OHIO STUDENT SUCCESS LEARNING INSTITUTE
MAXIMIZING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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Take inventory: Where do you stand in engaging employers?

Present a continuum of roles and methods for engaging employers

How your college can achieve deeper engagement and stronger student success (Scott Ellsworth)

End Goal: Identify current/new engagement strategies across your work to be even more employer driven
Founded in 1983, JFF is a national nonprofit intermediary. Offices based in Boston, MA, Oakland, CA, and Washington, D.C.

Our work focuses on:
- Increasing college readiness and career success
- Strengthening the workforce talent pipeline and programs
- Expanding economic opportunity.
Jobs for the Future works in some 130 communities in over 40 states.
TAKING INVENTORY

BEFORE I MAKE MY DECISION, I'LL LIKE TO ASK FOR YOUR OPINIONS.

IT'S SUPPOSED TO MAKE YOU FEEL "ENGAGED."

AND YOU ACTUALLY PLAN TO LISTEN TO US?

I'M HOPING IT WILL LOOK THAT WAY ON THE OUTSIDE.
2013 Gallup study—96% of chief academic officers were “extremely or somewhat confident” that there institutions are preparing students for success in the workforce. In contrast, just 11% of employer reps said they believe that graduates have the skills and competencies needed by businesses.

88% of business leaders favor an increased level of collaboration with higher education institutions.

Nature of work has changed (complexity, longevity, composition, and need to upskill).

Convergence of landmark reports

- OECD PIACC Study A Time for the U.S. to Reskill?
- VP Biden’s Ready to Work Initiative
JFF: A RESOURCE GUIDE TO ENGAGING EMPLOYERS

> Responds to the need for building greater college capacity around the level of employer engagement
  - Limited number of employers engaged
  - Little engagement beyond “advisory committees”
  - Low awareness of high-impact employer engagement approaches

> Synthesizes best of recent literature and practice
Effective Employer Engagement is:

- **Continuous** vs. episodic or “one-off” (more than advisory)
- **Strategic** vs. transactional (high-impact partnerships)
- **Mutually Valuable**: creating value for employers as well as the college and students
- **Wide-Ranging**: going beyond “usual suspects”
- **Comprehensive**: engaging in a variety of roles and activities
- **Intensive**: engaging employers in depth on skills & program needs
- **Empowering**: employers assume leadership roles
- **Varied**: using many channels, including employer associations
## Figure 1. Ladder of Employer Engagement

<table>
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<tr>
<th>New Relationship</th>
<th>Working Relationship</th>
<th>Strategic Partnership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key employer role</strong></td>
<td><strong>Level I</strong></td>
<td><strong>Level II</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>Capacity-building</td>
<td>Co-designing</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Stage of relationship</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial contact / new relationship</td>
<td>Establishing trust and credibility</td>
<td>Working relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Activity examples</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss hiring needs, skills, competencies; advise on curricula; contract training; hire graduates</td>
<td>Job site tours; speakers; mock interviews; internships; needs assessment; loan/donate equipment; recruiting</td>
<td>Curriculum and pathway development; adjunct faculty and preceptors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement examples by level</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Western Technical College (Wisconsin Shifting Gears)</td>
<td>&gt; Bristol Community College</td>
<td>&gt; Owensboro Community and Technical College</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; Monroe Community College</td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Automotive Technical Education Collaborative (AMTEC)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>&gt; Columbus State Community College (LogisticsART)</td>
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</table>
## Employers First: Towards a New Employer Engagement Model

Employers:
- Co-design college and business data systems tracking for labor outcomes & feedback
- Provide current and forecasted job & skill needs

Colleges:
- Prior Learning Assessment and credit for prior work experience
- Use of available diagnostic assessment to capture current/transferrable workforce skills

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### Connection to Labor Market

Employers:
- Guaranteed interviews
- Employer Resource Networks (support for new hires at work site)
- Guaranteed feedback loop of performance/data tracking
- High-leverage policy work as regional/state advocates

Colleges:
- Redesigned job placement assistance
- Employee partner recruiting preference plan

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### Connection

Employers:
- Co-design student assessments
- Define job readiness skills
- Participate in student orientation
- Job shadowing before instruction to ensure right career choice

Colleges:
- Enhance advising model w/employers
- Create individual student success plan w/embedded work-based learning

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### Entry

Employers:
- Co-design college and business data systems tracking for labor outcomes & feedback
- Provide current and forecasted job & skill needs

Colleges:
- Prior Learning Assessment and credit for prior work experience
- Use of available diagnostic assessment to capture current/transferrable workforce skills

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### Progression

Employers:
- LMI w/employer validation of pathways
- Co-develop curriculum
- Resources to support pathways (equipment/tuition);
- Example job descriptions/salary/certificates/degrees mapped

Colleges:
- Enhance advising model w/employers
- Create individual student success plan w/embedded work-based learning

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### Completion

Employers:
- Guest or adjunct instructors
- “Hands on” instruction at work-based sites throughout program
- Mentors
- Extensive internships & sponsored (juried) project competitions

Colleges:
- Redesigned pathways with stackable certificates
- Entry/exit points for upskilling incumbent workers
- Intensive faculty training at employer facilities
- Contextualized, learner-centered instruction

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### Employers as active collaborators throughout the entire college experience
Outline various ways you and your college can deepen employer engagement.