

Moving to Action: Using Task Teams Effectively

Once your sector partnership has discerned shared priorities, it's time to move from ideas to action. Task teams—small groups of business leaders and support partners organized around priority areas—help to clarify actionable strategies and mobilize the right business leaders and public partners to begin implementation.

To be most effective, Task Teams require three key elements:

- **The right business leaders** who see a direct connection between the issue at hand and their bottom line and, therefore, are committed to taking action and making progress. Ideally, each task team has a Chair who helps to lead team meetings and recruit other business leaders to participate.
- **The right support partners** who have a role to play in supporting implementation of the strategy. For example, if the task team is addressing workforce needs of the manufacturing sector, you will want to include key education and training partners in manufacturing-related programs in the region. Bring in support partners selectively to ensure that the teams continue to be industry-led; initially, task teams are most effective if business leaders outnumber support partners.
- **Facilitation to help the team develop actionable strategies** and move into implementation. The facilitator acts as a neutral third party, helping the group move to action without pushing a particular agenda. Initially, the facilitator's role is to clarify the team's strategy, helping the team define success and identify concrete action steps. Once the strategy has been developed, the facilitator helps the team get and stay organized, agreeing on who will do what and by when in order to move to action.

This simulation gives you and your team an opportunity to “role play” members of a task team. The goal is to develop an actionable strategy for responding to the needs identified through a health care sector partnership.

Task Team Simulation

Scenario: Greenville Health Care Sector Partnership Workforce Task Team

About the Sector Partnership

- The Greenville Health Sector Partnership is a sector partnership based in a two-county region. The Partnership brings together health providers across diverse health disciplines together with public partners from workforce, education and economic development. The group of more than 30 health care businesses and 10 public partners established the Health Sector Partnership in 2013 to address common issues in the industry.
- *Mission:* To bring together health care business leaders in Greater Greenville to promote and improve health within our communities and to fuel a vibrant health care

sector. We collaborate across disciplines, organizations and communities to seize opportunities, solve problems, and celebrate successes in the region.

- *Four task teams have formed around priority areas:*
 - Education of the public on health care;
 - Coordination of a larger behavioral health solution for the two-county area;
 - Increasing workforce skills relative to diversity awareness, and;
 - Changing state regulations relative to Preadmission Screening and Resident Review

The Workforce Task Team

The goal of the workforce task team is to meet growing workforce needs of the health care industry, now and in the future. The partnership has collectively identified a need to fill critical positions with people that have the right knowledge, skills, and abilities for the jobs. This hasn't been an easy task. Healthcare is a dynamic industry that has experienced significant changes with the Affordable Care Act. Across the state, health care jobs increased by 22% in the last five years. The Greenville Health Sector Partnership has agreed that they need to work on making it easier for health care employers to find a well-trained workforce for the jobs that are available.

The workforce task team is made up of six health care business leaders including the CEO of Greenville Hospital who is chairing the Team. In addition, the Team includes the following support partners:

- High School Health Academy Program Instructor
- Nursing Department Chair, University of Greenville
- Business Services Representative, Greenville Workforce Center
- Dean of Nursing at Greenville Community College

The Challenge

The Workforce Team has identified two key priorities that they would like to address:

- **Strengthen career pathway for CNAs:** CNAs are a critical need across all health settings (acute, long-term, home care) but retention is a challenge since they are entry-level positions with low wages. Employers want to build pathways and opportunities for CNA employees ready to advance to other roles in the industry
- **Increase talent pipeline of nurse practitioners:** There is a large shortage of nurse practitioners in the region and the region currently offers no nurse practitioner training programs.

Your Role

You are participating in a meeting of the Workforce Task Team. Your collective role is to develop solutions to address the two priorities the team is focused on: building a stronger career pathway for CNAs and increasing the talent pipeline of nurse practitioners. You will have 45 minutes to work together as a team to:

- Develop strategies that will likely have an impact on the two core issues your team is addressing;

- Identify opportunities to leverage resources (existing programs, funding streams, staff time, expertise) from support partners to help solve these challenges;
- Agree on specific next steps including who is doing what (commitments from all team members) and by when.

