

OURS TO SOLVE TOGETHER

Best practices in employer engagement
from American Rescue Plan programs

The Project on Workforce at Harvard Summer Fellowship Series

This report is a product of the Project on Workforce's Summer Fellowship Program, a short-term research and policy opportunity for Harvard graduate students and recent alumni from the Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard Business School, and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Summer fellows are placed in interdisciplinary, cross-school project teams over the course of the summer and complete projects focused on pressing policy or operational challenges at the intersection of education, labor markets, and workforce development. The Fellowship Program also provides students with opportunities for professional development and engagement with staff and faculty at the Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy, the Managing the Future of Work Project at Harvard Business School, and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The views expressed in this report are the sole responsibility of the Summer Fellows and are not meant to represent the views of the Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard University, or the Economic Development Agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce.

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About the Project on Workforce at Harvard

The Project on Workforce is an interdisciplinary, collaborative project between the Harvard Kennedy School's Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy, the Harvard Business School Managing the Future of Work Project, and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The Project produces and catalyzes basic and applied research at the intersection of education and labor markets for leaders in business, education, and policy. The Project's research aims to help shape a postsecondary system of the future that creates more and better pathways to economic mobility and forges smoother transitions between education and careers. Learn more at www.pw.hks.harvard.edu.

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Executive Summary

In many regions, a disconnect exists between employers and regional workforce systems. Far too many workforce training programs are misaligned with the skills sought by employers. Conversely, employers do not know “what good looks like” when engaging with workforce systems and training programs. In this tight labor market, many employers are seeking skilled talent. Yet, they fail to work with workforce systems to create effective upskilling programs that meet their needs.

This report seeks to clarify how regional workforce entities and employers can better work together. The Economic Development Administration’s (EDA) recent American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) competitions have provided plentiful examples of excellent employer partnership models. We highlight learnings from the regional workforce training system pools of the Good Jobs Challenge (GJC) and Build Back Better Regional Challenge (BBBRC). After analyzing applications, incorporating outside research, and conducting stakeholder interviews, we highlighted some of the best practices in employer engagement and summarized them into a “playbook” for the EDA.

The most effective partnerships have successfully shifted the employer mindset in their region. This change entails a switch from a transactional perspective of the labor market — “what talent is available” — to a true partnership in which employers are involved and invested in talent development — “ours to solve together.” With this perspective shift as a north star for organizations, we identified five best practices for both workforce entities and employers to drive towards this goal:

- 1) Understand the regional economic context
- 2) Assess employer demand
- 3) Secure strong commitments
- 4) Build and implement employer-driven training models
- 5) Support workers across ‘the last mile’

These five recommendations are somewhat sequential, but successful partnerships have elements

incorporated throughout all three phases of the project (System Development, Program Design, and Program Implementation). While regional workforce training systems and employers are the intended audiences for this playbook, we hope the content educates the broader field on innovative ways to impact how employers engage with workforce development. This report summarizes learnings and recommendations for each best practice.

Introduction

Background

In 2021, Congress passed the American Rescue Plan to build resilient regional economies for future economic shocks. This law provided \$3 billion to the Economic Development Administration which allocated the funds to support more transformational investments across the country as well as community-led and equitable economic development¹.

The Good Jobs Challenge and Build Back Better Regional Challenge are two of EDA's six innovative programs from ARPA.

Grant Competitions

The Good Jobs Challenge (GJC)

The Good Jobs Challenge made \$500 million available to help train Americans for good jobs by developing and strengthening regional workforce training systems and sector partnerships². These systems and partnerships will create and implement industry-driven training programs to connect unemployed, underemployed, or under-skilled workers to existing and emerging job openings. Ultimately, these systems are designed to train workers with the skills to secure quality jobs that provide good pay, benefits, and growth opportunities, such as a union job³.

Build Back Better Regional Challenge (BBBRC)

The Build Back Better Regional Challenge will allocate \$1 billion to support a group of complementary regional projects to recover from the coronavirus pandemic and increase resilience⁴. Grant activities to support these regional growth clusters can include planning, infrastructure development, innovation and entrepreneurship, workforce training, access to capital, and more. Activities are expected to begin quickly, leverage existing plans and resources, and engage broadly with regional industry, community, and civic partners.

