

A New Path Forward: Place-Based Solutions for a Stronger Workforce Ecosystem

An Accelerator for America Playbook of Best Practices



ACCELERATOR
FOR AMERICA

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Today’s economy is rapidly changing and will require many workers to build on their existing skills or obtain new skills throughout the course of their careers... it is critical that [we] recognize the importance of workforce development in order for our country to remain competitive in the global economy.

[THEN U.S. SENATOR (D-CA)] VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS



Call to Action

America's current system of training, preparing, and matching workers with jobs has failed to evolve with the changing nature of work. Large segments of the population are low-skilled and increasingly likely to be chronically unemployed. At the same time, nearly half of all graduates of 4-year programs are overqualified for their jobs. This underemployment, partly attributable to employers' use of college degrees as a proxy for 21st-century skills, creates inefficiencies and costs for both businesses and workers. **Rapid technological advancement, unmatched by progress in our workforce development systems, has left us with both a shortage of workers and a shortage of jobs.**

For too long, workforce development has been driven by **supply**—training institutions have driven how workers are prepared for their jobs, leading to inefficiencies and mismatches between the skills that workers have and those that businesses need. **Now it is time for a demand-driven approach, with employers at the center of leading and decision making.**

This requires local leaders to drive coalition-building between employers and educators, make the business case for employer engagement, set up the infrastructure to connect training organizations with industry, collaborate with employer champions of change, and coordinate with K-12 schools, community colleges, nonprofits and local workforce agencies to maximize alignment and efficiency. Through partnerships between business and city governments, leaders must bring effective workforce-development reform and programming to communities across the country, especially for those Americans without college degrees.

It is not enough for teachers to instruct only on technical skills. Success in the modern workplace depends on soft skills as well—the lifelong skills that apply to all careers and that foster success and upward mobility in the workplace. Finally, our most vulnerable workers—those without the safety nets of generational wealth or college degrees—must receive assistance in the process of making career transitions. Without innovations in how we support our workers, unequal access to good jobs will continue to hinder inclusive economic growth.

The Future of Work is here, and without significant intervention from local leaders, it will widen the growing inequities facing vulnerable workers. COVID-19 only increases the urgency of this work. After months of un- or under-employment, workers will feel a heightened sense of urgency to return not only to work, but to good jobs—defined as those offering resistance to automation, a livable wage, and stability. Furthermore, the need for reform will not disappear when the immediate health and economic consequences of the pandemic are alleviated.

We call for swift and immediate action, driven by local leaders and stakeholders, to adopt the **Four Best Practice Areas** outlined in this playbook: **Put Employers in the Driver's Seat, Empower Workers with Durable Skills, Redefine Job Requirements, and Provide Guidance and Support for Workers** to create the economic conditions our communities so desperately need.



What is the Opportunity?

As of September 2020, an estimated 21.5 million workers nationwide had either become unemployed or had left the labor force because of the pandemic. More than half of these workers believe this change to their employment status will be permanent.

Though these economic shifts feel particularly salient and dramatic during this time, the nature of work has been changing—and dramatically so—for decades. Technology and globalization have altered business and labor needs, both creating new jobs and destroying old ones. Research estimates that at present, nearly half of America’s jobs are vulnerable to advancements in technology, a figure that will only continue to increase.



Four decades ago, for most U.S. workers, the trajectory of productivity growth diverged from the trajectory of wage growth. This decoupling had baleful economic and social consequences: low-paid, insecure jobs held by non-college workers; low participation rates in the labor force; weak upward mobility across generations; and festering earnings and employment disparities among races that have not substantially improved in decades. While new technologies have contributed to these poor results, these outcomes were not an inevitable consequence of technological change, nor of globalization, nor of market forces. Similar pressures from digitalization and globalization affected most industrialized countries, and yet their labor markets fared better.

“THE WORK OF THE FUTURE: BUILDING BETTER JOBS IN AN AGE OF INTELLIGENT MACHINES,” AN MIT WORK OF THE FUTURE REPORT



For jobs that require training but not a college degree—known as **middle skill roles**—there is a 10% gap between demand and supply of appropriately skilled workers. This is no small matter—52% of current jobs in the United States qualify as “middle skill,” and this gap is costing our economy an estimated \$2.5 trillion a year.

The negative effects of this gap, paired with our lagging workforce systems, disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, with Black, Latinx, and Native American workers significantly more susceptible to unemployment and low wages from automation. Of workers without college degrees, white workers are about 75% more likely than workers of color to hold “good jobs,” defined as those that are stable, resistant to automation, and that pay a good wage. This trend is the result of biases in hiring and on-the-job mentoring, in addition to disparities in access to higher education: 85% of Latinx workers and 80% Black workers do not have a college degree.

Fortunately, innovative leaders and programs are making meaningful progress in shaping workforce systems that prepare workers better and more equitably for today's business needs. These workers, equipped with training to match the needs of today's workplace, can be placed in persistently hard-to-fill positions, which represent the fastest growing area of employment in American businesses. These workers then enjoy the financial and professional benefits of better training and matching to good jobs.

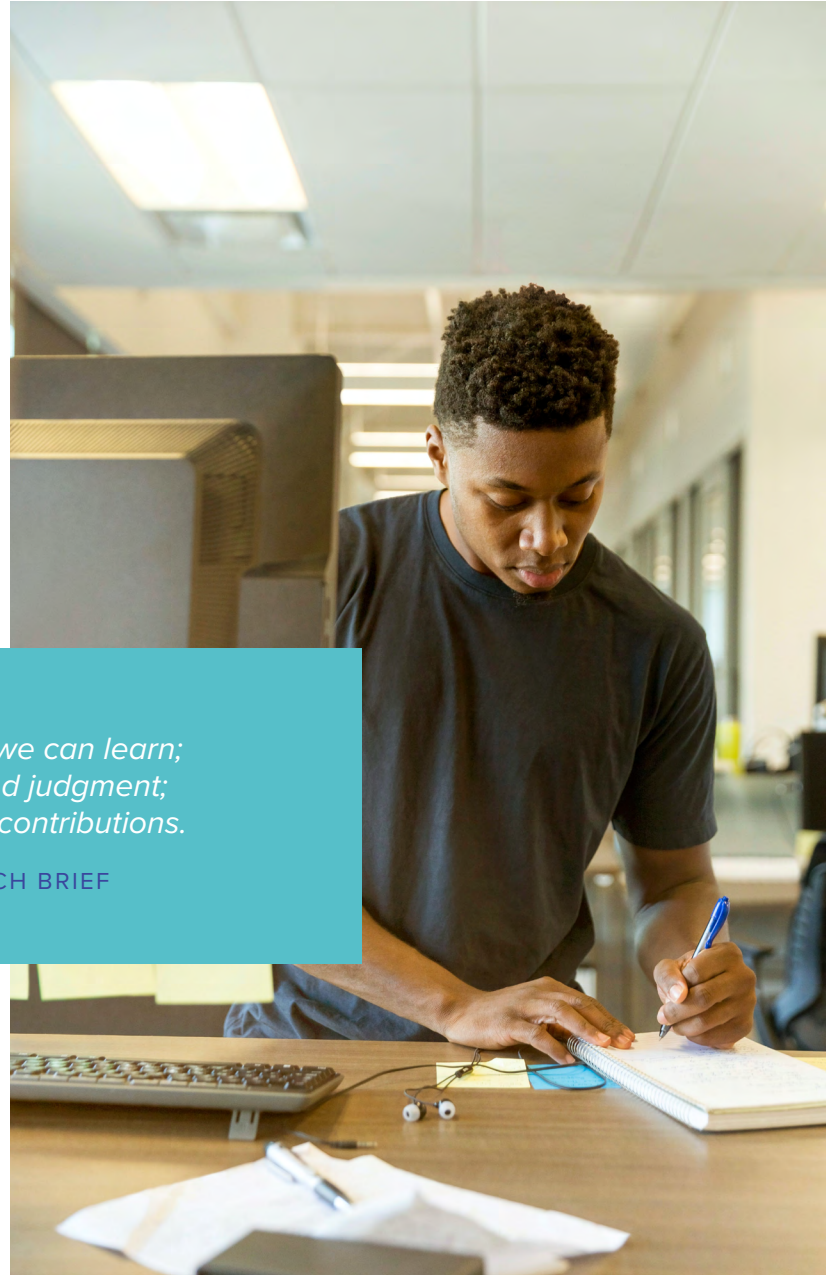
As America faces some of the greatest economic challenges in its history from the combined impacts of the pandemic and the changing nature of work, our leaders are charged with the responsibility of accelerating workforce reform in our systems and communities.

