# Growing Corporate Training Revenue

Five Strategies to Scale Employer Outreach

# Community College Executive Forum

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# Supporting Members in Best Practice Implementation

## Beyond this Publication

This publication is only the beginning of our work to assist members in growing corporate training revenue. Recognizing that ideas seldom speak for themselves, our ambition is to work actively with members of the Community College Executive Forum to decide which practices are most relevant for your organization, to accelerate consensus among key constituencies, and to save implementation time.

For additional information about any of the services below—or for an electronic version of this publication—please visit our website (eab.com/ccef), email your organization's dedicated advisor, or email research@eab.com with "Community College Executive Forum 'Growing Corporate Training Revenue' Request" in the subject line.

**Implementation Road Maps and Tools**

Throughout the publication, this symbol will alert you to any corresponding tools and templates available in the "Implementation Toolkit" at the back of this book. These tools are also available on our website at eab.com.

**Recorded and Private-Label Webconference Sessions**

Our website includes a recording of an hour-long webconference walking through the practices highlighted in this publication. Forum experts are also available to conduct private webconferences with your team.

**Unlimited Expert Troubleshooting**

Members may contact the consultants who worked on any report to discuss the research, troubleshoot obstacles to implementation, or run deep on unique issues. Our staff conducts hundreds of telephone consultations every year.

**Facilitated Onsite Presentations**

Our experts regularly visit campuses to lead half-day to day-long sessions focused on highlighting key insights for senior leaders or helping internal project teams select the most relevant practices and determine next steps.

# Top Lessons from the Study

**U.S. Employers Invest Large and Growing Sum in Workforce Training**
In 2013, employers across the United States spent $177 billion on formal training for their workers. About half of this figure went to external training providers, either in the form of contract training ($57 billion) or tuition reimbursement ($28 billion). Employer training expenditures fluctuate with the overall health of the economy. As the U.S. continues to recover from the Great Recession, employers will likely invest more in upskilling their workers.

**Training Provides Supplemental College Revenue as State Funding and Enrollments Decline**

To date, few states have restored higher education funding to pre-Recession levels. Meanwhile, community college administrators are struggling to sustain tuition revenue as high school graduating classes shrink, adult learners return to the workforce, and enrollment competition grows from other postsecondary sectors. In this climate, corporate training represents an alternative revenue stream for colleges that require additional funding to sustain activities central to their mission.

**Lack of Proactive Employer Outreach Limits Colleges' Training Revenue**
Currently, postsecondary institutions capture only a small share of the vast and growing corporate training market; just 9% of U.S. employers maintain a formal training partnership with a college or university. Many community colleges already have the capacity to offer customized onsite training at a competitive price point. However, they largely rely on inbound inquiries, and they lack an outreach strategy to expand employer awareness of their training solutions.

**Corporate Training Sales Require Business-to-Business Marketing Channels**
Because corporate training has a narrowly defined target audience, traditional advertising channels such as mass media typically yield low returns on investment. Instead, college administrators should market corporate training through industry-specific channels that allow them to build relationships with local business leaders. For example, colleges can sponsor events hosted by regional industry associations, trade presses, or chambers of commerce. Alternately, college administrators can convene an advisory council of industry leaders to meet quarterly with college executives.

**Needs Assessment Surveys Generate Warm Leads for Training Partnerships**
Generic outreach methods such as cold calls and direct mail rarely resonate in business-to-business settings. Instead, employers more often respond to outreach from training providers if it addresses their organizations' specific needs. To identify employer-specific needs, colleges can partner with local industry associations to survey association members on hard-to-fill positions and high-demand skills. College staff can then use survey responses to craft customized outreach messages that match each responding employer's talent gaps to the college's most relevant training solutions.

**Shared Cohorts Allow Small Employers to Purchase Contract Training**

Many community colleges serve fragmented markets that primarily consist of small businesses, few of which can purchase contract training at scale. To make contract training viable for these organizations, college administrators can allow employers with similar needs to purchase seats in shared training cohorts. Program staff should invite participating employers to provide feedback on proposed curricula to ensure that shared trainings meet individual employers' needs.

**Sales Commissions and Merit Bonuses Incentivize Outbound Marketing**

To combat overreliance on inbound inquiries, select community colleges have introduced sales incentives that encourage staff to proactively identify and recruit new clients. For example, staff may receive commissions on every training contract they sell, or they may qualify for merit bonuses if they meet quarterly revenue goals. Some administrators may find these practices controversial because they lack precedent at many community colleges. However, progressive college leaders are finding these practices valuable not only to motivate staff but also to recruit and retain them.

# Understanding Your Current Practice

The following questions are designed to guide members in evaluating their current activities. Members may use them to determine if the full range of best practices is in use on their campuses and to identify opportunities for investment or action.

| Scaling Employer Outreach | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Do you primarily market corporate training through industry-specific channels that reach business executives? | | |
| 2. Do you sponsor events hosted by local chambers of commerce, professional associations, and trade presses? | | |
| ***If you answered "No" to Questions 1–2, please turn to pages 13–14.*** | | |
| 3. Have you assembled executive advisory councils that allow industry leaders to develop relationships with senior-level college leaders? | | |
| 4. Do advisory council meetings include facilitated discussions of training needs across participating organizations? | | |
| ***If you answered "No" to Questions 3–4, please turn to pages 15-16.*** | | |
| 5. Do you survey local employers on skill gaps within their organization before staff attempt to sell training solutions? | | |
| 6. Do you partner with local professional associations to distribute needs assessment surveys to member organizations? | | |
| 7. Do you use needs assessment survey responses to customize outreach messages to individual employers? | | |
| ***If you answered "No" to Questions 5–7, please turn to pages 17–19.*** | | |
| 8. Do you allow small businesses with common training needs to purchase seats in shared training cohorts? | | |
| 9. Do you provide opportunities for all employers who participate in a shared cohort to provide input on training content? | | |
| ***If you answered "No" to Questions 8–9, please turn to pages 20–22.*** | | |
| 10. Do you set staff performance goals that reflect their ability to generate revenue (e.g., net revenue earned, contracts signed)? | | |
| 11. Do you incentivize staff to recruit and retain training clients through sales commissions or merit bonuses? | | |
| 12. Do you leverage performance incentives to recruit experienced sales and project management staff from other industries? | | |
| ***If you answered "No" to Questions 10–12, please turn to pages 23–25.*** | | |

