How Do We Ensure a Prepared and Thriving Workforce?

Center for Civic Engagement

March 2017
About This Issue Guide

The purpose of this Issue Guide is to provide an overview and structure of the complicated issues related to workforce. It will also offer three Ideas, or possible paths, that provide advantages and disadvantages relative to that idea. The three Ideas stem directly from multiple community Interview Forums. Using the Kettering Foundation’s method of Deliberative Dialogue, this Issue Guide will help us to talk productively about a topic of common importance, to recognize its complexities, to come to a shared understanding, and find potential paths to action.

What Is Deliberative Dialogue?
It is not a debate and it is not about reaching agreement or consensus. It is about looking for a shared direction guided by what we most value. It is about thinking together and examining the consequences of possible ideas regarding challenging problems.

A Framework
This issue guide provides a brief overview of the problem and outlines three ideas based on community interviews, each rooted in a shared concern. It weighs the advantages and drawbacks of different approaches to address this issue.

We Engage in Deliberation by:
• Getting beyond the initial positions we hold to expose our deeper motivations and values—that is, the things we most care about like safety, freedom, or justice.
• Carefully weighing the views of others and recognizing the impact various ideas would have on what others hold as valuable.
• Working through the conflicting emotions that arise when various options pull on what we—and others—hold as valuable.

It is important to remember that, as a group, we are dealing with broader underlying concerns that are not defined by our career or our position in the community. Your work here is to get down to the basic values that define us as invested citizens, rather than as business owners or employees.

One Effective Way to Hold a Deliberative Forum*

- Introduce the issue to be deliberated.
- Ask people to describe how the issue has affected them. OR Ask people how the issue has played out in their community.
- Consider each option one at a time. Allow equal time for each.
- Review the conversation as a group, identifying any areas of common ground as well as issues that must still be worked through. Allow enough time for this.

*This is not the only way to hold a forum. Some communities hold multiple forums.
Introduction

A strong local economy is vital to the well-being of the Monadnock Region. This includes the availability of good jobs as well as a workforce who is prepared and willing to step into those jobs. In our current era of globalization, automation, and shifting demographics, it is important to consider: **what are the primary issues we face and what can be done to ensure that we have a prepared and thriving workforce, now and in the future?**

According to the Manufacturing Industry, the Health Care Industry, as well as large and small businesses in our region, there are plenty of jobs. They reported that there is a lack of a trained, educated, and prepared workforce. For the Manufacturing Industry, **these limitations inhibit growth and economic capacity**. For the Healthcare Industry, these limitations are reaching a level of serious concern; if not addressed, there is potential for adverse effects in meeting the healthcare needs of our community. For large and small businesses, these limitations can force them to make difficult decisions, which could result in a relocation of the business to another community or out of state.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Care Industry Sector - 2,167 postings</th>
<th>Job Ads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O*Net Code</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-1141.00</td>
<td>Registered Nurses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-1123.00</td>
<td>Physical Therapists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-1014.00</td>
<td>Nursing Assistants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-2061.00</td>
<td>Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-9111.00</td>
<td>Medical and Health Services Managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-1122.00</td>
<td>Occupational Therapists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-1127.00</td>
<td>Speech-Language Pathologists</td>
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<tr>
<td>31-9094.00</td>
<td>Medical Transcriptionists</td>
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<td>29-1141.03</td>
<td>Critical Care Nurses</td>
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<td>43-6013.00</td>
<td>Medical Secretaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>31-9092.00</td>
<td>Medical Assistants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-1171.00</td>
<td>Nurse Practitioners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 1. Source: Labor/Insight, Burning Glass Technologies, NH Results 6/1-7/31, 2016
Due to population demographics and a decrease in migration into our state, **NH has become a graying state** (see Fig. 2).

**As of August 2016, 20,246 workers will retire from the manufacturing industry in the next ten years.** To fill those positions and maintain the current numbers, we will need 2,024 employees each year. These figures do not include growth in the industry.

![Fig. 2 shows the increase in the percentage of the population that is 65+. NH is getting older. In 2010, 65+ citizens made up just over %10. It is projected in 2040 that 65+ citizens will make up %30 of the NH population.](image)

Additionally, **a new generation of workers is seeking flexibility in the workforce and placing a high value on living in a vibrant and growing community.**

Younger people are focused on family dynamics and **worldview’s that may differ from traditional perspectives.**

Young students feel disconnected from potential careers, lacking adequate exposure. Potential employees that differ from the traditional idea of an ideal employee want to work and encounter **multiple barriers** that make obtaining employment extremely difficult.

Filling these gaps and creating a sustainable workforce has become a complex issue.

