match labor market information against the current mix of education and training programs available across the spectrum of skill development needs. Identify areas where programs can be developed or increased as well as specific competency areas that warrant further care and attention from stakeholders in the region – education, employers, workforce system and other civic leaders.



Recommendations

Focus on highly concentrated industries and associated occupations. To ensure the workforce is well positioned to support target sector growth and take advantage of new career opportunities, maintain and create a robust array of programs that are available to residents and the current workforce through aligned education and workforce training partners. Ensure there are pathways for higher level post-secondary education degrees. Equally important are high value technical certificates and credentials that are stackable within higher level degree pathways.

Highlight competencies that apply across specific industries and occupations. Businesses prefer and communities need resilient workers who can apply learning in a number of contexts. Whether focusing on cognitive or non-cognitive (soft) skills, transferability is key. Even industry-specific programming can highlight cross-industry capabilities.

What Can You Do?



- Align to Target Industries
- Identify New Program Development
- Highlight Needed Program Modifications
- Increase Education Access
- Match Skills to Existing and Emerging Jobs

Communication

A skilled and ready workforce is only valuable if employers are aware of where to find qualified candidates. Similarly, abundant job and career opportunities are only valuable if your population is aware of them. Increasing awareness of both skilled candidate pools and skill development opportunities will help link people to opportunities and businesses to people. Strong communication efforts ensure that businesses and residents understand the opportunities available and how to make the connections. It also helps to engage the various leaders with a stake in talent development.



Recommendations

Visualize the Pipeline. Inventory and strengthen connections between companies who are hiring and skilled candidates coming out of education and workforce training. This includes systems for company partnerships with training providers around career opportunities and hiring processes for recent and future graduates.

Implement a Career Awareness Campaign. Showcase career opportunities at local businesses through public service announcements and outreach campaigns. Make information accessible and easy to understand for today's mobile learner.

Show AND Tell. Promotional efforts are important, but first-hand experience is invaluable. Increase opportunities for students, workers, instructors, and other influencers to understand the reality of key jobs and careers and dispel myths and outdated perceptions that may keep talent from engaging with key sectors.

Highlight cross-sector competencies. Workers in legacy or stagnant industries may be well-prepared for target sector jobs and education/training programs, but may not perceive themselves to be ready or able. Increase the efficiency of your labor market by defining and communicating skills crosswalks from one industry to another.

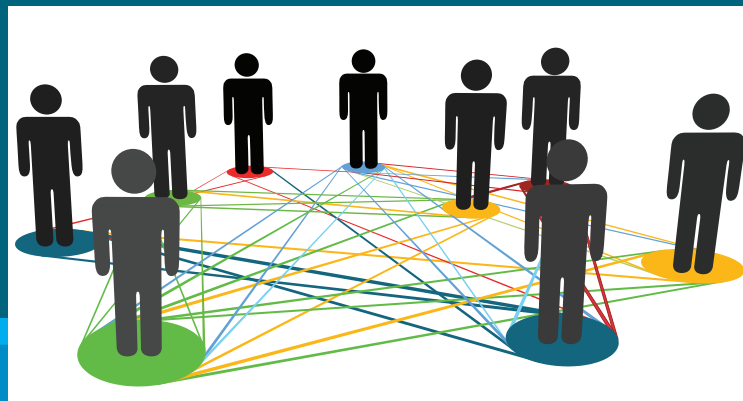
What Can You Do?

- Increase Employer Awareness of Candidate Pools
- Increase Career Awareness
- Highlight Skill Development Opportunities
- Pave Pathways to Success
- Address Sector Specific and Foundational Skills



Collaboration

Across regions there are numerous efforts, groups and initiatives underway with a mission to support the health and well-being of the local economy, the workforce pipeline and the education and training system. However alignment and collaboration amongst these partners is key to ensuring that each effort is delivering efficient and maximized value to residents and firms in the region.



Recommendations

Create unified regional industry and education round tables. Reduce time demand and increase the impact of business engagement by unifying and coordinating industry round tables to provide labor market demand intelligence for all educational and workforce development efforts. Regular, focused industry input, will identify if and where the community may be over-producing some competencies while ignoring others. Industry learnings can be leveraged by the public high school system, tech centers, community colleges, state universities and other public or Chamber-led workforce efforts.