Role Descriptions

CEO of Greenville Hospital, Workforce Team Chair

Background: You have been CEO of Greenville Hospital for the last 7 years. It has been a challenging time with the roll out of the Affordable Care Act and new requirements for the hospital. But the thing that keeps you up at night most often is worrying about your hospital's workforce strategy. As shortages in a few key critical occupations worsen, you've resorted to poaching skilled workers from the hospital in nearby Bluesville, which you realize is an unsustainable strategy. At the same time that you worry about your ability to find the skilled workforce you need, you're frustrated that local schools don't seem to be emphasizing health care careers. You have two sons in high school who have expressed an interest in pursuing medical careers but you've been disappointed in the school's career-focused programming.

Your interests in participating in the healthcare sector partnership:

- You've been an enthusiastic member of the sector partnership since it was first launched. You recognized the opportunity to come together as an industry around the issues that matter to every business but that no single organization can address on its own. That said, you were grateful that the Workforce Center, the Community College, and the local economic development organization have provided convening support since that has helped mitigate some of the competitive dynamics within the industry.
- As a CEO, you have a lot of practice leading teams and so you've played a strong role in helping the Workforce Team hone in on just two top issues to focus on initially: the career pathway for CNAs and the shortage of Nurse Practitioners. You're eager to see some quick wins on both fronts.

CEO of Greenville Long-Term Care, Workforce Team Member

Background: You are new to Greenville, having accepted the CEO position at the Long Term Care Facility just last year. You started your career as a Registered Nurse and have a strong commitment to helping your staff grow their careers. You've been frustrated by your experience working with education partners, both here in Greenville and in Bluesville where you worked previously, because you've found them to be slow in responding to your workforce needs. However, you recognize that the long-term success of your business depends on building stronger relationships with education and training partners in order to prepare the workforce of the future.

Your interests in participating in the healthcare sector partnership:

- You've been excited about participating in the sector partnership and have appreciated having all public support partners seated around the same table, listening to industry's needs.

- You're hopeful that the partnership will prove to be an effective forum to address one of the core challenges impacting the success of your business—your ability to grow and retain a skilled talent pool.

High School Health Academy Program Instructor

Background: You are a Career and Technical Education (CTE) teacher in charge of the health academy program at your high school. Before becoming a teacher you worked for several years as a Registered Nurse at a local hospital and are excited to share what you know with students. You are passionate about exposing your students to the broad range of careers in healthcare and hope to connect students to as many real world opportunities to apply what they are learning as possible. You've been dreaming of establishing a health careers academy that would bring healthcare professionals into your classroom to provide real world projects for students to address and to provide mentoring and support to the students as they try to develop solutions to the healthcare challenges. Your CTE director is excited about the possibilities of your healthcare academy and wants you to develop a presentation about your ideas to share with the administration. You want to make a strong case about how the program that will detail the benefits for students and address the administration's concerns about insurance and liability.

Your interests in participating in the healthcare sector partnership:

- For your health academy to be successful, you need to make sure your curriculum is relevant and aligned with the needs of business. You plan on attending the sector partnership to network with business members and learn more about what the businesses need to be successful.
- Your principal has been very worried about ensuring your school is meeting the state's new graduation requirements and he is worried that something new like the Health Care Academy won't meet those requirements.
- You want students completing your healthcare academy to earn a credential. When you attended the first sector partnership meeting you met a representative from the Greenville community college. You look forward to the opportunity to talk with her further about aligning concurrent enrollment credits with the healthcare academy.
- You are passionate about healthcare and you look forward to sharing ideas with your CTE colleagues from neighboring school districts. With your busy schedules, it has been difficult to find time to get together, so you look forward to the time to connect during sector partnership meetings.

Nursing Department Chair, University of Greenville

Background: You recently joined U of G having come from Arizona State University's nursing program which offers a Bachelor's degree in nursing. You spent 10 years at ASU and developed a nursing pathway program that prepared students to transfer from an Associate in Applied Science at Maricopa Community Colleges to Bachelor of Science program at ASU. You also

developed a strong relationship with Banner Health and worked with them to double the number of nurse practicum placements for students enrolled in your program.

