



A definition of CAREER PATHWAYS

A Career Pathway is a series of structured and connected education programs and support services that enable students to advance over time to better jobs and higher levels of education and training. Each step on a career pathway is designed explicitly to prepare students to progress to the next level of employment and/or education. Career pathways target jobs in industries of importance to local and regional economies.










Career pathways provide a way for colleges to give students more clarity and structure in programs of study. They are organized around a sequence of credentials that lead learners in attainable steps towards higher levels of education and work.

Career pathway certificates and degrees are carefully aligned to skill sets needed in a given industry or occupational sector and have relevance, credence, and currency with employers.

Ideally, career pathways are designed to maximize student flow and accomplishment—so that credits are portable; credentials are stackable; and students who need to are able to step in and out of college and employment, building as they go.

When done well,

PATHWAYS:

-  Include **on-ramps** or **bridge programs** for underprepared students with limited basic skills and youth and adults with barriers to employment
-  Span the **entire range of programs** from entry level, intensive “bridge” programs through occupational certificates, transfer, and academic degrees
-  Are **stackable** in design with certificates “nested” in longer transfer and degree structures, always preparing students for the next step
-  **Contextualize** foundational skills to the knowledge and skills needed in a specific occupation or group of occupations
-  Provide an effective framework for workforce development by **aligning** with industry needs and **integrating** the resources of community colleges, other educational institutions, workforce agencies, adult education programs, social service providers, and other stakeholders
-  **Engage employers** actively in pathway development, worksite training, internships, and placements.
-  Focus on **careers in demand** that provide family-sustaining wages and ongoing advancement opportunities as confirmed by industry partners.
-  Include **work based learning** opportunities through structured experiences which could be credit-based and/or paid work experience, internships, or service learning
-  Use and promote **data** and focus on **continuously improving** outcomes



The Career Ladders Project works with community colleges and their education and workforce development partners to provide educational and career advancement opportunities for Californians. HIP® is a CLP guided approach to map career pathways designed to maximize student progression and accomplishment—so that credits are portable; credentials are stackable; and students who need to are able to step in and out of college and employment, building as they go.