From providing apprenticeships to high school students in rural Wisconsin, to teaching durable skills to manufacturing students in Kentucky, to training veterans to code in Boston, innovative business, nonprofit and government leaders across the country are finding creative ways to better prepare and connect workers with meaningful employment. Through this report, we aim to highlight the ingenuity and efficacy of a range of solutions that can bring stability and growth to communities and restore prosperity to our country's families, businesses and communities.



Not simply a source of income, work is a way that we can learn; exercise our powers of perception, imagination, and judgment; collaborate socially; and make constructive social contributions.

“GOOD JOBS,” AN MIT WORK OF THE FUTURE RESEARCH BRIEF



How to Use this Playbook

Our Playbook contains recommendations for and examples of successful workforce development programs from across the country. For each of our **Four Best Practice Areas—Put Employers in the Driver’s Seat, Empower Workers with Durable Skills, Redefine Job Requirements, Provide Guidance and Support for Workers**—there are case studies and recommendations for cities at any stage in the development of their workforce development ecosystem.

We have divided our recommendations into **Three Pathways**, each matching a potential city profile for readiness and capacity for workforce investment. Though all of our case studies contain valuable insights for cities at any stage of their workforce development journey, one can hone in on the most relevant content for a specific pathway by following the colors noted on the pathway descriptions below.



Pathway 1 describes a plan for **Long-Term Coalition Building**. Though this is the ideal launch point for all cities and regions, it requires significant long-term leadership and coordination. It also relies heavily on existing private sector investment. For cities not yet ready for this level of engagement, or for cities that are building early momentum around workforce reform with their business partners, Pathways 2 and 3 offer alternatives that can ready the ecosystem for development.






Pathway 2 illustrates a focus on **Employer Champions**—the development of private sector partnerships and investment in nontraditional workforce pipelines. This pathway relies on high-touch, short-term leadership and coordination.



Pathway 3 outlines opportunities for cities to connect with highly-effective **Workforce Partners** who can plant the seeds necessary for a rich and dynamic workforce ecosystem. This is the ideal pathway for cities with low capacity for engagement and/or which aim to empower a nonprofit partner to begin cultivating relationships and momentum within the field of workforce development.

Solutions Map

	Pathway 1: Long-term Coalition Building	Pathway 2: Employer Champion	Pathway 3: Workforce Partner
			
Public/Private Partnerships	Strong	Early Stage	Early Stage
Employer Network and Participation	Strong	Strong relationship with and investment by at least one anchor employer	Early-stage employer network and participation
Capacity	Capacity for high-touch, long-term leadership and coordination	Capacity for high-touch, short-term leadership and coordination	Capacity for a low-touch solution
Philanthropic Investment	Low	Low	High
Solution	Create infrastructure for long-term planning and coalition building within one or more industry committees	Build momentum and local proof-points by supporting an anchor institution in generating a connected pathway with training partners	Recruit a highly-effective workforce partner to begin coalition building on behalf of the city
Case Studies	UpSkill Houston Careerwise Colorado CESA6 Skilled KC Technical Institute	Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health Hilco CVS IBM Opportunity@Work General Assembly	Apprenti FAME WPSI General Assembly Per Scholas Heartland Alliance Fund for our Economic Future Skillful The Markle Foundation
Impact Timeline	Long-term	Medium-term	Short-term

Best Practices Summary

1. PUT EMPLOYERS IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Problem: Students graduate K-12/community college with outdated competencies that are misaligned to the business needs of 2020.

Solution: Engage employers in the design and execution of training programs.

Case Studies: [UpSkill Houston](#), [Hilco](#), [CVS](#), [IBM](#), [Apprenti](#), [Per Scholas](#)

2. EMPOWER WORKERS WITH DURABLE SKILLS

Problem: Employers expect workers to have durable skills, but traditional K-12 schools do not necessarily teach these skills and/or employers do not trust those without a college diploma to have them. As schools cope with catching up post-COVID, they will likely not have the bandwidth to incorporate new curricula.

Solution: Provide durable skill training to young people through intermediary-led training programs or community colleges.

Case Study: [FAME](#)

3. REDEFINE JOB REQUIREMENTS

Problem: Too often, workers without college degrees are unnecessarily excluded from the hiring process, thus limiting worker access to good jobs and employer access to good employees.

Solution: Employers must hire workers based on their competencies and specific credentials, not only on broadly-defined college degrees.

Case Studies: [Careerwise](#), [Opportunity@Work](#), [Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health](#)

4. PROVIDE GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT FOR WORKERS

Problem: It takes high touch guidance along the [Worker Journey](#) to fill the pipeline. Workers attrite at each stage in high numbers, which is particularly damaging for vulnerable populations and costly for businesses.

Solution: Provide support services for workers at all stages of the Worker Journey, including innovative finance options, transportation and career coaching.

Case Studies: [CESA6](#), [West Philadelphia Skills Initiative](#), [Heartland Alliance](#), [General Assembly](#), [The Fund for Our Economic Future](#), [Skillful](#), [The Markle Foundation](#)

Best Practice #1: Put Employers in the Driver's Seat

Summary:

Workforce planning and education must be driven by employer demand, not the habits and patterns of outdated curricula in our secondary and postsecondary institutions.

Problem:

Too many training programs are designed to meet the needs of decades past, and in many cases, teachers are using outdated knowledge or assumptions about industry needs to design curricula. Furthermore, communication between training institutions and most employers is disjointed, at best. Many stakeholders rely on a single relationship for their pipeline; for example, an employer may have a partnership with a single training institution but fail to share knowledge with other high schools or community colleges. This leads to inconsistencies in training, poorly distributed opportunities, and a mismatch between what graduates can do and what they are expected to do if and when they are hired.

Solution:

Employers must be involved in the design and execution of training programs. This reduces friction between training and employment, allows workers to be paid for on-the-job learning, and sets workers on a trajectory to obtain stable, financially sustaining work. Through this process, employers can reduce recruiting, training and turnover costs, strengthen their workforces with diverse perspectives, and provide valuable jobs to often-overlooked workers.



[We must] move away from ... a “train and pray” approach. ... [Workers] enroll, they get trained for something, they’re not even sure whether the job is out there, and if the job isn’t out there, all they’re doing is saddling themselves with debt, oftentimes putting themselves in a worse position. What we want to do is make sure where you train your workers first based on what employers are telling you they’re hiring for.

FORMER PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA,
REMARKS MADE DURING THE BILL
SIGNING OF THE WORKFORCE
INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT



It’s a cardinal rule of the new job-focused education and training emerging nationwide: there can be no effective career preparation without employers. Only employers know what skills are in demand at their companies. Few know better than employers how technology is transforming their industries or what skills will be needed in the workplace of tomorrow. And engagement by employers, helping to ensure that educators are teaching in-demand skills—this year’s trending coding language, not last year’s, or the more sophisticated skills needed for new manufacturing jobs—is what makes today’s job-focused education and training different from the old, often ineffective vocational education of the past.

