Five Steps to Career Pathways

Career pathways involve five stages that follow a rational design model. The process guides regions through data analysis, planning, partnership development, goal setting and the implementation of strategies. Taken together, the career pathways steps represent a continuous improvement process that, if undertaken correctly, will have a systemic and sustainable impact on the performance of the partner organizations.

I. GAP ANALYSIS
   • Assess labor demand (current and projected)
   • Assess labor supply (current and projected)
   • Assess capacity of educational institutions
   • Analyze return on potential investments
   • Choose a sector of focus
   • Scan current service provision
   • Identify service provision gaps

II. CAREER PATHWAYS PLANNING

   PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
   • Identify potential partners
   • Gain partner participation
   • Set mission, vision, and goals
   • Formalize partner roles and responsibilities

   EMPLOYER STRATEGY
   • Identify employers
   • Determine the framework of an employer partnership
   • Map career mobility patterns
   • Gain employer–partner commitment
   • Develop ongoing relationships with employers
PATHWAYS DESIGN
- Illustrate training, education, and career mobility
- Incorporate and align the following programmatic components:
  - Recruitment
  - Assessment
  - Training
  - Work experience
  - Support services/case management
  - Job development and placement
  - Retention services
- Establish data collection protocols
- Organize data management and reporting procedures among partners
- Develop a sustainability strategy

BUDGET AND FUNDING STRATEGY
- Generate a budget
- Identify potential resources, including:
  - Workforce resources
  - Educational resources
  - Private resources (employers, foundations, individual donors)
  - Other (e.g., economic development organizations, youth programs)
- Leverage available resources
- Plan for fundraising and development

III. IMPLEMENTATION
- Develop curriculum
- Recruit and assess participants
- Deliver training
- Provide support services and case management
- Develop work experience opportunities and jobs
- Continue employer development activities
- Utilize data management system
IV. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
   • Conduct regular in-process reviews
   • Review overall performance
   • Evaluate the performance of each partner
   • Make operational adjustments based on evaluations
   • Optimize scale based upon need for services
   • Reevaluate the mission, vision, and goals
   • Document lessons learned

V. EXPAND THE PATHWAY
   • Apply pathways model to additional populations
   • Replicate the pathways process in other sectors of importance to the regional economy