The Good Jobs Challenge and the Build Back Better Regional Challenge are similar in that they both

have a workforce development component in the application. Recipients of this funding successfully address how to align regional workforce development needs with employer demand.

The Challenge

While these innovative efforts are promising, it is vital to underscore and prepare for the challenges these programs may face in the implementation phase. Research shows that employer-based workforce training models play an instrumental role in increasing employment and earnings for participants⁵. For many decades, the public workforce system has sought to engage employers. In 2014, federal policymakers passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as a direct way to stress greater employer and workforce development collaboration, establish a metric structure to meet employer needs, and provide financial resources to ease the financial burden on employers⁶.

Despite these efforts, lack of employer engagement continues to persist for the following reasons:

- *[Resource intensive]* Employers are hesitant to commit time, effort, and money to efforts they perceive as inefficient. When an organization is disorganized, services are poor, or require too much of the employer's time, it inevitably prevents the creation of a sustainable relationship. Employers will not see value in engaging and would rather not collaborate if it is resource intensive.
- *[Lack of trust]* Employers are wary of working with the government or nonprofits. When many stakeholders are at play, each has its own organizational culture and expertise, creating an information gap. Consequently, employers and stakeholders are not speaking the same language when exchanging the information needed to push efforts forward with the identified program.
- *[Scaling]* There is a mismatch between employer capacity (demand) versus stakeholders' participant pool (supply).
- *[Timing]* It is hard for employers to predict and plan for future needs, especially regarding long-term training.

- *[Communication]* While there is an increase in interest to participate in workforce development programs by employer leadership, there is often a disconnect between employers themselves, from the executive to the front-line workers. The lack of internal employer communication regarding the interest thus reduces the odds of permanently changing the internal hiring process to reflect the population workforce development agencies serve.
- *[Biases]* Employers are skeptical of working with target populations (e.g., people with no college education, people with criminal records, and youth, among other demographics).
- *[Competition]* Employers are dubious of working with each other and thus may not want to share curricula and information with the competition. Rather than work with the public workforce system, employers prefer to spend their resources to train in-house.

ARPA grants help to eliminate the need for employer costs to participate by providing the funds needed for each project. However, because these employer engagement issues persist, regional workforce entities (or system entity/backbone organizations) must address these challenges to engage employers effectively. This leads to our two guiding questions: **1) how can regional workforce training systems best engage employers? and 2) how can employers better understand “what good looks like” when engaging with workforce systems and training programs?**

Methodology

We conducted our research in several phases. We first conducted a literature review focused on employer engagement and public-private partnerships in the workforce sector. This provided a solid grounding for understanding the high-level best practices to include in our playbook.

In the second phase, we sought to understand the government’s perspective on employer engage-

ment, specifically how the Economic Development Administration defined what good looked like. We reviewed and analyzed internal documents used for the competition. Finally, we conducted 12 interviews with EDA staff connected to the Good Jobs Challenge and/or Build Back Better Regional Challenge grants.

In the third research phase, we reviewed selected ARPA applications that the EDA identified as outstanding. After identifying patterns amongst the standout applications, we synthesized these learnings with our hypothesized best practices from the literature scan to create a revised list of recommendations. In our final research step, we validated these recommendations with experts in the field, consulting with over 12 subject matter experts across academia, the nonprofit sector, and private companies.

Key Findings and Recommendations

The Goal: True Partnership

Throughout our research and conversations with experts in the field, a consistent goal of shifting employer mindset emerged. Historically, employers have viewed workforce development programs as pipelines for talent when needed. The responsibility of developing talent fell upon education institutions and government programs. This transactional perspective of labor markets leads to suboptimal outcomes for workers and employers. Without sufficient employer investment or input, training programs struggle to equip workers with the skills that employers need.

To achieve more demand-driven workforce development, employers must play a more active role in workforce development. This includes investing financial and time resources, but critically it also includes a mindset shift from a transactional perspective of the labor market — “what talent is available” — to a true partnership in which employers are involved and invested in talent development — “ours

to solve together.” Driving towards this mindset shift can be seen as an overall recommendation of the report, with each best practice supporting this goal.

