

Notes on Promising Strategies Shared by Adult Career Pathways Mini-Training Institute Participants

Compiled by Hope Cotner during roundtable discussions

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Section 1: Targeted Populations

Following the discussion about student expectations of the use of high-tech tools in the classroom, our colleagues from South Carolina – Michael King and David Stout – mentioned an “Integrating Technology” course they have offered specifically for adult education instructors.

Section 2: Components of the ACP Model

During our discussion of where you focus your state resources within the seven component model, our colleague from New York, Robert Purga, mentioned his state’s success with a case manager approach that enables them to “connect the dots” and guide adults through the maze of available support services and academic programs. Barry Shaffer from Minnesota mentioned online course resources from Mindquest Academy [<http://www.mindquestacademy.org>] that they have used successfully to serve the transitional needs of adult learners.

Section 3: Employer Engagement

During our discussion of the community engagement process, it was agreed that the best chance for CEO participation in local industry forums is for other CEOs to extend the invitation. Randy Whitfield from North Carolina cited her experience with Levi Strauss and the group concurred that invitations from the community college president or from a company CEO who has already made a commitment to career pathways can ensure the forum message is read and seen as a priority.

Section 4: Recruitment/Assessment/Career Ladders

Offering courses at times convenient for adult learners was a key issue throughout our roundtable conversation on section 4 issues. Providing opportunities for career exploration was also seen as critical. Our colleague from Arizona, Karen Liersch, mentioned her state’s positive experience with an action research project in which GED candidates were required to complete a career exploration component. She cited an improved transition rate from 8 to 40%.

Section 5: Student Support

In our discussions of student support, Maureen Whelan from Delaware mentioned her state’s student organization who had organized successfully to garner political and legislative support for the needs of adult learners. One of our colleagues mentioned their “Accolades” program in which a board member lobbied for support and establishment of a series of stackable CNA certificates for incumbent workers after his personal experience with local nursing home staff. Barry Shaffer of Minnesota mentioned their use of EL Civics funding to support career-focused, capacity-building activities. I’m fairly sure it was Karen Liersch who recommended the National College Transitions Network [<http://www.collegetransition.org>] as a good resource for ABE program models.