



Team Time Worksheets

Next Gen Sector Partnership Academy

Over the course of the Academy, you will have three opportunities to come together with your team to make a plan for strengthening sector partnerships in your region. These worksheets are designed to guide your team time discussions, helping you assess your current efforts and identify actions for moving forward.

MANY TABLES, MANY KNOCKS 2

MAPPING YOUR UNIVERSE OF CONNECTIONS 3

PREPARING TO LAUNCH 4

 ACTION PLANNING TO LAUNCH A PARTNERSHIP 5

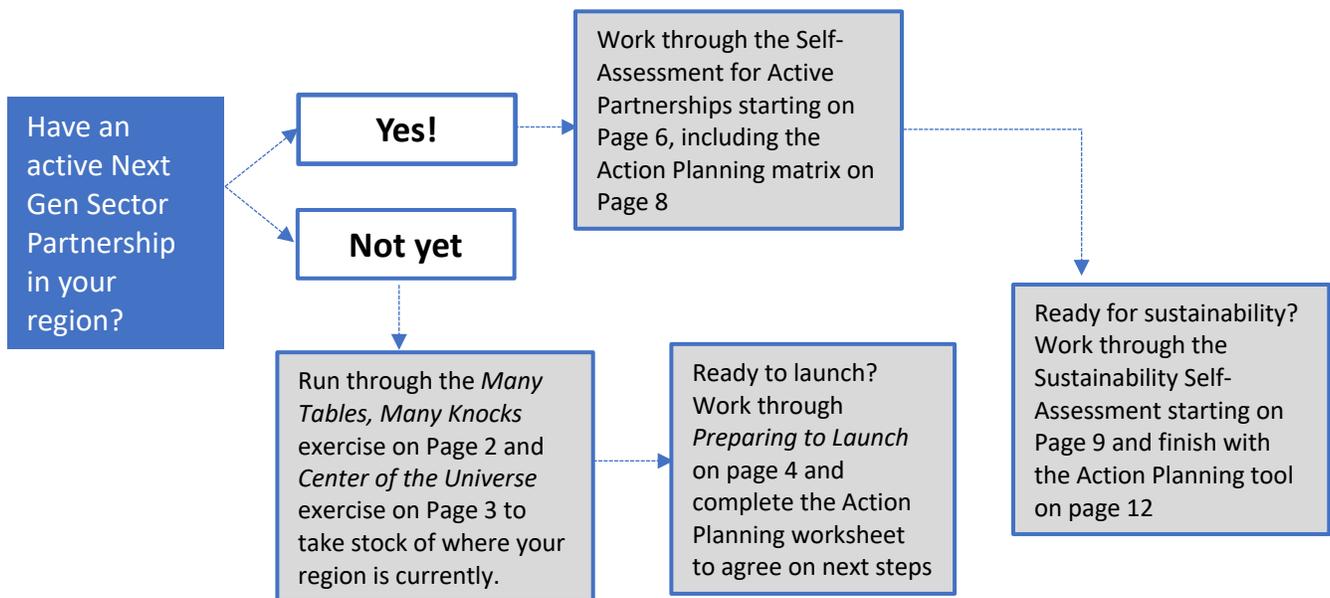
SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS 6

 ACTION PLANNING FOR ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS 8

SELF-ASSESSMENT: READY FOR SUSTAINABILITY? 9

 ACTION PLANNING TO STRENGTHEN SUSTAINABILITY 12

WHERE SHOULD I START?





MANY TABLES, MANY KNOCKS

A Group Exercise to Diagnose Fragmented Industry Engagement

Step 1: Journey-mapping the Business Experience

Brainstorm *all* the experiences (good and bad) that businesses have with your programs, or with the public “system” generally. What do they say about us?

