



IWNC
INDUSTRY WORKFORCE NEEDS COALITION
— *Connecting Business with Education* —

Strategic Plan

Increasing the population of ready skilled workers with Career and Technical Education

Business and Industry Need

The number of people prepared to satisfy business and industry workforce needs is being developed at a slower rate than is needed by business and industry. Businesses may outsource mission-critical skilled jobs to other countries if the skills challenge is not met by this and coming generations. According to a study by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, “by 2018 we end up with a shortfall of workers with Associate’s degrees or better of about 3 million.” Career and Technical Education (CTE) plays a critical role in producing the necessary talent that businesses need.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that middle-skill jobs, those that require some significant education beyond high school but less than a baccalaureate degree, will account for roughly 45 percent of all job openings projected through 2014. Postsecondary education and training is quickly becoming a critical path to the American middle class.

While businesses are already feeling the pain of the skills gap, action to address the problem is only beginning. As identified in the 2011 Talent Shortage Survey by Manpower Group, “Approximately three-quarters of employers globally cite a lack of experience, skills or knowledge as the primary reason for the difficulty filling positions. However, only one in five employers is concentrating on training and development to fill the gap. A mere 6 percent of employers are working more closely with educational institutions to create curriculums that close knowledge gaps.”

In addition, the retirement of the aging baby boomer workforce is outpacing the incremental increase in skilled workers. This aging of the workforce will exacerbate the current skills gap as baby boomers have talents and skills that will leave businesses when they retire. We need the proper training in place to meet this coming challenge.

In his State of the Union address on January 24, 2012, President Obama offered proposals to foster an economy “built to last” predicated on education, a skilled workforce, high-paying jobs, energy independence, and fairness that would help bolster the middle class. Highlighting the skills gap, he stated, “Growing industries in science and technology have twice as many openings as we have workers who can do the job.” In an effort to solve this problem, he called for a national commitment to train two million individuals with the skills they need to land a job with a focus on partnerships between businesses and education.

America has reached a pivotal point in time. A skills gap exists and must be solved.

Opportunity

A coordinated effort by business and education is required to align the supply and demand of prospective labor and workforce needs.

High school and postsecondary CTE programs that prepare students for career paths and provide them the knowledge and skills relevant to the workplace must be supported.

Employers must participate with local schools and workforce boards to reallocate resources to strengthen high school CTE programs, career-based secondary programs, community colleges, and employer-sponsored apprenticeships.

The definition of “college and career readiness” must be reevaluated and expanded to include the multiple career paths and learning options that students have today. It must include a focus on employability and careers throughout a lifetime. Perceptions and how we communicate and reinforce education must change to encourage more students to participate in CTE programs and understand the value of all careers.

Coalition Mission

Increase the population of ready skilled workers in America through better alignment between the educational system and the opportunities created by industry.

Coalition Objectives

The overall goal of the Coalition is to increase the extent of, and funding for, CTE programs in K-12 schools, charter schools, and two-year colleges. We will work toward this goal by achieving three strategic objectives, each supported by specific tactics.

- I. Focus on business and industry engagement for feedback, direction, results, and funding.
 - a. Identify and communicate critical hiring needs
 - i. Identify:
 1. Convene a roundtable of HR executives from a broad range of industries to map critical needs
 2. Establish an interactive industry needs tool on the IWNC website that allows quantification of job needs by region
 - ii. Communicate:
 1. Based on the annual roundtable (and work preparing for it), publish an annual *State of the Workforce* whitepaper on needs for specific jobs and skills
 2. Based on the whitepaper and ongoing research, place articles and quotes in national and major regional media to communicate industry needs to the general public.
 - b. Foster business/education partnerships
 - i. Based on research done under § I.a.i., along with quantification of educational programming, publish an annual *Industry and Education Alignment Index* that measures the alignment of industry and education in regions across the country
 - ii. Develop “playbooks” for creation of local business/education partnerships to strengthen connection between business and education:
 1. For business leaders, best practices to work with education to showcase local needs and foster programs to support them
 2. For educators, best practices to create business advisory boards to identify and/or create CTE programs to meet industry needs
 - c. Create a national funding mechanism to solicit and channel contributions from businesses and industry groups to support the activities of this plan, including:
 - i. Need identification & communication
 - ii. Public relations

