

Why Career Pathways?

- Restore Economic Competitiveness
 - Labor market projections on middle-skilled jobs
 - Reduce Income Inequality
 - Education pays
 - Fix the “Leaky Pipeline”
 - Current approaches leave too many without skills, credentials, or jobs
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What Do We Mean by Career Pathway Approaches?

The term “career pathway programs” refers to a clear sequence of education coursework and/or training credentials that:

- Are aligned with the skill needs of regional industries;
- Include secondary, adult education, and postsecondary education options;
- Include curricular and instructional strategies that contextualize learning;
- As appropriate, integrate education and training that combines occupational skills training with adult education services, give credit for prior learning, and accelerate advancement;
- Lead to the attainment of an industry-recognized degree or credential;
- Include academic and career counseling, and support services;
- Are organized to meet the particular needs of adults, with flexible and non-semester-based scheduling, and the innovative use of technology.

What Do We Mean By Career Pathway Approaches?

Career pathway systems make it easier for individuals to earn industry-recognized and academic credentials by:

- Connecting training, education, and employment systems;
 - Designing remedial and postsecondary around the needs of working learners; and,
 - Engaging employers in program design and curriculum development.
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The Six Key Elements



Six Key Elements of Career Pathway Systems

- Career pathway systems provide a clear sequence of education coursework or training credentials and have the following elements:

1. Build cross-agency partnerships & clarify roles
2. Identify industry sector or industry & engage employers
3. Design education & training programs
4. Identify funding needs & sources
5. Align policies & programs
6. Measure system change & performance



#1: Build Cross-Agency Partnerships and Clarify Roles

- Key cross-agency partners at the local and state levels are engaged to participate in the initiative.
 - Local team is formed to design, pilot, launch, and grow a local or regional career pathway system.
 - Partners are invited to design, craft, and implement a shared vision.
 - State team supports the local team with administrative policies and legislation to aid in local implementation and statewide growth. Senior state and regional leaders visibly support the initiative.
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#1: Build Cross-Agency Partnerships and Clarify Roles (cont.)

- Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and formalized.
 - Create a leadership or steering committee to guide the development process.
 - Clarify and formalize roles and responsibilities of the following:
 - Workforce system
 - Economic development system
 - Education system
 - Human service system
 - CBO's
 - Employers
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#2: Identify Industry Sector and Engage Employers

- Sectors and industries are selected and employers are engaged in the development of career pathways.
 - Determine labor market trends, skill development needs and opportunities, and employer preferences.
 - Select employers or industry representatives and plan how to pitch the initiative to them.
 - Plan how to work with employers in the different phases of the initiative (design, launch, operation, evaluation).
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#3: Design Education and Training Programs

- Career pathway programs provide a clear sequence of education courses and credentials that meet the skill needs of high-demand industries.
 - Design programs to accommodate individuals regardless of their skill level at the point of entry.
 - Design programs around high demand industries and career ladders that pay family-sustaining wages.
 - Support programs through state legislation and administrative policies for sustainability.
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#3: Design Programs for Adult Learners (cont.)

- **Key questions to ask: How will we . . .**
 - Incorporate & align secondary & post-secondary education elements?
 - Integrate & contextualize adult basic education & occupational skills training?
 - Chunk curricula into shorter programs of study?
 - Meet the need for flexible training & education options?
 - Include academic & CTE content in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression?
 - Integrate wrap-around services?
 - Ensure the program leads to an associate or baccalaureate degree or industry-recognized credentials or certificates at the postsecondary level?
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#4: Identify Funding Needs & Sources

- Necessary resources are raised and/or leveraged to develop and implement career pathway programs.
 - Identify resources needed to operate programs and core system components.
 - Program development
 - Professional development
 - Operating costs
 - Supportive services
 - Ensure state and local partners work together to raise and leverage funding from federal, state, local, and foundation sources.
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#4: Identify Funding Needs and Sources (cont.)

◆ Key questions to ask:

■ What are your funding needs?

- Curriculum development
- Professional development
- Operating costs
- Supportive services

■ What funding sources should you explore?

- WIA Titles I, II, & IV funds
 - Wagner-Peyser Act funds
 - Carl Perkins Act funds
 - TANF funds
 - State funds
 - Private foundations
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#5: Align Policies and Programs

- Federal, state, and local legislation or administrative policies promote career pathway development and implementation.
 - Local and state partners identify key policy and program changes and actions needed.
 - Partners actively coordinate efforts across the region and/or state and establish formal procedures to institutionalize system change.
 - Agencies and programs collaborate to provide professional development across organizations and systems.
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#5: Align Policies and Programs

(cont.)

□ Key questions to ask:

- How are career technical & academic programs linked (or not) at the community college? How can linkages be strengthened?
 - How does the eligible training provider list (ETPL) promote career pathway development?
 - How can One Stop and TANF service providers coordinate with each other in providing services?
 - What can be used to fund curriculum & professional development?
 - How can policymakers support the development of portable and stackable credentials?
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#6: Measure System Change and Evaluate Performance

- ❑ Track effect of policy changes and program designs on participant outcomes
 - ❑ Arrange data-sharing agreements with key partners and employers, as appropriate
 - ❑ Design systems for sharing performance information to support continuous learning and improvement
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Career Pathways: Six Elements