“KENTUCKY FAME: FULFILLING THE PROMISE OF APPRENTICESHIP,” A BROOKINGS INSTITUTE REPORT



Pathway 1: Employer Engagement

Step 1 Convene business leaders to codify the essential competencies for their respective sectors in industry-specific roundtables. Ideally, an anchor institution that is deeply respected by the business community leads the coalition to generate support and momentum.

Step 2 Communicate the competencies to the K-12 system, relevant community college programs and involved intermediaries.

Step 3 Connect trainers with industry so that they can build curriculum and credentials together.

Step 4 Include durable skills in curriculum.

Case Study

UPSKILL HOUSTON

UpSkill Houston: In 2014, The Greater Houston Partnership founded its flagship workforce development initiative—UpSkill Houston—with the intention of strengthening the pipeline between workers and employers. UpSkill Houston is recognized as a U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Talent Pipeline Management® exemplar.

At first, UpSkill Houston convened industry councils to discuss their workforces and codify the competencies that were in the highest demand for their businesses. In addition, they designed an executive group of cross-sector leaders to design the region’s strategy for workforce development and alignment, with the intention of convening individuals whose work intersected, but who may not have otherwise had opportunities to collaborate, such as school superintendents and CEOs of major employers.

In 2020, UpSkill Houston began to shift to a skills-based approach for their convenings, instead of one that was industry-focused. With this skills-based approach, they aligned competencies that cut across industries, especially for roles in IT and healthcare, which are in increasingly higher demand due to the pandemic. One of their goals was to address how job postings align across industries for roles with similar functions; this consistency helps workers prepare for a wider range of jobs and makes career-opportunity pathway information more readily available for new workers. Their intention was to make roles as merit-based as possible, remove requirements that are unnecessary for hard-to-fill roles, and increase access to and the inclusivity of good jobs.

UpSkill Houston recognized the need for awareness of career pathways that do not require a college degree. They launched [a platform](#) with resources about varied career pathways, such as construction and healthcare. For each pathway, users can explore whether it is a good fit, how to prepare for careers in the field, and what to expect from different types of roles within the pathway. They use a variety of media—including video interviews from real workers—to communicate about opportunities.



In Houston we believe there is a real opportunity to do a better job of putting into place the mechanisms within the job market for acknowledging that skills drive the economy, not just credentials, which are an important part of the hiring process but can often only tell part of the story of who makes up our workforce. UpSkill Houston is looking to bridge that gap by highlighting the right competencies needed for the jobs of tomorrow while also connecting employers with job seekers to build a more robust talent supply chain.

BRYANT BLACK, DIRECTOR OF REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, GREATER HOUSTON PARTNERSHIP





Pathway 2: Employer Engagement Models

Hilco, Philadelphia: A partnership between an employer and the local school district



In partnership with the City of Philadelphia, Hilco Redevelopment Partners has committed to a significant investment in Career-Connected Learning for local schools. In addition to providing pre-apprenticeships for local Career and Technical Education (CTE) students, Hilco will provide paid youth summer internships and virtual career shadowing and awareness days. Hilco will also partner with the school district to lend insight to curriculum development on 21st century skills and competencies.

CVS, nationwide: A corporate commitment to train seasoned workers and individuals with disabilities



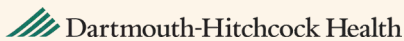
CVS operates Regional Learning Centers in Boston, Cleveland, New York City, and Washington, D.C., working with thousands of community partners and current employees to provide skill development and retraining. The Regional Learning Centers have earned recognition for their work with individuals with disabilities to obtain relevant training for roles at CVS pharmacies. CVS also operates “Talent is Ageless,” a program to recruit and train seasoned workers and a formal Registered Apprenticeship program for pharmacy technicians. Apprentices earn stackable credentials and are twice as likely to be retained by the program than traditional employees.

IBM, worldwide: An innovative partnership to prepare young people for careers in tech



IBM partnered with the School District of New York and The City University of New York to launch the first P-Tech schools in 2011. Students obtain their high school diploma and associate’s degree in a STEM field through P-Tech and are “first in line” for a full-time IBM role after graduation. The programs are free of cost for students and families and include paid internship opportunities.

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health, New Hampshire: A pathway into healthcare for nontraditional workers



[The Dartmouth-Hitchcock Workforce Readiness Institute](#) provides apprenticeships and training pathways for nontraditional workers to match with persistently hard-to-fill roles in the healthcare system.



Business cannot succeed if society doesn't succeed ... companies have to come together with governments and communities to address these issues together ... we must focus maniacally on what kind of society we want and how to put the building blocks in place to make it happen.

INDRA NOOYI, CEO, PEPSICO, COMMENTS AT “A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE WORK OF THE FUTURE,” AN MIT CONFERENCE



Pathway 3: Employer Engagement

Intermediaries can bridge the gap between employers and training providers by 1) securing a hiring commitment from an employer, 2) working with that employer to design a training model that specifically suits their needs, 3) sourcing candidates for the available roles, and 4) providing training to prepare workers to fill these roles. This model contrasts with the traditional “train and pray” process in which organizations provide generic training they anticipate the market will need and merely hope that students will secure employment with these skills. Apprenti, the [West Philadelphia Skills Initiative](#), and Per Scholas have experienced higher-than-average placement and retention rates, and their participants obtain significant wage increases from participation.

Program Elements:

- The training program is created in direct partnership with employers, and it is designed to meet specific, time-sensitive employer needs
- An intermediary uses relationships with community organizations to gain access to traditionally overlooked candidates
- This model relies on an anchor institution—such as Microsoft (Apprenti) and University City District ([West Philadelphia Skills Initiative](#))—to quickly gain trust with prospective workers and the business community



Nationally, we have significant unemployment, and people who have been leaving less-secure sectors looking for better opportunities. Apprenticeship is a great opportunity to start retraining American talent domestically to prepare them for in-demand tech roles.

JENNIFER CARLSON, CEO, APPRENTI



APPRENTI

Case Study

Apprenti is a Registered Apprenticeship program developed by the Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA) and a consortium of technology companies in the Seattle area, including Microsoft and Amazon. It connects diverse candidates—predominantly women, veterans and minority individuals—with firms in need of mid-skill, tech-based employees such as Network Security Administrators, Software Developers, Cyber-security Analysts and IT Support Professionals. As of March 2019, 84% of Apprenti’s apprentices had been retained in the sector.

Apprenti fosters relationships with corporate partners; together, they establish a hiring commitment from the employer for a specific number of apprentices. Apprenti then sources candidates, coordinates trainings that are specific to the employer’s needs, and liaises with state and federal agencies to formally register the apprenticeships. Throughout the process, they do “light-touch” case management to support the employee, but primarily put the onus on the employer to help the worker succeed. Apprentices are compensated at a minimum of 60% of full salary and are given the opportunity to apply for full-time roles at the conclusion of apprenticeships.

Apprentices served through Apprenti have experienced an average 155% increase in earnings as they transition from often minimum-wage work to stable, high-paying employment. For its success, Apprenti was selected as the IT Sector Lead for the U.S. Department of Labor and quickly expanded from one to fifteen state centers over three years.