- iii. Program creation, identification, & dissemination (perhaps including a grant clearinghouse that channels funding to CTE programs that adopt approved courses or curricula)
- II. Redefine the image of Career & Technical Education among policy makers (P), educators (E), and the general public (G) (especially students who can benefit from the programs and their parents)
 - a. Messages to include but not limited to:
 - i. There is a skills gap that can be addressed only by CTE (P, E, G)
 - ii. Skilled trades are valuable and fulfilling career opportunities (G)
 - iii. CTE and higher education are mutually supportive, not antagonistic (G)
 - iv. CTE and STEM are natural allies in pursuing their common goals (P,E)
 - v. CTE supports the Common Core and related standards such as NGSS (E)
 - vi. CTE improves dropout rates, college admissions, college completion (P)
 - vii. CTE needs to start earlier in students' careers – middle school if not upper elementary (P, E)
 - b. Communications tactics to include:
 - i. Identify prominent industry spokespeople for each Career Cluster who came out of CTE and can speak to its benefits
 - ii. Identify and partner with groups conducting research and outreach supporting Coalition messaging goals (e.g., Georgetown CEW, Pathways to Prosperity network, Global Skills Exchange, Manufacturing Skills Institute, NCCER Aspen Institute, etc.)
 - iii. Professional lobbying presence at national and selected state government levels directly or through association partnerships
 - iv. Cultivate foundation grant backing
 - v. Placement of and participation in stories in national and important regional media
 - vi. Work with educational organizations such as AASA, NASSP, NSBA, TCEA, ASCD, ISTE, NGA, PTA, and CCSSO along with all CTSOs
 - 1. Submit articles to their publications
 - 2. Attend and present at their conferences
 - 3. Develop joint programs
- III. Increase programs offered and number of people taking those programs and becoming skilled workers in areas of critical need as identified by the Coalition
 - a. Develop materials to communicate appropriate message points from § II.a. to educators, students, and parents
 - b. Showcase successful CTE/workforce programs and strategies
 - c. Develop means to alert state, district, and school level educators of grant and program opportunities from § I.c.
 - d. Develop campaign to convey the advantages of CTE teaching as second careers in selected industries

Coalition Membership Structure

The membership program is targeted at Businesses with greater than 100 employees that can pool resources to achieve the IWNC mission. Two tiers have been defined to capture a complete business voice.

Global Business: Targeting businesses and associations representing industry with the most significant employee needs in the future. The focus is the larger global organizations that have more than 100 employees that have the real need for change in the next 5-10 years or face becoming uncompetitive and having to move overseas. This will be the core group that drives direction of the Coalition.

Small Business: Smaller businesses, associations, and individuals interested in participating and supporting the mission. This will capture a rounded business viewpoint creating a solid group of supporters that can help further the cause.

Education & Educators: Educational institutions and educators that can support and assist in executing the mission.



Coalition Support Structure

To carry out this mission, the IWNC will utilize the following resources to carry out its activities

Present

- ACTE Staff (marketing, communications, outreach, policy)
- ACTE 501C3 status (skeletal structure for handling capital)
- NASDCTEc Staff (marketing, communications, outreach, policy)
- Members (contributions in form of in-kind time, marketing, or capital)

As efforts progress

- Same as above
- Leveraging foundation and government money to fulfill mission
- Matching private sector dollars for foundation and government funding

Future (to be defined)

- Defined organization structure
- Self sustaingaing entity

Coalition Organization Structure

- A. The Coalition shall have a Board of Directors that consists of no fewer than eleven (11).
- B. The Board shall consist of 2/3 Global Business members and 1/3 Small Business members.
- C. The Board shall have industry representation from each Career Cluster™ (as defined in the Appendix).

Appendix



The National Career Clusters™ Framework, developed by the National Career Technical Education Foundation, groups 79 career pathways into 16 clusters, providing context for academic learning and linking it to skills required for success in the workplace. This structure provides a guide for students and educators to ensure the comprehensiveness of courses of study and serves as a foundation for bridging secondary and post-secondary educational programs and training.

The 16 Career Clusters™:

- Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources
- Architecture & Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
- Business Management & Administration
- Education & Training
- Finance
- Government & Public Administration
- Health Science
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security
- Manufacturing
- Marketing
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

