



# What We Know About Apprenticeships

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Five essential elements of Registered Apprenticeships & how CSW can support regional apprenticeship strategies.

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# Table of Contents

Why Apprenticeships?	3
Element #1: Employer Engagement	6
Element #2: Development of Curriculum and RTI	8
Element #3: Outreach & Recruitment	10
Element #4: Funding	12
Element #5: Registration of Apprenticeships	14
Creating Momentum	16

# Why Apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships are not a new tool in workforce development. Over the last several decades, their presence has been most prominent in Europe as an effective tool for up-skilling individuals seeking long-term careers in good paying jobs and in skilled trades in America. Where apprenticeship programs exist, they are seen as highly effective in meeting the needs of employers and job seekers alike. However, apprenticeship programs have only recently begun to scale up across the country as a heavy push from policy/thought leaders and national/federal funders have made clear that this kind of strategy is worthy of a more prominent role in the American workforce development arena.

Many of our colleagues around the country are leading good work on apprenticeship strategy and policy, including the National Governors Association. Further, key federal agencies and departments, including the Department of Labor, are making available significant levels of funding to jumpstart apprenticeship programs. By the end of 2016 alone, the Department will have made available nearly \$100 million in funding for apprenticeship programs alone. These dollars are being targeted to state-based efforts and national sector initiatives alike with the direct charge to generate apprenticeship strategies and place individuals in apprenticeship programs.

The focus on apprenticeships begs a simple, but profound question: Why? Over the last several years, we've begun to hone in on the answer to that question. It is multi-faceted and deserves an explanation for various stakeholder groups:

- **Employers:** The argument for employers is simple. Apprenticeship programs help generate defined and committed workforce pipelines in a manner that ensures both theoretical and practical classroom training, relevant on-the-job training, and progressive credential development for employees. The apprenticeship structure also helps ensure that the right community partners are involved and invested in a manner that leads to long-term student/

employee success.

- **Employees/Participants/Students:** Individuals who participate in an apprenticeship have the ability to create long-term economic security in careers that are middle- and high-skill. Just as an apprenticeship program provides a guided and defined infrastructure for employers, employees benefit from knowing what training they need (and will receive), how their wages will increase, and the general security that comes along with structured training programs like this.
- **Community partners:** Registered apprenticeship programs help community partners effectively serve their clients and participants. By understanding the prescribed curricula, training schedule, and necessary inputs for support, community partners can engage with apprentices in a manner that leads to long-term success.
  - **Workforce Agencies** - these organizations can help apprenticeship programs create innovative and comprehensive funding models to cover program expenses and link to various community partners that provide wrap-around services, among other strategies.
  - **Higher Education Institutions & Training Providers** - these organizations provide both traditional and non-traditional training programs in line with the overall apprenticeship program and the progressive wage schedule; they also help individuals achieve the necessary credentials to build long-term career pathways.
  - **Community Based Organizations (CBOs)** - these organizations help fill the gaps that may exist for apprentices as they seek to create long-term economic security, including support for wrap-around services and non-technical components that can often inhibit student/participant success, including career coaching components, social and cultural support, and other key factors.

### **The Five Essential Elements**

To support the national movement toward comprehensive registered apprenticeship programs, CSW has developed, organized, and galvanized tools and methodologies that will support regions in creating formal programs that are recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor and provide real and

tangible value for a region. These elements are not overwhelming or hard to comprehend, nor are they necessarily new; instead, the combination of these items developed and augmented in a collaborative manner at a regional level creates the right momentum for the implementation of an apprenticeship program.

1. Employer Engagement - the development of an apprenticeship program must begin with effective employer engagement and should lead to defined employer investment that shows a long-term commitment.
2. Development of Curriculum and RTI - effective apprenticeship programs must include relevant and evidence-based curriculum and related-training instruction.
3. Outreach and Recruitment - apprenticeship programs should be inclusive and utilize comprehensive outreach and recruitment strategies to find the best talent from all walks of life.
4. Funding - communities and regions must work collaboratively to define effective funding models that ensure both one-time and long-term costs are managed.
5. Registration - while technical in nature, it's important that all stakeholders associated with an apprenticeship program are part of the registration process to ensure that the program accurately reflects the goals and aspirations of the region.

# Element #1

## Employer Engagement

Above all else, employer engagement and investment in any apprenticeship program is a required first step. This may seem overly logical, but it's an important anchor in the overall development of any apprenticeship program. All other components of an apprenticeship program flow from the kind, type, and level of employer engagement and investment.

In short, employers must prescribe for workforce agencies, training providers, and community based organizations (CBOs) what positions they seek to fill using an apprenticeship model. These decisions don't have to be made in isolation; in fact employers should communicate and work with their community partners to define what positions best fit this type of workforce strategy. Further, if multiple employers are involved in a region, different positions can be included in an overall apprenticeship program based on local market conditions. In any case, employers must define the specific occupations that should be part of this work.