 **PER SCHOLAS**

Case Study

Per Scholas is a national nonprofit with 15 campuses across the country, in large cities like New York and Chicago and in mid-size cities such as Charlotte and Columbus. As of January 2021, Per Scholas had trained more than 13,000 professionals from a wide range of backgrounds in middle skills such as IT services and in advanced competencies such as Full Stack Java Development and Cloud DevOps. In 2020, about two thirds of their learners did not have bachelor degrees. Graduates experience wage increases of four times their original annual income on average, and all training services are free for the learner. A full 85% of all Per Scholas students graduate the program, 80% of whom gain IT employment, and 70% of whom remain in their placement role after one year.

Per Scholas offers Market Driven Trainings to three quarters of their learners, in which participants study through curricula that are based on trends in the labor market and anticipated employer needs. The coursework in this training spans technical training, durable skill development, and career services. About one quarter of all Per Scholas trainings are Customized Trainings, in which Per Scholas plans coursework based on a specific employer’s needs. In this model, Per Scholas works with local employers to understand their hiring needs and create relevant, high-quality training programs. Each relationship is designed to suit the employer’s needs, ranging from service delivery to a true planning partnership, in which the employer co-creates curriculum and becomes engaged in the learner experience. Per Scholas then seeks cohorts of learners to guarantee candidates for the employer to interview at the end of the training. Any individuals who are not matched directly with the employer receive career services to find similarly relevant employment.



Our employer partners play a critical role in advancing economic mobility: they help us identify in-demand skills and open job opportunities in the market, provide our learners with coaching and feedback throughout our courses, and enable our graduates to jump head first into employment that, on average, is a 4x increase from their pre-training income. Continuing to grow our employer partnerships is among our top strategic priorities as an organization.

ALANNA HUGHES, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY, PER SCHOLAS



Best Practice #2: Empower Workers with Durable Skills

Summary:

Employers use four-year college completion as an imperfect proxy for durable skills, which leads to insufficient worker preparedness and exclusion of non-degreed workers. Instead, training partners must provide intentional, direct instruction in durable skills and employers must look to these credentials to inform their hiring decisions.

Durable Skills: Sometimes referred to as “soft skills,” “power skills,” or “21st-century competencies.” Examples include public speaking, professional email communication, and conflict resolution.

Success in the 21st-century workplace requires capabilities beyond technical skills, and these additional competencies are commonly known as the 4C’s of Communication, Collaboration, Critical-Thinking, and Creativity. Workers are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors, such as timeliness and receptiveness to feedback. We will refer to these skills here as “durable skills,” a term shared with Accelerator for America by Gardner Carrick, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives at FAME, to note that these skills are persistent and transferable.

Problem:

Unfortunately, America’s education systems—including K-12 schools, community colleges, and four-year postsecondary programs—are woefully behind in both teaching and evaluating durable skills. As a result, a wealth of research indicates worker deficiencies in these competencies. When employees lack these skills, businesses suffer from inefficiency, worker attrition, and internal dysfunction. Many learners enter the workforce deficient in durable skills and struggle to be effective or gain upward mobility within a company.

Solution:

High schools, community colleges, and training programs must include direct instruction in durable skills in order to prepare learners for workplace success. Workforce development programs and modern employers must provide adequate training in durable skills to learners in order to maximize their professional success. Employers—who traditionally have expected learners to enter the workforce already highly competent in these skills—should also provide professional training in them. Though this calls for a new investment in curriculum and instruction, the payoffs are long-lasting. Employers generally retain the value created from an increase in productivity and a decrease in worker attrition.

Durable skills give workers the ability to pivot into new roles, to enter new workplaces with the tools needed to navigate new challenges, and to teach themselves the skills they need to be successful in new work opportunities.

A University of Michigan study reports that durable-skill training increased overall productivity by 12%. When measuring the impact of durable-skill instruction on garment worker productivity, the researchers found a 256% net return on investment.

FAMeUSA

Case Study

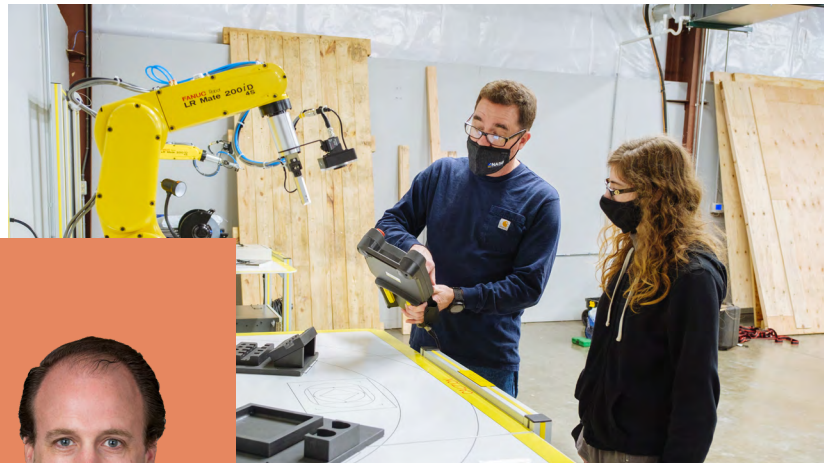
The Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (FAME), a Manufacturing Institute program, is a national network of almost 400 companies who execute the FAME model at scale. FAME chapters utilize a three-pronged approach, combining classroom instruction at community colleges, durable-skill development, and on-the-job training through apprenticeships. At FAME, the employer drives a partnership with a local community college's manufacturing training program, utilizing parameters and tools from the primary FAME model. Employers also must compensate apprentices to sufficiently pay for the cost of the training, and most FAME students graduate without debt.

Recently, the Brookings Institute and Opportunity America published a comprehensive evaluation of FAME, finding remarkable success and making a recommendation for policymakers to scale the program. A full 80% of all FAME students graduate the program, compared with 29% of Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) students. FAME graduates obtain nearly \$15,000 higher wages one year after graduation than their KCTCS peers, a gap that grows three-fold within five years after graduation.

In particular, the durable-skill training is found to be comprehensive and highly effective:

“The program’s approach to higher-order soft skills starts with basic manufacturing practices like safety, but the broader goal is to teach critical thinking and problem solving. The curriculum borrows heavily from the lean manufacturing practices Toyota pioneered in the U.S. and elsewhere. Students learn to break down problems and address root causes. The principle behind all work practices and processes is continuous improvement. The upshot for learners and employers: FAME graduates come to work equipped with the full spectrum of competencies required by the new manufacturing that has emerged in recent decades—initiative, communication and teamwork, plus the skills to operate sophisticated machinery and adapt to changing technology.”

- Kentucky Fame: Fulfilling The Promise Of Apprenticeship, Brookings Institute



“

FAME is successful because we teach individuals to be world-class manufacturing employees. Professional behaviors and durable skills are embedded in the technical courses, given equal priority to the technical skills, and reinforced by employers during the on-the-job part of the program.

GARDNER CARRICK, VP OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, THE MANUFACTURING INSTITUTE



Best Practice #3: Redefine Job Requirements

Summary:

Local leaders must help employers redefine job requirements to intentionally target nontraditional employees—such as high school students, those without college degrees, returning citizens, and seasoned workers—to improve their own outcomes and create more equitable access to good jobs.



A manager will never be fired for hiring a Harvard graduate who doesn't work out. Many are hesitant to take a chance on workers without four-year college degrees, even though we know from research that millions of those workers have the skills to be successful in these roles.

MARTIN EVELYN, INSIGHTS MANAGER, OPPORTUNITY@WORK



Problem:

Employers have traditionally used college degrees as a proxy of durable skills, critical thinking, and independence. This imperfect predictor for workplace success helps employers narrow the field of candidates quickly, but does not necessarily result in an applicant pool that is better qualified for a job. Black, Latinx and Native American workers, who are least likely to hold college degrees, are automatically excluded at higher rates because of this requirement.