Examples of what we think businesses say about us: *Didn't I just talk to you? Wait, who are you? There are so many of you. No communication, inefficient, waste of taxpayer dollars. Inconsistent. This is just a workforce thing. If I provided services like yours, I'd be finished. Or on the flipside: Wow, that was just what I needed. I just didn't know you could do that.*

Now, brainstorm the experiences we have with them! What do we say, good and bad?

Examples of what we say about them: *They are “employers” (i.e. we forget they are actually businesses first). Deep pockets, short arms. Unrealistic, unwilling. Bottom-line driven, not big picture. The don't know what they want or need. Or on the flipside: Our programs only exist because of them, we owe them more. They are incredible partners and investors.*

Step 2: Mapping the Many Tables

Identify the “tables”, groups, venues, and other gatherings where businesses are brought together. These might be boards, councils, forums, task forces or associations, convened by colleges, workforce boards, Chambers, economic development organizations, community-based organizations, etc. Or maybe employers self-convene for a particular purpose.

- List them out for your region or community, and answer: what is the purpose of each table? Is there overlap? Are there gaps? What types of businesses are involved? How well is each table serving its intended purpose?

Step 3: Mapping the Many Knocks

Now think about the many “knocks” that employers/businesses get from public or community organizations/programs. These are the points of individual engagement or outreach, some for business service purposes, others for job development purposes.

- Try to list them all out – who is doing this? What programs and positions or people? What's the purpose of each engagement or outreach effort? Is there overlap? Gaps? Redundancy? Or a risk of employer fatigue?



MAPPING YOUR UNIVERSE OF CONNECTIONS

Step 1: Brainstorm the Actors in your Universe

Think about the institutions, organizations and agencies that will be/should be involved in your sector partnership activities. Brainstorm a list of the principal actors in each of these systems and organizations. E.g. think about trade associations, chambers of commerce, unions, workforce development organizations, education and training institutions, support service providers, investors, others. Where you can't name the principal actor (i.e. actual person with some influence in an organization), just list the organization.

Step 2: Code your Actors.

Take a moment to code your principal actors/organizations. Code them in two ways: 1) Mark them with an "V.I." for Very Important, an "I" for Important, and a "N.I." for Not Important, depending on how important you see their role in your industry-led partnership efforts; and 2) Mark them with a "S" for Strong relationship, a "M" for Mediocre relationship, and a "W" for weak relationship, depending on your relationship with each of them.

Step 3: Draw your Universe

Start with a blank piece of paper. Draw yourself in the center. Now draw all the other actors in your universe around you, as big circles if they are "Very Important," medium circles if they are just "Important," and small circles if they are "Not Important." But watch *where you* draw them: very close to you if you have a strong relationship with them, far away from you if you have a weak relationship, and somewhere in-between if the relationship is mediocre. What do you notice? Any surprises? What's been confirmed for you? Do you see any strengths or opportunities you had not thought of? Any gaps you want to address?

Step 4: Share your Map with your Team

Discuss what emerged as insights. How do your individual maps differ, or how are they the same? Are there different experiences or interpretations of how well actors behave as a "system" vs. independent actors, or are the interpretations similar? How would or does Industry view this Universe? What about jobseekers or students? What are the implications on your sector, or industry-led partnership, work?

(This exercise modified from the Aspen Institute's Workforce Strategy Institute (WSI) *Sector Skills Academy*)



PREPARING TO LAUNCH

1. **Have we built a sector support team?**

- Do key stakeholders in our region (from education, workforce development and economic development) recognize how Next Gen Sector Partnerships can act as the shared table where they can work with businesses from a targeted sector, understand their needs, and collaborate with other public partners to develop responsive and coordinated solutions?
- Are we *willing* to agree on at least one sector to target (*even if we don't know that sector yet*) for a Next Gen Sector Partnership and use the partnership as a “shared table” (vs. operating via multiple, independent employer engagement efforts)?
- Have we agreed on clear roles and responsibilities on the sector support team? Who is the lead convener or co-convener?