Develop a clearinghouse of regional education and workforce focused efforts and initiatives. Identify and document each effort to encourage transparency of all education, training, workforce and employer supported initiatives currently underway. By identifying the objectives of each initiative, the leaders in talent development will have a better understanding of how to increase their collaboration, leverage limited capacity and limit duplicative efforts. Make this information publicly available to break down any perceived

or actual “turf-ism” across talent development leaders in education, industry and civic sectors.

Collaborate on regional funding requests, engagement of the philanthropic community. Unify philanthropic education requests from the region. Create an inventory of philanthropic dollars coming into the region to better aggregate education and skill development requests and support.

Localize services to address specific barriers. Build the talent pool by assisting with career progression or transition into the workforce and associated skill development opportunities by providing specific services to effectively serve unique populations.

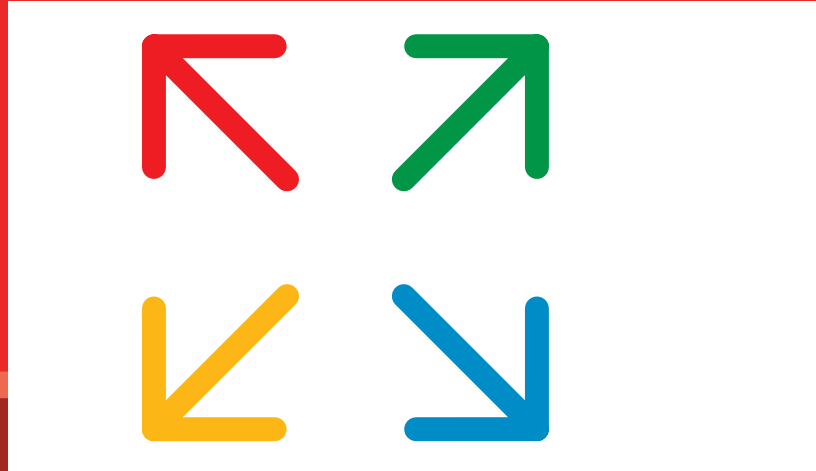
What Can You Do?



- Connect Industry and Education
- Drive Centralized Sharing
- Centralize Intermediary Focus
- Create Funding Collaboratives

Capacity

Sustaining economic growth requires communities to address capacity within workforce and education alignment. This starts with recalibrating how certain programs, services and initiatives are currently structured as well as providing additional resources to expand capacity in successful programs. A community economic and workforce alignment success is ultimately predicated on their capacity to strategically resource and connect the key workforce and education assets with growing companies in target industries.



Recommendations

Enhance career services, networking and job placement. Provide career services within the elementary, middle and high school locations to create a stronger connection between the population and the labor market. The local K-12 school system and other non-higher education venues are places where residents feel comfortable.

Increase non-traditional students' and working learners' access to education and training. By engaging individuals who are not typical students, communities can expand the range of talent available to current and prospective employers. Focused outreach, adult-friendly scheduling, distance learning options, creative financing, and recognition of work-based and experiential learning can help more residents build skills and increase their market value. From this you can increase access for the veteran population, working adults, career changers, dislocated workers and those whose careers have stalled for lack of a postsecondary credential.

Invest in supportive services and outreach efforts to increase labor participation rates. Increase access to businesses by focusing on under-served neighborhood areas and invest in areas where transportation is a significant barrier to employment. Incentivize small and large companies to promote and develop ride sharing programs for commuting to work.

Focus investment in key segments of your labor pool. Some populations may represent opportunities for increasing the talent supply but face barriers to employment. Addressing those barriers may be more affordable in the long run.

What Can You Do?

- Create a Partnership Structure
- Support Champions
- Increase Articulation Opportunities
- Develop Prior Learning Focus





CAEL partners with economic development professionals in communities across the country. If your region is looking to better align workforce and education to support industry growth, CAEL can help.

Contact CAEL for

- Local and regional workforce/economic development strategy
- Assessment of education/industry alignment
- Mapping target sector career pathways
- Target sector skills profiles
- Sector-based workforce initiatives
- Fundraising for workforce efforts
- Community-wide education and training asset inventory
- Target population initiatives (mature workers, career changers, etc.)

For more information, please contact:

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