The excess demand for college-degreed workers leads to rapid attrition and movement between jobs, which drives up hiring costs for employers. With such an oversimplified view on worker quality, employers also lose the opportunity to strengthen their workforce from those with diverse perspectives and experiences, which has ramifications from entry-level positions through the C-Suite.

As a result, the entire system suffers. Employers miss out on candidates who bring the right skills and competencies for the job but who have acquired these skills outside of a four-year degree program. Young workers fail to receive on-the-job training that might set them up for a lifetime of success in the workplace. Seasoned workers with valid skills and expertise are overlooked and relegated to lower-paying work.

Solution:

Employers, intermediaries and local governments must create and support pathways for non-college-degreed workers to access good jobs:



Among workers with no postsecondary education—a group that includes two-thirds of workers of color and about half of White workers—White workers are about 75 percent more likely than workers of color to hold good jobs.

“RACE AND THE WORK OF THE FUTURE: ADVANCING WORKFORCE EQUITY IN THE UNITED STATES,” A NATIONAL FUND FOR WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS REPORT

Pathway 1: Ecosystem-Focused

- **Community college awareness:** Raise the profile of community colleges to help employers understand the value of their training, differentiating between programs that offer remedial classroom instruction vs. technical training
- **High school career exploration:** Support career exploration in high schools to raise awareness of non-college pathways and reduce bias around apprenticeships

Exemplar: Careerwise + [CESA](#)

Case Study



Careerwise Colorado offers “modern youth apprenticeships” for high school students in Colorado. Now expanding to New York City and Washington, D.C., as well, the program offers a three-year, on-the-job learning opportunity for students to prepare for success in their career or in college. Through the program, students gain real-world experience to better understand their interests, earn a living wage, and obtain both industry certification and college credit.

Unlike many apprenticeship programs, marketed as alternatives to college, Careerwise stresses the value of work-based learning in preparation for college. By focusing on roles that span multiple industries, such as financial services, business operations and IT, Careerwise opens the door to numerous options and pathways for their students.

At each stage, the program is designed with employers in mind, from the selection of competencies to teach in the curriculum to the hiring process for apprentices. Before engaging with the apprentices, Careerwise employers report a need to prepare a reliable pipeline of workers into hard-to-fill roles, which the program provides. As a result, they consistently show enthusiasm for working with young people, says Hollis Salway, Director of Development and Research at Careerwise and a veteran workforce champion.



Employing high schoolers in modern apprenticeships can address the huge ‘leaks’ in our talent pipeline that we see today. By integrating young people into the working world much earlier, they can apply the academic lessons they’re learning in the classroom to real-world work. From there, their career and education options are unlimited. It’s a win/win/win for our employers, our students and our society.

NOEL GINSBURG, FOUNDER AND CEO, CAREERWISE



Fast Facts

1,050 community colleges nationwide

11.8 million students annually, nearly half of all college students

Two-year degree programs

Community college student profile:

64% part time

29% first-generation college students

\$3,730 average annual tuition

“

Community colleges are one of America's best-kept secrets ... For more and more people, community colleges are the way to the future. They're giving real opportunity to students who otherwise wouldn't have it. They're giving hope to families who thought the American Dream was slipping away. They are equipping Americans with the skills and expertise that are relevant to the emerging jobs of the future. They're opening doors for the middle class at a time when the middle class has seen so many doors close to them.

DR. JILL BIDEN, FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES
AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATOR





Pathway 2: Employer-Focused

- **Employer education:** Help employers understand the value of workers not skilled through four-year degree routes with data-driven insights and stories of workers who have gained relevant experience through apprenticeships, associates degrees, and other non-degree pathways

Case Study

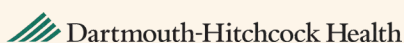


Opportunity@Work is developing an online talent marketplace for “STARs,” an abbreviation for the more than 70 million workers in the U.S. who are Skilled Through Alternative Routes other than a four-year degree. The aim of their three-sided talent marketplace, called Stellarworx, is to connect employers with STARs through verified training providers. In doing so, the marketplace streamlines the process for employers to identify and vet training organizations, including community workforce development programs, community college programs, and other certification pathways.

The platform is currently live in the Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles metro areas, with additional markets, such as the San Francisco Bay area, coming online in 2021. City governments can generate large-scale momentum for platforms like Stellarworx by convening the business community and raising awareness of alternative hiring methods, before connecting employers with practical solutions for hiring STAR candidates.

- **Connection to community organizations:** Connect employers with community organizations to find workers through nontraditional pathways
- **Internal recruitment:** Encourage or incentivize employers to provide retraining for current employees, such as those working for environmental-service or food-service departments

Case Study



The Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health workforce development team’s goal is to build a sustainable workforce so that the best possible patient care can be delivered across their health system. They do this by engaging and training the people who live in their NH and VT communities through a portfolio of training programs delivered through their licensed career school, the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Workforce Readiness Institute. In 2014, the Institute was originally created as a mechanism to ‘grow our own’ talent by educating and engaging apprentices to fill critical frontline roles. Over time the program portfolio has expanded and now offers training for Medical Assistants (apprenticeship), Pharmacy Technicians (apprenticeship), Surgical Technologist (apprenticeship), Ophthalmic Assistants and Nurse Assistants.

In all of their apprenticeship programs the related technical instruction, learning is completed first. These in-house training programs are typically 7-11 weeks long and students earn a training wage while enrolled. At the end of the training program, students sit for their national certification exam and transition to an apprentice role in one of their pharmacies, clinics or operating rooms. Students also earn college credit for the work they complete during the training program and apprenticeship.

The Workforce Development team recruits learners in two especially creative ways. First, they source talent from local high schools through hands-on, experiential learning programs, in which students shadow practitioners through realistic, but fictional, patient-scenarios to better understand the roles available to them. They have also partnered with Colby-Sawyer College to establish degree paths for all participants making this non-traditional post-secondary option much more appealing. Students can complete their associate’s degree within two years at no cost to them. Second, they advertise heavily among existing hospital staff, such as those on the environmental services or food services teams, and to those interested in changing careers and need a way to do so.

Pathway 3: Intermediary-Focused

Recruit intermediaries—through relationship building and/or incentives—to connect workers without four-year degrees to employment. These intermediaries should focus on [high-touch solutions](#) to prevent attrition from the pipeline.

- **Nonprofits:** Recruit organizations that do the work of training workers and connecting them directly to work

Exemplars: [Per Scholas](#), [Apprenti](#), [Heartland Alliance](#)

- **Training Organizations:** Incentivize the establishment or expansion of accessible and affordable training organizations, including coding bootcamps, especially those that include career counseling and/or durable-skill training

Exemplar: [General Assembly](#)

- **Local Intermediary:** Fund the development of an intermediary that provides last-mile training to nontraditional applicants in preparation for specific job placement based on local needs

Exemplar: [WPSI](#)



Best Practice #4: Provide Guidance and Support for Workers

Summary:

Our workforce systems must provide high-touch support at each stage of the worker journey, especially for low-income workers whose mobility is hindered by lack of resources, network and support.

Opportunity Youth: Young people ages 16-24 who are neither participating in school nor work. One in nine people in this age category are considered Opportunity Youth, a number anticipated to rise from the pandemic's effects on school and labor markets.