There are numerous considerations that employers and partners should factor when deciding if they should participate in an apprenticeship program and how they should invest in this kind of strategy:

- Can an apprenticeship model effectively develop talent for specified occupations?
- Can a comprehensive career pathway be developed in concert with an apprenticeship model? For instance, if an individual successfully completes an apprenticeship, can they continue training and career progression as outlined through a career pathway?
- Does the apprenticeship provide reasonable and progressive wage increases throughout the duration of the program?
- Can a reasonable talent pipeline be developed, in partnership with community partners, to fill open apprentice slots?
- Are incumbent workers eligible for the apprenticeship program?

- What existing talent acquisition and talent development processes are already aligned with apprenticeship models?
- Are multiple employers within a region participating in an apprenticeship program? If so, is there alignment on the occupation(s)? If not, do community partners have the capacity to support multiple occupational apprenticeship programs using similar infrastructure processes?
- What funding resources already exist to support an apprenticeship program? What funding resources need to be developed? What is the right funding model for the region?
- How do unions and union leaders, where applicable, support this work? How do employers work effectively with unions for a successful program?

All of these considerations don't need to be addressed before proceeding with other components, nor do employers necessarily need a final answer to each of these items before deciding to engage in an apprenticeship program. Certain employers will know right away if an apprenticeship program is right for them while others will need clarity on many of these items before deciding to proceed. In either case, additional and concurrent activities can occur that help further develop the apprenticeship program.

#### **How CSW Can Help...**

- Organize regional efforts that define in-demand sectors, industries, and occupations.
- Provide technical support for employer outreach and case-making.
- Collaboratively support multiple employers, especially when groups of employers have multiple/competing priorities.
- Frame initial career pathway maps that show the effectiveness of apprenticeship programs for employers.
- Conduct initial regional workforce analysis to understand how the supply of talent can meet the demand of employers, specific to the apprenticeship program.
- Develop long-term workforce pipeline strategies that show employers how regional talent can be attracted and retained.

## Element #2

# Development of Curriculum and RTI

Along with employer engagement and investment, a key factor in the development of any apprenticeship program is the relevant curriculum and related training instruction (RTI) necessary for apprentice success. There are numerous components associated with the development of curriculum and RTI, including the following:

- Has a job or task analysis been completed that outlines the foundational and occupational competencies associated with the occupation? If yes, have these competencies been linked to the specific training programs and credentials that are offered by regional training partners? If no, is a plan in place to ensure competencies are defined and linked to both sourcing processes and training programs?
- Are there existing national standards already registered for the occupation? If so, can regional partners use these standards as a starting place to develop a locally-defined apprenticeship program?
- What is the progressive training schedule associated with the apprenticeship? Is this training schedule aligned with existing occupations within an organization that allow for individuals to perform multiple jobs throughout the duration of the apprenticeship? For instance, if an apprenticeship program for a Surgical Technician in a healthcare setting is created, can the training schedule allow for an individual to serve in lower-skilled occupations along the way, therefore creating a stronger career pathway for the individual and helping the employer better justify the implementation of an apprenticeship program since it fills the needs of multiple occupations?
- What is the progressive wage schedule that is attached to the progressive training program? Is the employer able to provide a wage schedule that matches the curriculum and RTI schedule?

Answers to these questions will inform the development of the overall



curriculum and RTI component for the apprenticeship program. This is an important milestone as the official registration of a local apprenticeship program must include a specific description of the curriculum and RTI. For instance, each registered apprenticeship program must have defined on-the-job training and instruction that generally consists of 4,000 hours and RTI that is at least 144 hours. The development of this curriculum and RTI should be done in concert with one another so that individuals can learn in the classroom, apply on the job, and gain demonstrable skills and knowledge that help build their competencies and provide direct value to the employer.

### **How CSW Can Help...**

- Ensuring that the curricula and RTI associated with an apprenticeship program utilizes the right competencies and skills is essential. In partnership with Metrics Reporting, Inc., CSW can help regions complete comprehensive job/task analyses for the relevant apprenticeship occupation. This is an expansive process that utilizes the national O\*NET system as well as world-class technology/methodology that is unique.
  - This approach helps ensure that regions focus on objective data when developing apprenticeship programs and in the sourcing and selection of apprentices.
  - This work is associated with best/leading practices around the country and has helped reduce turnover, increase diversity, and mitigate employer expenses.
- Create career pathway models that are informed by job/task analyses and that represent local training programs that can serve the apprenticeship program. These career pathway models can and should be fully integrated with outreach and recruitment efforts described in the next section.
- Synthesize training program modalities, schedules, and other technical components to ensure that training is provided in concert with on-the-job training requirements.
- Help all stakeholders, especially training providers and employers, ensure that learning objectives are aligned with the progressive wage schedule associated with any apprenticeship program.