2. **Have we defined our scope of industry focus?**

- Has our regional team jointly agreed on which industry sectors merit our collective action in launching a sector partnership? Did we use labor market information, combined with our on-the-ground knowledge about industries, to make these selections? Which sector is first? Or next?
- Will the scope of our partnership (both definition of the industry and geographic footprint) make sense to business and industry? Will businesses likely share common opportunities and challenges? Does the geographic scope we've identified follow the footprint of the industry? (Beware of falling into the trap of scoping your partnership around jurisdictional boundaries or service areas if they aren't likely to make sense to business).
- What more do we need to know about the industry we have chosen?

3. **Who are our business champions who could sign an invitation letter and/or host the first launch meeting?**

- Who are or could be business chairs, individuals who could help convene other sector employers for a launch meeting? Remember to focus on ‘civic entrepreneurs’; a certain kind of leader who not only has decision-making authority at his or her business but who also understands that the long-term success of his/her company is linked to the broader prosperity of the community.
- Which companies and leaders do we need to approach to gauge their interest? How do we identify and recruit strong co-chairs? Who is going to drive this outreach? What is the timeline?



4. Who are or could be business participants that would be invited to a launch meeting?

- Which sub-sectors and which employers within those sub-sectors should be invited?
- Have we considered building an invitation list that represents that full diversity of the industry? Consider size of company as well as gender and race/ethnicity of individuals being invited, aiming for a balanced group that represents the demographics of your community.

ACTION PLANNING TO LAUNCH A PARTNERSHIP

Target Sector: _____

Actions	Timeline	Commitments (Who is Responsible?)



SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

This worksheet will help your team assess where your partnership is and what is needed to move forward. The questions below are grounded in common success factors of partnerships.

What Does Success Look Like?	Where is Our Partnership Now?
1. Business leaders set and drive the partnership's agenda.	<i>Is active business participation in the partnership growing? (i.e. number of business leaders at partnership meetings is increasing, not decreasing)</i>
2. Business co-chairs taking active leadership roles in building out the partnership, recruiting other business leaders and building teams around priority areas.	<i>Are business co-chairs in place, actively setting the partnership's agenda and recruiting other business leaders?</i>
3. A support (non-industry) organization acts as a lead convener, or two act as co-conveners, to ensure backbone support is provided to the industry leaders and their task forces or committees, including call coordination, meeting facilitation, follow through, etc.	<i>Does the sector partnership convening (or support) team include multiple community partners, across education, workforce, and economic development?</i>
4. A team of community support partners (including education, workforce, and economic development) actively support the partnership and leverage their programs to support implementation of partnership priorities.	<i>Are we finding a role for at least some of them in the early stages (e.g. facilitation of priority areas, adding expertise/resources, contributing to creation of industry-driven deliverables/activities)?</i>



What Does Success Look Like?	Where is Our Partnership Now?
<p>5. Industry champions are taking an active role in transforming partnership ideas into real action and deliverables</p>	<p>a. <i>Have we established teams of employers, including employer leads, to advance specific priority areas, moving from ideas to action?</i></p> <p>b. <i>Have we achieved clarity around outcomes and strategies in key areas for action?</i></p> <p>c. <i>Have we developed a written Action Plan?</i></p> <p>d. <i>Are business co-chairs in place, actively setting the partnership's agenda and recruiting other business leaders?</i></p>
<p>6. The partnership has accomplished some “early wins” while working toward longer-term goals.</p>	<p>a. <i>Have we identified and acted on opportunities for early wins? Have we celebrated and promoted these early wins to build a sense of momentum?</i></p> <p>b. <i>Are we tracking progress on action items and communicating successes?</i></p>
<p>7. The partnership has become a mechanism to understand and address disconnects/gaps among education and training systems that should be working together.</p>	<p>a. <i>Are we plugging in community partners to help implement partnership priorities? Have community partners been actively contributing to action committees, in partnership with business leaders?</i></p> <p>b. <i>In response to industry, are we starting to see where there are clear connections and clear gaps across levels of education (K-12, college) and education/training systems (K-12, college/university, adult education, workforce training, etc.)? Do we have a plan for addressing those gaps and improving coordination among public partners in response to industry needs?</i></p>



ACTION PLANNING FOR ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Based on the self-assessment, prioritize up to four clear areas that need improvement in your partnership(s).