Problem:

For low-income workers and opportunity youth, especially those without college degrees or the safety net of generational wealth, the Worker Journey creates ample risk of attrition. First, these workers may lack networks or mentorship from friends, family or colleagues to facilitate smooth transitions between industries or roles. Low-income workers may not know where to find jobs, how to navigate new industries, or how to communicate their work experience to employers. As a result, the job exploration process may become discouraging or overwhelming. Low income workers may lack the financial resources to pay for skills training. Even when training is free, many workers do not have the financial resources saved in order to take time away from work. These workers face stress and costs driven by child-care, housing insecurity, and familial obligations, and they often lack the financial or structural safety nets that shield higher-income workers from the same risks. This can lead to a hesitancy to join training programs, or program attrition once they begin. These barriers are detrimental to workers, who miss the opportunity to engage in skills training that could connect them with higher paying work. This is also detrimental to employers, who experience high vacancy and turnover costs without a healthy pipeline of middle-skill workers.

Solution:

Low-income workers and opportunity youth benefit from high-touch, individualized support and coaching as they navigate the process from career exploration to training to employment. Career navigation is a highly personal endeavor, requiring that coaches understand the needs and motivations of their learners and cater to their circumstances.



CESA 6
SMART THINKING.

Case Study

CESA6, a Cooperative Educational Services Agency in Wisconsin, provides high-touch support through "program liaisons" and "school-based coordinators" to maximize participant success. CESA6 offers 55 career pathways to students over two semesters of instruction and apprenticeships. Program liaisons work with students, families and employers to address issues and challenges that arise during apprenticeships, to increase completion rates. School-based coordinators build deep relationships with students to understand their needs and motivations before recommending career paths and opportunities. The result is a 95% full-time placement rate for program participants.



Case Study

West Philadelphia Skills Initiative (WPSI) was created by the University City District (UCD), an economic development nonprofit in West Philadelphia designed initially to act as a Business Improvement District. Founded in 2011, WPSI provides customized training for unemployed workers of West Philadelphia who have a high school diploma or GED. Their program secures guaranteed job requirements from local employers, sources candidates for these positions, and designs bespoke training programs to meet employer needs. Employers report lower turnover from WPSI employees than average, and employees experience wage increases of 25% compared with their prior roles. Workers trained and placed through WPSI also earn higher wages than those who utilize state workforce programs.

WPSI was the subject of an in-depth study and report aimed at contributing to the nationwide body of knowledge about workforce development best practices, co-authored by Drexel University's Nowak Metro Finance Lab, Centre for Public Impact, University City District, and Accelerator for America. The authors found that WPSI is unique and successful because of three programmatic components:

- First, the model provides staff with exemplary curricular resources and training, while simultaneously allowing and encouraging autonomy that facilitates responsiveness to problems that arise.
- Second, WPSI works hand-in-hand with employers, creating customized training based on employer needs, and training in skills only when open positions arise.
- Third, WPSI builds a strong network of relationships with community members and employers, which creates trust and therefore engagement among stakeholders.

In the summer of 2020, PIDC—Philadelphia's nonprofit economic development corporation—launched a pilot workforce program in collaboration with WPSI at the Navy Yard, an urban development in Philadelphia. Using the same model as UCD, this site is connecting workers with Navy Yard employment in industries such as advanced manufacturing and the life sciences.



The West Philadelphia Skills Initiative is a significant model for cities to adopt and adapt in creating income as a first step toward community wealth in some of our most disadvantaged neighborhoods. Its groundbreaking formula of employer-driven skill-building leverages its location in the heart of a global innovation district housing major hospitals and universities.

BRUCE KATZ, DIRECTOR OF THE NOWAK METRO FINANCE LAB AND ACCELERATOR FOR AMERICA ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER



HEARTLAND ALLIANCE

Case Study

Heartland Alliance operates the Rapid Employment and Development Initiative, also known as READI Chicago, offering wraparound services to highly vulnerable individuals who have been impacted by gun violence and incarceration. Each participant is a non-service seeker who, after a referral into the program, engages for one year with paid transitional employment, skill building, support services, and perhaps most importantly, a minimum of 200 hours of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). All individuals in the program earn wages for a minimum of 12 months, as well as stipends for their therapy.

The program model has three components. First, participants focus on CBT and workforce-preparedness skill training. Then participants engage with subsidized, transitional employment, during which they can explore multiple sectors and gain skills on the job. Finally, participants gain support in earning industry certification and transitioning to unsubsidized employment. The model was designed through research showing the benefits of transitional employment and CBT.

The University of Chicago is currently completing a randomized, controlled study of the program. Early findings indicate a high level of efficacy, including a decrease in victimization to gun violence and recidivism. More than half of those who start the program remain engaged after a year and continue to work the majority of the weeks available to them.

Re-entry is complicated, and individuals affected by violence and incarceration have significantly more complex journeys to work, as described by Eddie Bocanegra and Miguel Cambray, program leaders at Heartland Alliance. Setting up these individuals for success requires far more than just providing a job; this community of workers require wraparound services, connections to community organizations, support in re-establishing social communities, violence prevention, and victimization prevention.



Learner-Centered Financing

Vulnerable workers need financial support to both pay for training and to take time away from paid work for that training. This can be achieved through an apprenticeship model ([Apprenti](#), [Per Scholas](#), [FAME](#), [Careerwise Colorado](#)), in which employers pay trainees for their work as they learn. If the employer is unable to pay, an alternative payment model to consider is the Income Sharing Agreement, in which private investors provide capital for training providers, covering the upfront costs of UpSkilling workers, and are repaid by the worker as a fixed percentage of their income only if he/she obtains meaningful employment.



Case Study

General Assembly (GA) has trained more than 40,000 people for careers in technology through a combination of online and in-person bootcamps. General Assembly reaches nontraditional learners by offering both an accelerated pathway to skills and experience and offering a rich variety of financing options to maximize access to their programs. The optionality of their model increases flexibility and learner choice for nontraditional learners. These offerings include:

- **Low-cost Loan Options:** Students can obtain loans through General Assembly partners at 0% interest for the first 18 months to finance the cost of part-time programs.
- **Payment Plans:** This option spreads the cost of the program over the duration of the program, instead of requiring the tuition be due entirely upfront, as most training programs do.
- **Income Sharing Agreements:** In this option, students do not pay anything up front in exchange for a percentage of future earnings starting several months after graduation, the size of which is determined by their earnings only if they obtain employment with compensation above \$40,000 annually. In this model, students may find security in that they will not owe any payments unless they are gainfully employed. However, they do incur a risk of paying more than the tuition of the course should they earn compensation of more than \$60,000 annually.
- **Employer Sponsorships:** About half of General Assembly part-time students are sponsored by employers, who anticipate their needs and collaborate with GA to recruit, train and hire directly from the program.
- **GI Bill:** Veterans and military spouses can use their GI Bill® benefit toward tuition at several GA campuses; they have School Certifying Officials on staff who support veterans with the necessary paperwork and logistical steps to enroll.
- **Partnerships:** General Assembly has a range of partner programs, in which GA offers instruction and the partner provides either tuition support or access to nontraditional learner communities.



We know that tuition can be a barrier, and since founding GA a decade ago, have continued to iterate and explore innovative financing models like our Catalyst ISA program and scholarship opportunities that make it easier for all of our students to focus on class, not costs.

TOM OGLETREE, VP OF SOCIAL IMPACT AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, GENERAL ASSEMBLY



Transportation

The lack of reliable transportation is often a barrier to obtaining good jobs, especially for workers outside major metropolitan areas with established public transportation. In most ecosystems, the burden of transportation falls on the worker. Given patterns of housing segregation, this process is inherently exclusionary and limiting.

Alternatively, employers can be encouraged or incentivized to contribute to the transit ecosystem, creating more access to their jobs for diverse workers and widening their available talent pool. This can include subsidizing public transportation, establishing ride-sharing agreements among workers, moving training centers into low-income neighborhoods, or finding creative ways to leverage local resources to increase access to employment through transportation.