## Element #3

# Outreach and Recruitment

Outreach and recruitment efforts for any apprenticeship program can be completed by numerous community partners, as well as the employer directly. In any apprenticeship program, specific goals must first be established for outreach and recruitment, including the following:

- Does the employer seek to develop an apprenticeship program with incumbent workers? If so, are there union considerations that need to be factored in with incumbent worker populations and recruitment efforts?
- If the program is not focused on incumbent workers, what is the right strategy for recruitment? Is the employer looking to develop opportunities for portions of the workforce that it doesn't regularly attract? Is the apprenticeship program an opportunity to work with community partners to develop a non-traditional sourcing strategy?
- What kind of long-term talent pipeline needs to be developed to create a sustained apprenticeship strategy? Who are the right community partners to have engaged to develop a talent pipeline?

Any apprenticeship program is a perfect opportunity to integrate a comprehensive career pathway strategy that develops a talent pipeline for the region. An effective career pathway approach includes the following components that should be integrated with the outreach and recruitment effort:

- Career Coaching – the use of comprehensive career coaching processes should be integrated, especially for non-incumbent populations, in order to align the aspirations of individuals with the apprenticeship program.
- Career Pathway Mapping – potential apprentices should develop a comprehensive career pathway map that outlines how their career aspirations aligns with the progressive training schedule.
- Career Portfolios – the use of career portfolios is an effective way to communicate the skills, competencies, and professional aspirations with

employers in a consistent and easy-to-navigate manner.

This overall career pathway approach can be effectively integrated with existing workforce agencies, training providers, and CBOs. By using this approach, regions can create an efficient model for outreach and recruitment that gets beyond just simple advertising and promotion of a workforce opportunity and instead creates the platform by which qualified individuals can be competitively considered as potential apprentices.

### **How CSW Can Help...**

- Integrate effective and evidence-based outreach and recruitment efforts, including career pathway mapping and career portfolio tools to effectively build an inclusive and talented workforce population that can be selected for an apprenticeship program
  - The career pathway mapping process utilizes the comprehensive components of both U.S.D.O.L.'s WIOA Career Pathway definitions as well as best practices from national thought and policy leaders. Our career pathway methodology helps develop a comprehensive picture for both the individual and the employer about his/her aspirations as well as the tools necessary for long-term success.
  - The career portfolio process ensures that individuals can effectively communicate their skills, talents, and aspirations to employers. This is an effective tool, especially for workforce populations that have limited experience in the mainstream workforce or who struggle with traditional sourcing and hiring processes.
- Galvanize regional community partners to create momentum and organize efforts for effective outreach and recruitment. This is particularly useful for:
  - CBOs that already work with participants seeking jobs.
  - Faith-based institutions that provide community and jobs programming.
  - Organizations that specifically serve individuals with limited or no mainstream workforce experience.

## Element #4

# Funding

A comprehensive funding strategy is needed for any successful apprenticeship program that includes the following components:

- Funding that helps build and implement the apprenticeship program itself;
- Funding that helps cover costs that the employer may have to cover for either one-time or ongoing functions associated with the full implementation of an apprenticeship program, including internal management, training, and assessment activities; and
- Funding that helps cover the costs of training, supportive services, and wages for apprentices.

In many states, there are significant opportunities to leverage local and state funding in support of apprenticeship activities. In addition, significant national and federal funding opportunities exist. As part of the overall development of a local apprenticeship program, funding considerations should be flexible and malleable to address local conditions. As part of this work, the following major funding sources should be assessed for application in this work:

- Existing employer support and tuition reimbursement – many employers have existing funds that can be leveraged for apprenticeship programs; the use of these funds should be considered to not only secure employer investment but to leverage additional funding sources that require a local match, where necessary.
- Existing WIOA funding – local workforce agencies may be able to leverage existing WIOA funding sources to support this work, specifically for training, wrap-around services, and other relevant expenses.
- Community-based funding – local foundations may be able to support this kind of work as well, depending on local conditions.
- State and federal funding – numerous competitive funding opportunities already exist in regions around the country and additional opportunities

may soon become available, which can support expenses associated with an apprenticeship program.

In all cases, employers and community partners must agree on a funding model that works best for the region. For instance, workforce agencies should be able to describe a braided funding approach that can be used for an apprenticeship program, training providers should be able to describe student counts they need to run courses and/or cohorts, and employers should be able to outline the various funding components they will make available, in addition to wages, for individuals. The combination of these items will lead to a comprehensive funding model for the region.