Discuss and agree to needed changes, steps and who/by when the changes will be implemented.

Action Areas to Strengthen	Goal	Action Steps	Commitments
Identify 3-4 areas	What do you want to accomplish?	How will you do this?	Who will do this and by when?



SELF-ASSESSMENT: READY FOR SUSTAINABILITY?

This worksheet will help your team identify areas to focus on to set your partnership up for long-term sustainability. Start by working through the self-assessment matrix and then complete the action planning tool below to agree on needed next steps.

What Does Success Look Like?	Where is Our Partnership Now?
<p>1. The partnership has a sustainable “organizational home,” that provides ongoing convening support while ensuring businesses continue to drive the agenda.</p>	<p><i>All Partners:</i></p> <p><i>a. Have we established an “organizational home” for our partnership to ensure ongoing convening support, while keeping employers in the driver’s seat?</i></p> <p><i>For Conveners:</i></p> <p><i>b. Have we made any changes away from dependency on stop gap, soft money to support sector partnerships?</i></p> <p><i>c. Has our organization(s) adopted the sector partnership approach as standard way of engaging and partnering with businesses in critical industries? (Or does this feel like an unusual, “unique occurrence”)?</i></p> <p><i>d. On a regular basis, do we map out partnership activities and members to identify new ways for individuals to contribute?</i></p> <p><i>e. Has my job description informally changed as a result of convening a sector partnership? Has it formally changed?</i></p> <p><i>f. Do we 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?</i></p>
<p>2. The regional support team understands the enduring value of the sector partnership for both companies and community partners, committing ongoing</p>	<p><i>All Partners</i></p> <p><i>a. Are we actively cultivating broader support, ensuring that all key partners on the team understand the <u>enduring value</u> of the sector partnership and are committed to continuing to support it?</i></p>



<p>time, energy, and resources to supporting the partnership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For Companies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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
<p>3. The partnership continues to attract new business members and the action agenda continues to evolve as the partnership makes progress and takes on new opportunities.</p>	<p><i>All Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Are we actively cultivating new business leaders, ensuring that the partnership is not overly dependent on a handful of individuals?</i> b. <i>Are business leaders driving a process of re-assessing opportunities and requirements on a regular basis or at least once a year?</i>



	<p><i>For Business Leaders:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>c. Are you involved at a deep enough level to move priority areas forward?</i> <i>d. Have you considered how you'll stay involved as a leader but also delegate to others in your company?</i> <i>e. Have you engaged others in your company in the sector partnership? Have you engaged other companies to be involved?</i> <i>f. 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?</i>
<p>4. 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."</p>	<p><i>For Public Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Are we shifting how we participate in industry solutions by organizing with program partners around their needs (vs. around our programs)?</i> <i>b. Are we finding specific areas for education and training systems/programs to align and connect in response to industry needs?</i> <i>c. Has our program changed how we engage with employers as a result of participation in a sector partnership?</i> <i>d. Do we or our program contribute in-kind, staff time and/or direct financial support for the partnership's activities?</i>



ACTION PLANNING TO STRENGTHEN SUSTAINABILITY

Based on the sustainability self-assessment above, prioritize up to four areas that will lead to sustainable partnership(s). Discuss and agree to clear needed changes, steps and who and by when these changes will be implemented.

Sustainability Factors to Strengthen Identify up to 4	Goal What do you want to accomplish?	Action Steps How will you do this?	Commitments Who will do this and by when?