Case Study

The Fund for Our Economic Future is a funding collaborative focused on advancing economic growth and increasing access to opportunity in Northeast Ohio. Launched in June 2019 by the Fund and a host of partners, The Paradox Prize is supporting innovative mobility solutions that address the transportation paradox of “no car, no job; no job, no car,” by improving connections of people to jobs and helping businesses access the talent they need to succeed. Ultimately, the initiative seeks to make the business case for improving job access and to drive long-term change. To support the generation of creative solutions as well as to draw attention to this important issue, the Fund structured The Paradox Prize as an open call for ideas, pledging up to \$1 million in awards.

Pilot ideas include the deployment of church vans that typically sit idle during the week and the implementation of vanpooling software for integrating transportation in sector partnerships. Five of the nine awardees are public transportation agencies in the region that were encouraged through the Prize to think innovatively about increasing access to their services.

Applicants were required to work collaboratively with employers in the development of their solution. By having employers involved, the Fund and its partners will be able to gather critical quantitative and qualitative data about the impact on the employers' bottom line, as well as the impact on users. For example, a number of participating employers so far have reported increased employee retention among pilot users. The Fund plans to share the learnings from the pilots broadly to further innovation and encourage scaling of proven solutions that results in improved access to jobs.



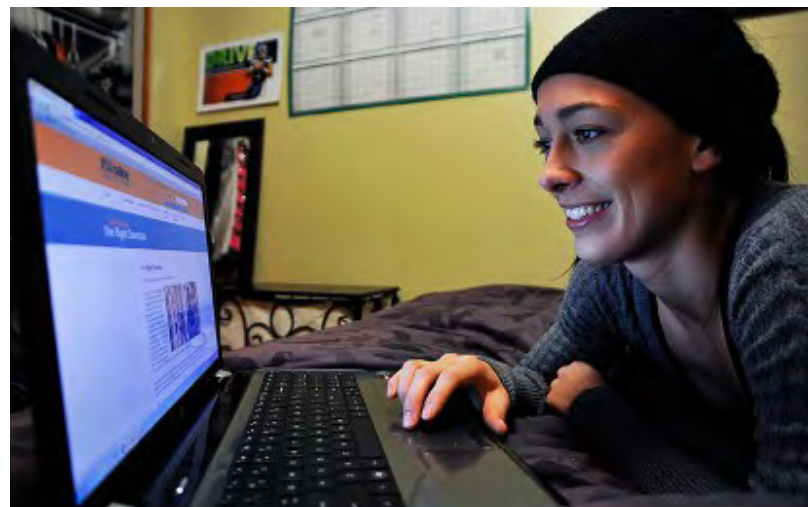
Career Coaching

Career coaching today exists on polar opposite ends of the spectrum. Businesses aim to serve clients who can pay for advising and coaching services, while non profits focus efforts on helping the unemployed. Low-to-middle-income workers are left in the middle, with limited private or nonprofit resources to support their transition between career pathways and jobs. Bridging this gap is critical for economic growth and mobility.



Case Study

The Markle Foundation, whose focus shifted to workforce development and coalition building in 2013, recognized the importance of career coaching for connecting low-income workers with good jobs. In order to address the growing need for career coaching, they launched Skillful. This non profit initiative operates two coaching programs that address the industry's lack of consistent models or frameworks, siloed environments, and the need to incorporate a stronger equity lens into the practice of coaching. The Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps provides intensive training for coaches, while simultaneously providing leaders from the field with the opportunity to share their perspective with state-level policy-makers. The Skillful Coaching Community of Practice is a virtual community of practitioners who use the online resources available from Skillful to share resources and best practices. In 2021, Skillful will launch a virtual coaching platform that can provide more equitable access to coaching resources for practitioners in schools, postsecondary institutions, and workforce centers.



Bringing It All Together: Skilled KC Technical Institute, A Kauffman Foundation Initiative



In response to thousands of unfilled tech jobs, the Kauffman Foundation funded Skilled KC Technical Institute, a start-up technical institute and workforce development program aimed at providing job training and pipeline opportunities for workers and businesses in Kansas City. The program is led by Jeff Barratt, a veteran workforce champion with a track record of success who most recently served as the CEO of the Emily Griffith Technical College, a school nationally recognized as a leader in job placement. Though Skilled KC is still in its founding years, it has relied on the four best practices highlighted in this playbook in the establishment of three early programs: advanced manufacturing, software development and biotechnology.

Put Employers in the Driver's Seat

Skilled KC Technical Institute utilized backwards design to create programs and curricula based on the needs of the region's employers. They started with an extensive survey of the ecosystem, seeking to understand market trends, skill gaps, major employers, and stakeholders. Barratt recommends a frequent cadence of conversations between industry leaders and educators—especially given how quickly the nature of work is changing from the pandemic—and Skilled KC engages regularly with each program's industry-led advisory boards to ensure skills taught are still relevant in the workplace. CEOs often need proof points to become invested in nontraditional worker pathways, whether from success stories of their graduates, or from the investment of a champion employer who can be used as an exemplar, and Skilled KC provides them.

Empower Workers with Durable Skills

Skilled KC designed a curriculum that focuses on an entrepreneurial mindset, a combination of the aforementioned Durable Skills and additional competencies that empower workers to respond to a dynamic work environment. In particular, the Skilled KC curriculum features training in observation, analysis, empathy, risk assessment, and managing uncertainty.

Provide Guidance and Support for Workers

To engage with all learners, Skilled KC plans to offer multiple modalities for learning, spanning full-time, part-time, in-person and virtual programs. In his years of service in workforce development, Barratt has found the combination of asynchronous and synchronous instruction and group work to be most supportive for at-risk workers, who benefit from in-person time with peers and instructors.

Twenty percent of Skilled KC students are over the age of 40. Barratt notes that this demographic is one of the fastest growing consumers of higher education, but one often not considered in program design. These individuals bring more experience, and often high levels of durable skills, but may struggle with using new technology. Training organizations should consider this demographic group in curriculum and initiative planning.

Barratt recognizes the need for high-touch worker support, especially for vulnerable workers. Skilled KC relies on community partners for robust systems of case management: individualized support for workers to navigate challenges outside the workplace, such as those related to transportation and child-care.

Skilled KC students start their journey with an intake meeting with a Pathway Advisor, who is responsible for providing guidance throughout their learning experience. Skilled KC also utilizes Connection Coaches, who provide additional support for students during the final stages of their preparation, especially in coordinating testing and licensure processes.

Learner-Centered Financing

Skilled KC currently offers full-time options with plans to offer part-time modalities to allow learners to continue working during their training. They also will rely on the private sector, workforce centers, and philanthropy to provide stipends and scholarships for learners. These funding streams assist in Skilled KC's goal of graduating students with little to no debt. There are multiple ways to engage employers in the financial support of their learners, Barratt reports. For example, some can provide scholarship assistance or philanthropic donations to ease the financial burden of training. Others can provide equipment, learning space, or subject-matter experts in the classroom. This "skin in the game" increases employer investment in nontraditional hiring pathways and builds a long-term relationship between trainers and hiring teams.

Words of Advice

Barratt offered three additional suggestions for local leaders who are aiming to foster ecosystem development support in workforce development and training:

- First, Barratt recommends a "campus within a campus" model, in which nonprofits or intermediaries partner with an employer or a postsecondary institution for training space in order to avoid spending on a bricks-and-mortar establishment. This method reduces cost and creates opportunities for partnership between employers and training providers.
- Second, Barratt highlights the need to build public-private partnerships, to engage with existing organizations to make their pipelines stronger and more efficient, instead of creating redundant silos.
- Lastly, Barratt emphasizes the importance of partnering with employers who offer career growth opportunities for their employees and with training organizations who offer stackable credentials for their learners. Workers must see opportunities for advancement in each part of the worker journey, he describes.