Building from this overarching goal, our playbook recommended 5 best practices to achieve excellent employer engagement. These practices are at a high-level sequential, but each should be leveraged throughout the project’s cycle.

Below we include summaries of each of the recommended best practices described in the playbook and a checklist for system integrators and employers.

Best Practice #1: Understand the Regional Economic Development Context

Understanding regional workforce needs and analyzing the economic development context in which workforce programs will operate is critical to a successful program. Alignment with the region’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or other comprehensive regional planning document allows workforce programs to lean on the region’s strengths and provide targeted assistance. Understanding which sectors in the region are poised for growth and how better talent pipelines can enable this growth. Doing this economic analysis is a powerful first step in designing demand-driven programs.

Recommendations for regional workforce providers to consider:

- **Familiarize yourself with existing analysis of the region.** A good place to start is reading the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or an equivalent EDA-accepted regional economic development strategy. You can locate your local economic development district on the EDA website [here](#). Another great resource is published academic literature by local universities. For example, the University of California, Riverside, has a [Center for Economic Forecasting & Development](#) department that publishes a variety of forecasts and analyses pertinent to the region’s em-

ployment, industry trends, and real estate markets, among other topics.

- **Assess the region’s economic state** (e.g., level of distress, unemployment) and high-level employer hiring needs (e.g., which industries are in-demand, where there are vacancies, and what types of worker roles exist). Through sources like [Poverty Persistent Counties List](#) and [EDA StatsAmerica](#), the regional workforce training system underscores how COVID has worsened the region’s economic and unemployment rates. Furthermore, the regional workforce training system strengthens its case by highlighting the regions as [Qualified Opportunity Zone \(QOZs\)](#) or economically distressed communities.
- **Research landscape to identify regional needs, demographics, and employment trends** (an industry association can assist here). With this information, the regional workforce training system is positioned to ensure equity and representation are at the forefront of the project’s outcomes. This is detailed through concrete actions, regional economic growth, and its benefits to underserved populations, racial minorities, and women. Additionally, do the regional needs, demographics, and employment trends promise jobs that are attainable and well-paid quality jobs?
- **Define target industry sector(s) to formalize networks.** First the regional workforce training system must describe how and why those sector(s) have been identified. Specifically, providers must demonstrate that the chosen sector(s) are strongly linked to the region’s overall economic growth potential. Once the target industry is defined, formalizing networks within the sector (sectoral partnerships) is next on the priority list. Using the region’s existing assets and past successful outcomes to create opportunities. For example, identifying a key stakeholder (like philanthropy or employer) who has invested or continues to invest in the area will help articulate achievable program goals.
- **Strategize for long-term sustainable fund-**

ing sources. Align and integrate plans with other public or private investments currently ongoing or planned for the community and region for the long-term (e.g., federal, state, and local resources, as well as private, philanthropic, and university resources).

- **Operationalize a structure.** By intentionally setting up an operationalized structure in the early stages, the Regional Workforce Training System will develop deep and lasting partnerships with the employers. One way to approach this is by [hosting](#) industry-specific briefings where employers can expand their networks into the community, access political value, meet potential customers, and learn strategic information. In addition, employers can provide insights on the type of structure that is most valuable, such as the membership model, yearly workforce working groups, or other forms.

Recommendations for employers to consider:

- **Familiarize yourself with existing analyses of the region** to understand industry trends and the role of other employers in the region. Reading the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or an equivalent EDA-accepted regional economic development strategy is a good place to start. You can locate your local economic development district on the EDA website [here](#). As mentioned above, local universities might produce helpful and relevant academic literature.
- **Ensure your company's mission and strategic plan align with the region's workforce development strategy.** Employers (CEO + HR lead) should consider having the mission and strategic plan explicitly written on all their internal and external facing material, establish a culture where every employee pushes for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts, and set up a recurring expense line on their budget to cover DEI and workforce development efforts. For more information on how to address this, refer to [MLT Black Equity at Work Certification](#).