Your interests in participating in the healthcare sector partnership:

- Being new to Greenville, you are looking to build relationships with local health care employers and with other education and workforce development partners in the region. In Arizona, you had a very close working relationship with the community college nursing program and are hoping to make similar connections in Greenville.
- Since you are new to your role, you are reluctant to make any significant commitments without first consulting your faculty and leadership team. From your first few months on the job, you've gotten the sense that some of your faculty are uninterested in partnering with the community college since they feel their training is not as rigorous as U of G.
- You have heard that there is interest in creating a Master's program to prepare Nurse Practitioners but you've gotten feedback from your Dean that there is no budget for a new program and she is skeptical that there is really sufficient demand for Nurse Practitioners to justify a new program.

Business Services Representative at the Greenville Workforce Center

Background: You have been with the workforce center for 6 years and have experience working as an employment specialist, workforce specialist and now a business services representative. You have been able to work across various workforce programs and understand the challenges in training job seekers to be ready to enter the workforce. For the last two years you have been working to build stronger relationships with hospitals in Greenville by hosting job fairs and hiring events. The events at the workforce center are resulting in fewer placements. Your business partners are frustrated by the lack of qualified talent at the job fairs and are looking for solutions to fill their pipeline.

Your interests in participating in the healthcare sector partnership:

- You have a good understanding of the barriers that CNAs face in entering and advancing in the healthcare industry because you have placed many individuals into this role. You have worked with both entry-level jobseekers interested in entering the healthcare industry as well as with incumbent workers currently working as CNAs but looking for opportunities to move up. You are passionate about helping people find jobs and careers and are sometimes frustrated when CNA positions turn out to be dead end jobs.
- You have been a part of many conversations with industry discussing the challenges they have faced with an unskilled and unprepared workforce. With the high demand for nurse practitioners you would like to focus on preparing incumbent workers for the upcoming job openings.
- It has been a challenge to build a relationship with the Community College and you get the impression that the Dean of Nursing looks down on the workforce center. The college is also resistant to changing their curriculum and program structure, as it is a lengthy process, but you've heard from jobseekers that their programs are difficult to complete when working a full time job.

- You have gathered your workforce data for CNAs and your boss, the WIB Director, is bought in to prioritizing training for CNAs and in health care in general. The partnership provides a great opportunity to understand the needs for CNAs first hand.

Dean of Nursing at Greenville Community College

Background: You have been with Greenville Community College for 25 years and are proud to have developed a well-recognized nursing program that has some of the highest job placement rates of any program at Greenville Community College. You also started your career as a Registered Nurse and are passionate about the field.

Your interests in participating in the healthcare sector partnership:

- You and your colleagues in the Department pride yourself on keeping up-to-date with industry dynamics and working closely with your industry partners. You have longstanding relationships with your advisory board members (many have been on the board for over 10 years). You were somewhat skeptical of the healthcare sector partnership meetings at first since you felt it might place a burden on your key advisory board members to ask them to attend another meeting, you know that they are bombarded by various Advisory Boards for education and workforce programs. But at the two meetings you've attended, you've found it valuable to learn about some of the changes in the healthcare sector overall. Maybe this partnership will provide an opportunity to align efforts across the various programs.
- You're looking for help in building stronger connections between your program and Greenville University's nursing program. With the new Institute of Medicine requirement that a majority of nurses have Bachelor's degrees (as opposed to Associate's degrees) by 2020, you have been working hard to shift your program's focus to prepare more students to continue on to get their BSN degrees. It has been challenging to build a strong partnership with the University of Greenville's nursing department because they have been going through changes in leadership recently but just this spring the department brought a new Chair on board who came from Arizona where she developed a pathway program from an Associate in Applied Science to Bachelor of Science at ASU and you are hopeful that this will help you create a stronger transfer program for your nursing students.
- You need some help in finding more practicum placements for your nursing students. Every semester it's a struggle to get all of your students placed and you could use some more connections to health care employers to ensure your students can access quality placements.

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