#### **How CSW Can Help...**

- Provide technical assistance, research, and guidance on the development of a comprehensive, equitable, and sustainable funding model that addresses both one-time and long-term expenses associated with an apprenticeship program.
- Connect state, federal, and philanthropic resources that are not yet (fully) utilized within the region.
  - For state and federal opportunities, work collaboratively with community partners to develop funding strategies, including the development of proposals and grant requests.
  - For philanthropic opportunities, work with all partners, and especially employers, to position the region in place-based funding opportunities.
- Help “make the case” for funding models, especially with relevant stakeholders that may not be familiar with the value of an apprenticeship program.

## Element #5

# Registration

The final major component of a comprehensive apprenticeship program is to make it official through registration with the United States Department of Labor (DOL). Registering with DOL creates necessary credibility for employers that seek to participate in the program, ensures that individuals who participate are doing so in a manner that guarantees appropriate wages and training progress, and makes available potential funding from state and federal funding sources.

Registration should be done in concert with the State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) to ensure that formal documents associated with registration are complete and comprehensive. In general, the following documents should be completed as part of the registration process for any local program:

- Standards of Apprenticeship – this document outlines the various technical requirements of the apprenticeship, including administrative functions, regulatory functions, training requirements, wage schedules, regional/ employer leadership, and other factors. In general, regions developing their standards should start with boilerplate language and make necessary adjustments to the language as advised by the SAA.
- Appendix A – this document outlines the occupational description, curriculum and RTI structure, the specific wage progression schedule, mentor/apprenticeship ratios, and other related items.
- Appendix B – this document is a formal Apprenticeship Agreement form that is filled out by the apprentice and the program sponsor.
- Appendix C – this document outlines the partners’ affirmative action plan, which describes the region’s commitment to ensure that measures are taken to create opportunities for diversity and equity in hiring and advancement.
- Appendix D – this document outlines the qualifications and selection procedures for the apprenticeship program, including the required credentials, work history, and other common selection components. This document also outlines other employment processes.

- Appendix E – in the case where the program sponsor is the not an employer (for instance, where multiple employers are part of the apprenticeship program), this document serves as the employer acceptance agreement that commits the employer to following the rules, processes, and procedures associated with the Standards of Apprenticeship as well as Appendices A-D.

While many of these documents are technical in nature, they are all informed by the input of employers and community partners alike. These documents should outline the needs and aspirations of these stakeholders while also ensuring that these legal documents meet the requirements for formal registration. In all cases, these documents should be aligned with SAA input as well.

#### **How CSW Can Help...**

- Ensure the necessary engagement of State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) officials so that the registration process is effective and efficient.
- Help employers understand their commitment to the formal registration of an apprenticeship program, including:
  - How they must act and function as an employer.
  - What liabilities do and do NOT exist as a result of registration and the employer acceptance agreement.
- Provide quality control on all documents, not only from a technical perspective but to ensure that the goals and aspirations of all stakeholders are well represented within the formal registration documents.

# Creating Momentum

For regions considering developing or enhancing a formal registered apprenticeship program, CSW can provide the capacity, technical assistance, research leadership, and necessary experience to fully implement a competency- and evidence-based apprenticeship program that meets the needs of all relevant stakeholders. A number of different considerations should be noted:

- First, this work can occur with either a single-employer approach or with multiple employers.
- Second, CSW can support regional efforts utilizing any or all of the five essential elements. If a region needs support with just one element, for example, CSW can effectively support that work while integrating the other established elements.
- Third, relevant stakeholders that aren't included or are briefly mentioned in this document will be engaged, as necessary, by CSW for any regional effort. For instance, labor unions play a very important role in apprenticeship programs across the country, but they aren't present in every regional strategy. Nevertheless, CSW can support and integrate any local partner to create a collaborative strategy for registered apprenticeship programs.

In order to create momentum for this work, the organization uses the following core principles and inputs in its work:

- Full utilization of existing tactics and strategies that are working in the region, to reduce duplication and fully leverage the investment that has already occurred throughout the region.
- World-class policy leadership that has application for practical use at the community and regional level. Our work is rooted in the balance of strong and evidence-based policy development with effective and viable application for practitioners.



- The Collective Impact approach (as understood via Stanford University), which includes the following core components:
  - Development of a common agenda for all stakeholders, including disparate partner groups.
  - Consistent measurement of results so that data is useful and effective for all stakeholders.
  - Mutually reinforcing activities that augment the efforts of everyone involved.
  - Continuous communication to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of common objectives and goals, and the progress toward each of those.
  - The use of backbone organizations (which often times can be CSW) to ensure that all partners can effectively play their role without interrupting the role and momentum of others.

CSW seeks to support regions and initiatives across the country that wish to develop comprehensive registered apprenticeship programs. To connect with CSW, please contact:

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