- **Champion parts of the economic development strategy that are relevant to your needs.** By championing relevant components of the economic development strategy, employers signal to the public system where to focus. One example of employer championship is through writing a letter of support that includes specific, relevant, and bold commitments to action (Best Practice #3 Secure Strong Commitments has more information on this).
- **Inject financial capital in areas of your need.** Matching existing financial resource streams via corporate donations can help support elements of regional workforce systems aligned with the employer's needs. A financial commitment can draw attention to the region by potentially differentiating the region to become a global leader in its sector. When employers invest private money, it enhances the likelihood of matching public investments, thus creating the multiplier effect.

Best Practice #2: Assess Employer Demand

A methodical approach to understanding employer demand is critical to building workforce programs aligned with employer needs. The regional economic analysis provides an important context, but individual employer hiring needs will drive much of the design of training programs.

Recommendations for regional workforce providers to consider:

- **Conduct a landscape analysis** of important regional employers and map out target employers and critical staff to interface with.
- **Establish roles within the organization focused on managing employer relations.** Once you have identified which employers to focus on, establish roles within the organization that specifically manage relationships with employers. Employer relationship managers champion the employer's voice in program design and can provide regular updates as hiring needs change. It

is often useful to divide employer responsibility by geography or sector so that each relationship manager can dedicate sufficient time to understanding their target employers' needs.

- **Build relationships with employers and hiring managers.** Start to build relationships by hosting events or a summit that includes various firms in the target sector. Gaining executive buy-in is important, but it is also important to build a strong relationship with hiring managers who can provide real-time insights into hiring pipelines.
- **Speak the same language.** As much as possible, take a private-sector perspective in understanding the goals and needs of the employers you are working with. Employers often use industry terminology and different styles or norms in the workplace. They often have specific goals in support of an overall goal of creating a more efficient profitable business. Unlike a government entity that places more importance on documentation and process, employers may prefer to operate at a different speed. Leveraging employer managers that are familiar with the industry or have worked in the private sector can help avoid miscommunication and speed up the process of understanding demand.
- **Execute a multichannel approach** that can lead to a more in-depth understanding of employer needs. Use several means to collect data, including focus groups, surveys, and convenings.
- **Assess employer needs often.** Continue to gather data about any changes in hiring needs throughout the program lifecycle. Keep lines of communication open and readjust when necessary.

Recommendations for employers to consider:

- **Get involved early.** Participate in industry events, meetings, and surveys. The more active the employer's voice in the process, the more aligned the training program will be with the employer's needs. Identify and

attend local conferences and events such as city-level convenings and chambers of commerce meetings. Consider hosting events to promote your needs and network with training providers and other employers with similar hiring needs.

- **Take stock of your needs now and in the future.** Projections regarding future demand will help the workforce providers accurately design programs to meet your needs when trainees are ready. Understand the timeline of the training programs in your region.
- **Be as specific as possible.** Alignment on which roles you need to hire for and which discrete skills employees will need will lead to better-targeted training programs. Consider which technical certifications may be needed, the job titles of the roles, how many roles are needed, and across what time frame. Creating job descriptions, career progressions, and other variables are vital to formulating good quality jobs that align with state, national and international job market trends.
- **Paint as complete a picture of the job offering as possible,** including salary, benefits, and what wraparound services might be needed for employees to be successful. Think through details of needed roles, including conditional vs. permanent hires, salary, PTO, 401k, and career mobility.
- **Consider eliminating unnecessary degree requirements** that may create barriers that exclude valuable talent.
- **Continue to regularly assess talent needs** and communicate with employer relationship managers.

Best Practice #3: Secure Strong Commitments

Many ARPA regional workforce training systems and awardees succeeded in bringing stakeholders together and engaging partners in developing, specifying, and expanding commitments. Building

strong commitments is important for both regional workforce training systems and employers in order to create a shared vision of success.