In the following pages, we offer three proposed ideas that are provided to help frame your discussion. These are not mutually exclusive choices, but rather initial ideas to start and guide the conversation.
IDEA ONE: Promoting and Strengthening Existing Resources

From this perspective, we need to look at the resources, organizations, partnerships, and initiatives that already exist, finding ways to improve and increase interconnectivity. The emphasis on creating a pipeline of existing resources, filling the gaps in the system instead of using energy to create new resources may prove to be an efficient and sustainable direction. In addition, strengthening and investing in our existing training and education resources may ensure a strong pathway to a thriving workforce.

What Can Be Done:

- Identify programs and models that are working and replicate them for other industries
- Publicize what is working through Print and social media
- Identify source or individual that can identify gaps in the current workforce network in a sustainable manner
- Encourage and support current programs of study offered by our colleges, universities, and businesses

Concerns:

- Each industry is unique and may need a different structure or approach
- Publication may threaten confidentiality
- May incur extra cost to businesses
- Potential lack of funding to focus on specific industry training and education

“We are like islands in the sea, separate on the surface but connected in the deep.” — William James
IDEA TWO:

Focus on Addressing the Vision and Value for a New Generation of Employees

From this perspective, employers need to consider that the new generation of employees’ vision of a “career” and/or “job” may be different from traditional thinking. Shifts in culture and technology may require a reevaluation of education, training and the workplace environment. Thinking “outside the box” may provide the opportunities for innovation and evolution that bring value to future employees. Looking beyond the traditional work ethic and principles have the potential for creating a sustainable and highly-qualified workforce. Students across educational institutions have similar desires to previous generations concerning work including: feeling fulfilled, financial security, and enjoyable work conditions. Sweeping generalizations about millennials are not uncommon and may be shaping the way employers or industries view the younger generation (see Fig. 3). Innovative thinking can provide employees with fulfilling work while accommodating the changing needs and wants of the workforce.
"I think the younger generation, the people poised to dominate the workforce, are more socially conscious. They are more demanding in terms of environment and how that environment contributes to their life."

- Helmut Jahn

**What Can Be Done:**
- Provide more flexibility with scheduling, family leave, or workplace structure
- Offer paid family leave
- Institute quality childcare at the workplace
- Businesses provide more subsidized education for opportunities in the workplace
- Communities need to provide a culture of music, arts, and entertainment
- K-12 educators provide “real world” training in applying for jobs, writing resumes, and procuring internships
- Shift employment opportunity members of the community that may not have been considered previously, including those with disabilities or language barriers

**Concerns:**
- Change in workplace culture could cause a period of tension in which shift or change is met with resistance
- Extra cost to employer
- Management and liability barriers
- May decrease emphasis on standard curriculum
IDEA THREE: Create New Collaborations for a Sustainable Workforce

From this perspective, by stepping outside of individual silos there is greater potential for creating a sustainable system to ensure a qualified workforce. Conversations between parents, students, teachers, business, healthcare, education and community leaders encourage interconnection and inclusivity for problem solving. Creating new ways that all members of society can be involved in the workforce is vital to a thriving community. Economic growth is interdependent and necessitates community members working together.

What can be done:

- Look for innovative and creative ways to incorporate marginalized groups into the workforce
- Involve service sectors
- Support collaborations between students and business/community.
- Consider after school programs for experiential learning, in preparation for a workforce
- Create school programs that partner with businesses
- Hold local school board meetings in healthcare and manufacturing facilities
- Connect unemployment staff with employers at industrial sites

Concerns:

- Using large amounts of energy to recreate existing connections

“It is equally important to know if we have a happy and engaged workforce as it is to have a profitable bottom line.” - Vern Dosch
### Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idea One: Existing Resources</th>
<th>Idea Two: Innovation</th>
<th>Idea Three: Collaborate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benefit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Concern</strong></td>
<td><strong>Benefit</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replicate successful models across industries</td>
<td>-Industries are unique and models may not be able to translate between industries</td>
<td>-Innovative and creative ways to incorporate unlikely groups into the workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicize success through marketing</td>
<td>-Publication may threaten confidentiality or competition</td>
<td>-Extra cost to employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify sources to identify gaps</td>
<td>-May incur extra cost to businesses</td>
<td>-Offer quality childcare at the workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage and support current programs offered by local institutions</td>
<td>-Potential lack of funding to focus on industry-specific training and education</td>
<td>-Provide culture of music, arts, and entertainment</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Include members of the community that are marginalized or previously dismissed</td>
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*You workforce is your most valuable asset. The knowledge and skills they have represent the fuel that drives the engine of business—and you can leverage that knowledge.* —Harvey Mackay
Feedback
If you participated in this forum, please fill out a questionnaire, which is located in this issue guide or can be accessed online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GVTFVJM. If you are filling out the enclosed questionnaire, please return the completed form to your facilitators.

This issue guide was prepared by the Center for Civic Engagement at Antioch University New England and is the property of the authors.
March, 2017
Keene, NH

Sources and References include:
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