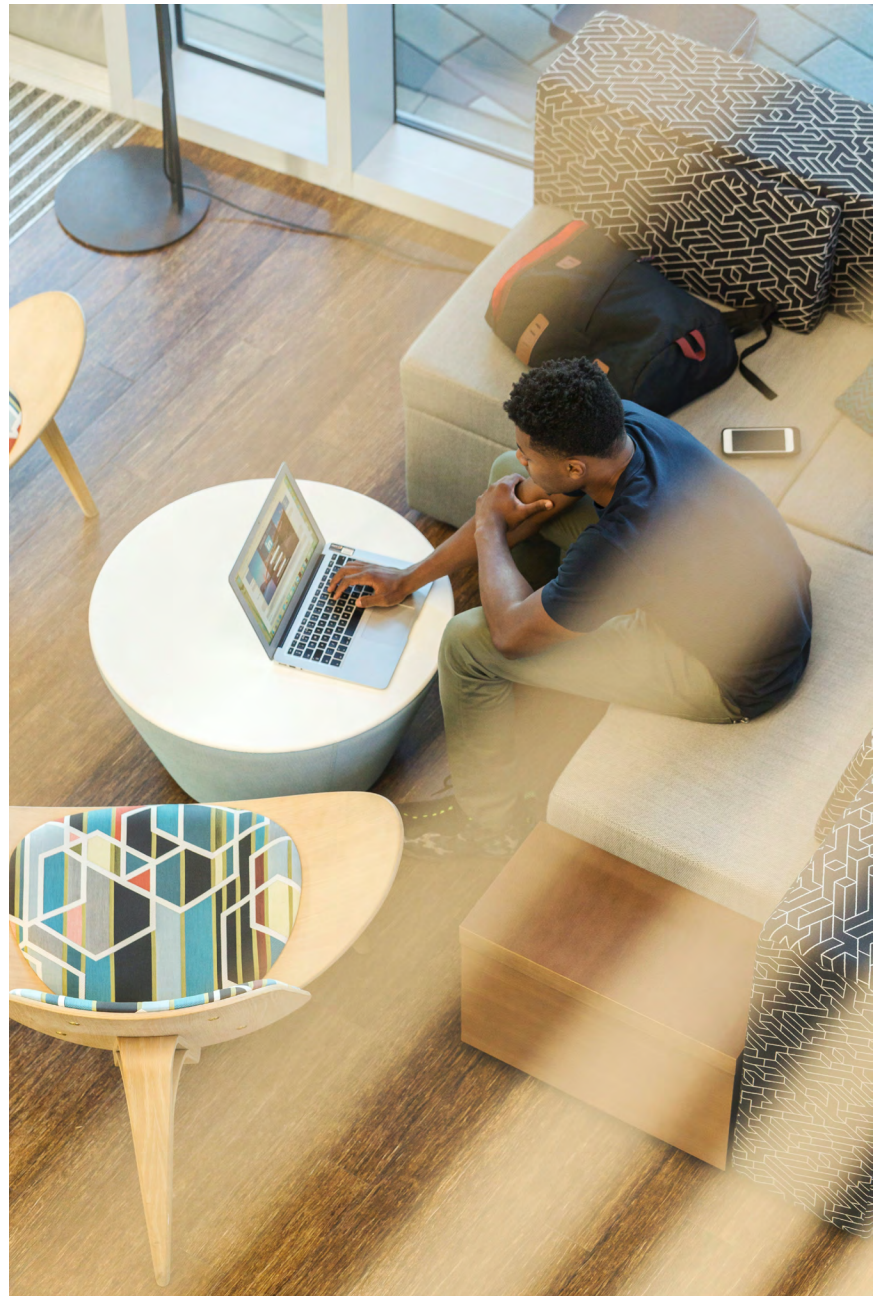
The development of stackable credentials provides opportunities for institutions delivering workforce education and training to become more responsive to both student needs and employers, as workforce demands evolve faster than traditional higher education models.

JEFF BARRATT, CEO, SKILLED KC TECHNICAL INSTITUTE



Conclusion

The future of work is now. As America recovers from COVID-19, local leaders can use the innovative workforce development tools assembled in this playbook to stimulate economic and inclusive growth. With this **demand-driven approach**, local leaders can address and begin to reverse the trends of unequal access to good jobs which have eroded our economy for generations, while businesses can benefit from a better talent pool aligned with their needs. We call on local leaders to align private, nonprofit and public sectors toward a common vision of employer-driven UpSkilling and reskilling, and to prioritize systems necessary to our most vulnerable workers in gaining access to financially sustaining, good jobs.



Resource Library

Pathway I: Industry Coalition

[National Fund for Workforce Solutions: Toolkit for Developing High-Performing Industry Partnerships](#)

“The National Fund defines an industry partnership as a dynamic collaboration of a regional group of employers, stakeholders, and workers that convene regularly with the assistance of a workforce intermediary. Successful industry partnerships embody a shared commitment to good jobs, racial equity and inclusion, and a continuous learning mindset.”

Pathway II: Anchor Institution Pipeline

[U.S. Department of Labor’s Talent Pipeline Management Academies](#)

An in-person training program for businesses and business associations to learn best practices in bridging the gap between employers and educational institutions.

Pathway III: High-quality Intermediary

Harvard’s Government Performance Lab: [Seven Delivery Practices to Achieve Better Results for High-Need Jobseekers at WIOA Career Centers](#)

Jobs for the Future: [Intermediary Functions and Features in Pathway Systems](#)

Durable Skills

Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce: [Workplace Basics: The Competencies Employers Want](#)

Policy Recommendations

Results for America: [7 Ways to Improve Workforce Outcomes Using Evidence: 2019 Policy Roadmap for State & Local Officials](#)



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Gardner Carrick, VP of Strategic Initiatives, The Manufacturing Institute

Martin Evelyn, Insights Manager, Opportunity@Work

Tracey Everett, Manager of Career Coaching Initiatives, The Markle Foundation

Jonathan Hasak, Senior Director of Scalable Solutions, Year Up

Alanna Hughes, Senior Vice President of Implementation Strategy, Per Scholas

Carolyn Isabelle, Director, Workforce Development, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health

Ethan Kenvarg, Program Manager, Massachusetts, Apprenti

Tania Kilpatrick, Director, College and Career Readiness, CESA6

Dominic Mathew, Urban and Regional Planner for Mobility Innovations, Fund for our Economic Future

Mandana Nakhai, Development Manager, CareerwiseColorado

Tom Ogletree, General Assembly, Senior Director of Social Impact and External Affairs

Hollis Salway, Director of Research and Development, CareerwiseColorado

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About the Author

Rebecca Agostino is an MBA Candidate at The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. Rebecca started her career in K-12 education as a 9th-grade special educator in Harlem, New York, through Teach for America. After several years in the classroom, she became the founder and principal of Freedom Prep High School, a college-preparatory public charter school in Camden, New Jersey. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from Duke University and a Master of Teaching degree from Fordham University.

About Accelerator for America

Accelerator for America finds and develops solutions to economic insecurity and shares them with cities to create national change from the ground up. It was co-founded by Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti in 2017 around the idea that, while Washington is broken and has, in fact, been broken for some time, change is still needed and can be made at the local level. The Accelerator has since created economic development tools that are being used by more than 70 cities nationwide, and it has helped local communities generate more than \$30 billion in funding for transit and transportation infrastructure through local ballot initiatives.

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