Recommendations for regional workforce training systems to consider:

- **Choose which stakeholders to prioritize.** The identity of the commitment-maker can matter significantly: senior leaders with the authority to ensure follow-through lend commitments credibility. A commitment from a CEO or University President carries more authority than a statement made on an organization's general letterhead. Commonly, regional workforce training systems engage stakeholders through letters of commitment and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). Strong commitments include signatures by HR directors or training managers and CEOs to create more strategic buy-in.
- **Set clear expectations on the population and target demographics.**
- **Align financial incentives with training goals.** The most effective commitments are those that leverage a financial stake. Examples include building the program/anticipated hires into the budget or line of business or an upfront financial commitment to the program.
- **The more specific the commitment, the better.** The most competitive applications included specific commitments to action (as opposed to a boilerplate letter of support) that draw on an organization's strengths in support of an overall strategic vision. Impactful commitments depend on the institution's unique assets. Standout letters included specific commitments to the number of employees hired, the types of skills needed, and the timeline for hiring. The best commitments are discrete regarding tangible impact, evidence, and success metrics over a timeline.
- **Identify the employer's capacity to engage in the project.** Understand their budget, the best model to support their needs, and the resources they can con-

tribute to financial support and employee engagement.

- **Secure letters of commitment and MOUs.** Provide example language around the type and scope of commitments to assist employers in drafting letters.
- **Identify goal metrics,** which are ideally aligned with the key metrics that the employer tracks. Include metrics related to hiring but also retention and career progress after hire.
- **Assess commitment follow through,** including employer funding (if conditional), concrete hires, and employee success after hire.

Recommendations for employers to consider:

- **Consider the scope and scale of your hiring needs.**
- **Consider the types of commitments your firm might be able to make.** Commitments can vary from more formal commitments to hire (hiring a specific number of workers who successfully complete the training program) to more conditional commitments (hiring conditional on successful completion of the training program and demonstration of skill acquisition). Employers can also consider committing to developing work and learn programs such as apprenticeships. The number and type of commitment can vary by firm size, as small firms may not have the resources to support multiple commitment avenues. Lower lift commitments can include assisting in developing curriculum, providing financial aid, or donating employee time.
- **Align stakeholders around hiring needs and goals,** from your talent team to your executive suite.
- **Identify ways the company can provide flexibility to participants** such as working part-time, educational stipends, and providing resources such as childcare or transportation.
- **Sign letters of commitment and MOUs to**

formalize the relationship.

- **Assess existing commitments and evaluate additional commitments.**

Best Practice #4: Build and Implement Employer-Driven Training Models

Once the regional workforce training system has confirmed employer commitment, the next step is to co-create a training program that produces skilled workers. The regional workforce training systems and employers must ensure that speaking the same language (refer to Best Practice #2 Assess Employer Demand) is at the forefront of the creation process. Not only does this create an employer-driven model approach, but it also elevates the employer engagement experience. We highlight best practices for both the regional workforce training systems and employers.

Recommendations for regional workforce training systems to consider:

- **Identify stakeholder staff (leads)** and role responsibilities to ensure the program implementation is seamless for both the employer and trainee. This lead will build relationships with employers/identified intermediaries.
- **Assign key players (including employer input) who build the ‘work and learn’ models** to immerse themselves in the employer’s line of work.
- **Map tasks to competencies.**
- **Develop an instructional plan** that determines what skills will be taught and where, what activities will be carried out, and what assessments may be needed.
- **Host frequent sessions** (for example, surveys, phone interviews, or focus groups) where employers can share their insights on what is working well and what is not.
- **Express the needs and challenges of local populations** so that employers tailor the ‘work and learn’ model to the targeted population

Recommendations for employers to consider:

- **Assign a subject matter expert** to every segment of the training program. This is best suited for an in-line manager/supervisor.
- **Define allocation of employer resources** to the training and ‘work and learn’ program best suited for their workforce demand.
- **Collectively determine the company’s strengths and weaknesses** in terms of resource capacity. Include decision-makers like the CEO, HR lead, in-line managers, and other key employer stakeholders.
- **Conduct a Beta test/pilot program**, if applicable.

Best Practice #5: Support Workers Across “The Last Mile”

Once employees are trained and hired, it is critical to support workers across the “last mile” and ensure they thrive on the job. Support from the moment they are given the offer letter, preparation for day one, onboarding support, soft skills training, and wrap-around services, among other factors, must be taken into consideration for employee success and employer retention.

