



Self-Assessment: Are You Ready for Sustainability?

Use the self-assessment questions below to assess your mature sector partnership and identify where you need to focus to set your partnership up for long-term sustainability. A sustainable partnership means:

- The partnership has a sustainable “organizational home,” that provides ongoing convening support while ensuring employers continue to drive the agenda.
- The regional convening team understands the enduring value of the sector partnership for both companies and community partners, committing ongoing time, energy, and resources to supporting the partnership.
- The partnership continues to attract new employer members and the action agenda continues to evolve as the partnership makes progress and takes on new opportunities.
- The partnership is a vehicle for strong coordination and alignment across multiple levels and institutions of education and training, i.e. the building of true career pathway “systems.”

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Have you established an “organizational home” for your partnership to ensure ongoing convening support, while keeping employers in the driver’s seat?
2. Are you actively cultivating new business leaders, ensuring that the partnership is not overly dependent on a handful of individuals?
3. Are you actively cultivating broader support on your convening team, ensuring that all key partners on the team understand the enduring value of the sector partnership and are committed to continuing to support it? (See text box below)
4. Are business leaders driving a process of re-assessing opportunities and requirements on a regular basis or at least once a year?
5. *For Conveners:*
 - a. Have you made any changes away from dependency on stop gap, soft money to support sector partnerships?
 - b. Have your organizations adopted the sector partnership approach as standard way of engaging and partnering with employers in critical industries? (Or is this an unusual, “unique occurrence”?)
 - c. On a regular basis, do you map out partnership activities and members to identify new ways for individuals to contribute?
 - d. Has your job description informally changed as a result of convening a sector partnership? Has it formally changed?
 - e. Do you have a clear co-staffing agreement/arrangement within and across key organizations? How can this be stronger and more formalized without risking one organization “owning” the sector partnership too exclusively?
6. *For Business Leaders:*
 - a. Are you involved at a deep enough level to move priority areas forward?



- b. Have you considered how you'll stay involved as a leader but also delegate to others in your company?
- c. Have you engaged others in your company in the sector partnership? Have you engaged other companies to be involved?
- d. Is your company (and others participating in the partnership) directly contributing in-kind or financial resources to the partnership, or proactively assisting with identifying financial resources?

7. *For Public Partners:*

- a. Are you shifting how you participate in industry solutions by organizing with program partners around their needs (vs. around our programs)?
- b. Are you finding specific areas for education and training systems/programs to align across and connect vertically in response to this target industry?
- c. Has your program changed how you engage with employers as a result of participation on a sector partnership?
- d. Do you or your program contribute in-kind, staff time and/or direct financial support for the partnership's activities?

Defining the Enduring Value of a Sector Partnership

- **For Companies:**

- A place to address big opportunities for shared competitiveness
- A single table at which to work with public entities
- An opportunity to share costs related to needed solutions

- **For Educators**

- A venue for faster understanding of changing industry needs
- A vehicle to identify, build and refine curriculum, programs and credentials
- The only way to truly create industry-driven career pathway systems

- **For Workforce Developers**

- A way to strategically focus time and resources toward high-impact solutions for industry and workers
- A wholesale vs. a retail approach to serving employers
- A way to create highly customized and therefore highly accurate training solutions for employers that give workers the right training at the right time for jobs that exist now

- **For Economic Developers**

- A place for focused work with existing key industries on critical questions related to competitiveness
- A meaningful venue for working with workforce development and education
- A framework for organizing the strategies needed to support critical industries
- A tool to truly understand the strengths and opportunities of existing industry in a region that can inform retention, growth and attraction strategies



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