Recommendations for regional workforce training systems to consider:

- **Use funds** to support and incorporate nonprofits and organizations that provide wraparound services.
- **Coach employers on new interview systems** focused on skill sets and soft skills.
- **Create financial models** to provide incentives for learning while earning (e.g., tuition assistance, scholarships, stipends, paid work, leave to learn).
- **Meet the employer where they are** by visiting local companies to promote the program as a solution to the skills gap.
- **Find credit options** for the work and learn

models.

- **Update the product and process improvements regularly.** Actively update the materials to align with employer feedback and changes in the work and learn models. Other practices entail making the content available in multiple formats to expand how the training is used within the industry.

Recommendations for employers to consider:

- **Determine if job needs require basic skills** such as reading, math, computer proficiency, and English fluency.
- **Identify in the budget if the company can provide financial incentives** for participants (e.g., tuition assistance, scholarships, stipends, employee loans, paid work, leave to learn). For sustainability, ensure this budget allocation is not a one-time but an ongoing budget expense.
- **Work closely with wrap-around service providers** for as long as possible, recommended 3 - 6 months, as the participant transitions into the new role.
- **Create an equitable hiring/onboarding process** by removing criminal record questions, “surprise drug test” exams, high school or college degree requirements, and/or credit score inquiries.
- **Implement a career progression track program.**
- **Formalize multi-mentorship programs and allocate a budget for mentorship activities** such as lunch outings and team building. Provide mentors at every level. Depending on size, industry, and capacity, some mentorship programs can look like the following:
 - ***Onboarding mentor:*** help with onboarding questions, company culture, day-to-day activities, and wrap-around services.
 - ***Career coach:*** work with the new hire on a career progression game plan and connect the new hire to

programs and services that can assist with childcare and transportation, etc.

- ***In-line manager/ supervisor mentor:*** teach the new hire about the line of service.
- ***C-suite leadership mentor:*** provide professional development advice, and invite to meetings and networking events that may be beneficial to the new hire, among other activities.
- ***Financial counseling:*** helps employees better manage their income and expenses and build personal wealth.
- **C-suite/leadership engagement** with new hires early in their onboarding.
- **Require more stable schedules for employees.**
- **Provide benefits** like family and sick leave, 401k, vacation days, and health insurance.
- **Continuous program improvement.** Conduct employee focus groups, surveys (example tools [Culture Amp](#)), and/or interviews (how-to guide [here](#)) to collect data, identify trends and invest in a holistic **approach over the long term.**
- **Implement performance recognition and rewards.**
- **Minimize performance evaluation and promotion barriers.**

Summary Matrix on Each Best Practice by System Phase

Best Practice by Phase	[Phase 1] System Development		[Phase 2] Program Design		[Phase 3] Program Implementation	
	Regional Workforce Training Systems	Employers	Regional Workforce Training Systems	Employers	Regional Workforce Training Systems	Employers
Best Practice #1: Understand the Regional Economic Development Context	Familiarize yourself with existing analysis of the region	Familiarize yourself with existing analysis of the region (from the employer lens)	Define target industry sector(s) to formalize networks	Inject financial capital		
	Assess the region's economic state	Ensure there is alignment between company and regional mission	Strategize for long-term sustainable funding sources	Champion economic development efforts.		
	Conduct a research landscape analysis		Operationalize a structure			
Best Practice #2: Assess Employer Demand	Conduct a research landscape analysis	Get involved early	Build relationships with employers hiring managers	Be as specific.	Assess employer needs often	Continue to regularly assess talent needs
	Establish roles focused on managing employer relations	Take stock of your needs now and in the future	Speak the same language	Consider eliminating unnecessary degree requirements		
			Execute a multichannel approach	Paint as complete a picture of job offering		
Best Practice #3: Secure Strong Commitments	Choose which stakeholders to prioritize	Consider the scope and scale of hiring needs.	Identify the employer's capacity	Identify opportunities of flexibility	Assess commitment follow through	
	Set clear expectations	Consider the types of commitments	Secure letter of commitment and MOUs	Sign letters of commitment and MOUs		
	Align employer incentives & leverage a financial stake	Align stakeholders	Identify goal metrics	Assess existing commitments		
	The more specific the commitment, the better					
Best Practice #4: Build and Implement Employer-Driven Training Models	Identify stakeholder staff (leads)		Assign key players who build the 'work and learn' models + employer input	Assign a subject matter expert		Conduct a Beta test/pilot program
			Map tasks to competencies	Define allocation of employer resources		
			Develop an instructional plan	Collectively choose a work based learning model		
			Host frequent sessions			
Best Practice #5: Support Workers Across "The Last Mile"	Use grant funds to provide wrap around services	Determine if job needs require basic skills	Coach employers on new interview systems	Set a reoccurring budget allocation to the programs	Update the product and process improvements on a regular basis	Work closely with wrap-around service providers
	Meet the employer where they are at		Create financial models			Create an equitable hiring/onboarding process
			Find credit options for the work and learn models.			Implement a career progression track program
						Formalize multi-mentorship program
						C-suite/leadership engagement
						Require more stable schedules
						Provide benefits
						Continuous program improvement
						Implement performance recognition and rewards
					Minimize performance eval & promotion barriers	

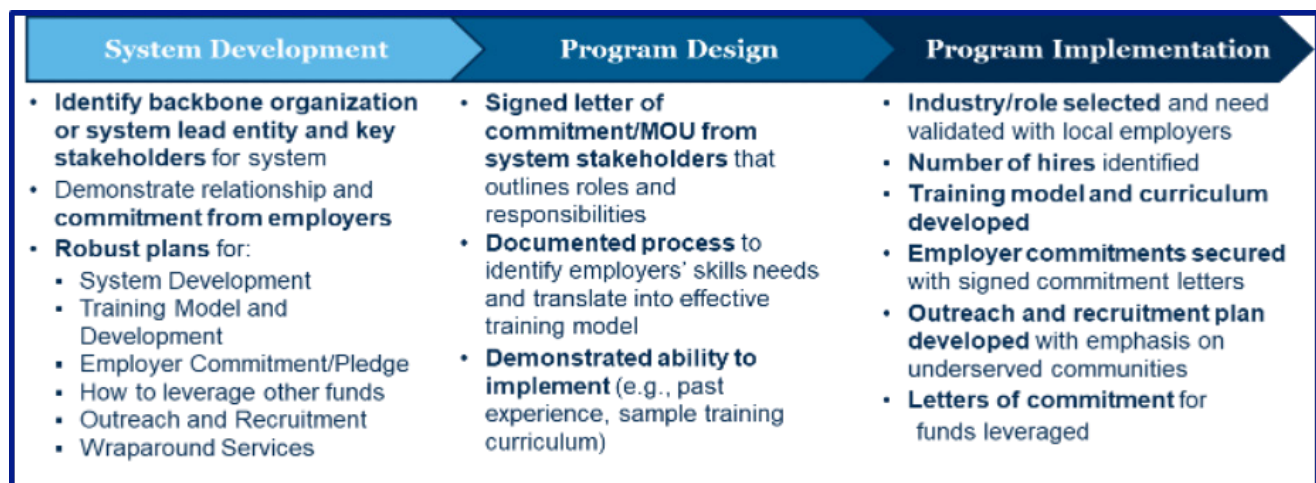
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Appendix

System Development Life Cycle Framework Metrics identified by the EDA team for the Good Jobs Challenge⁷



Benchmarks for the System Development Life Cycle by the Good Jobs Challenge⁸



Work-and-Learn Model Continuum⁹



Endnotes

- 1 <https://eda.gov/arpa/>
- 2 <https://eda.gov/arpa/good-jobs-challenge/>
- 3 <https://eda.gov/arpa/good-jobs-challenge/faq/>
- 4 <https://eda.gov/arpa/build-back-better/>
- 5 https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/76286/2000552-the-goals-and-dimensions-of-employer-engagement-in-workforce-development-programs_1.pdf
- 6 https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/76286/2000552-the-goals-and-dimensions-of-employer-engagement-in-workforce-development-programs_1.pdf
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