# Scaling Employer Outreach

# Cyclical Growth in Corporate Training Market

In 2013, employers across the United States spent $177 billion on formal training for their workers.[1] This figure reflects the magnitude of the corporate training market. Each year, employers spend three times more on training than the entire two-year college sector spends on instruction, academic support, and related expenses.

Nearly one-third ($57 billion) of employer training expenditures goes toward contract training, in which an external provider trains a cohort of employees. Another 16% ($28 billion) goes toward tuition reimbursement, which covers the cost of educational programs that employees pursue outside of working hours.

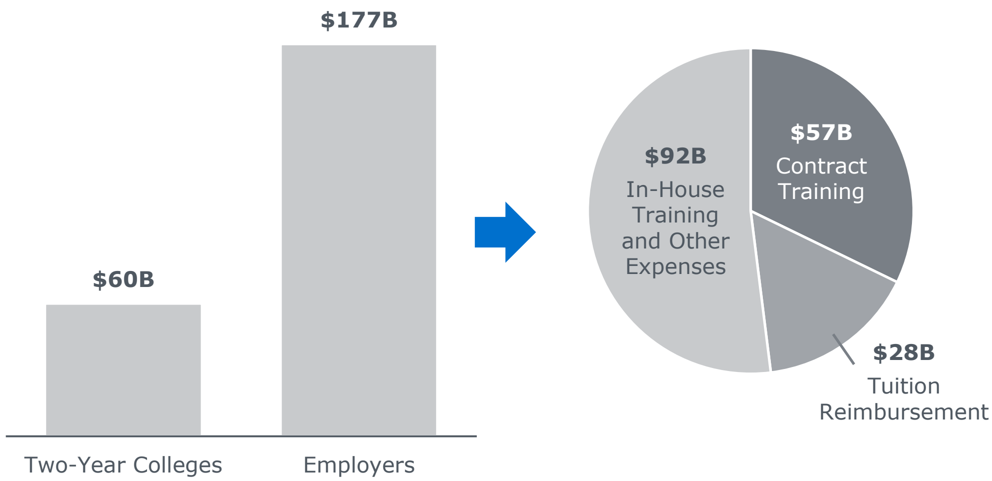
Because employer training expenditures vary with the economic cycle, demand for corporate training will grow as the U.S. recovers from the Great Recession. In fact, the corporate training market already shows early signs of cyclical expansion; employers spent 15% more on training in 2013 than in the previous year.

## U.S. Companies Spend Large and Growing Sum on Training and Development

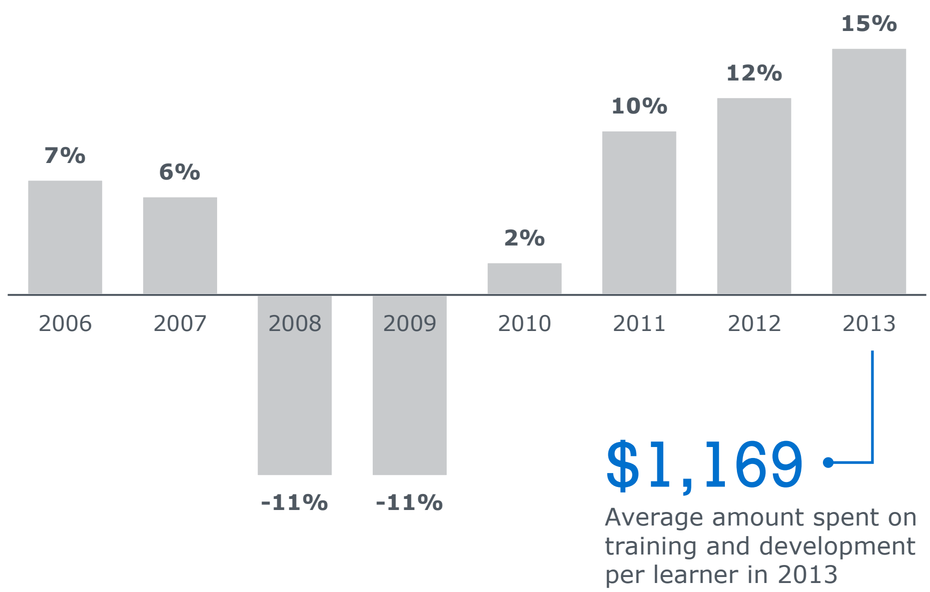
### The Invisible Postsecondary Market

*Education and Training Expenditures, 2013*

*Approximate Distribution of Employer Expenditures, 2013*




### Year-Over-Year Change in U.S. Corporate Training Expenditures[2]




1) Formal training occurs through scheduled, regimented learning sessions. In contrast, informal training occurs through on-the-job experience.
2) N=300 organizations.

Source: Anthony P. Carnevale, Jeff Strohl, Artem Gulish, *College Is Just the Beginning*, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, Feb. 2015; *The Corporate Learning Factbook 2014: Benchmarks, Trends, and Analysis of the U.S. Training Market*, Bersin by Deloitte, January 2014; EAB interviews and analysis.

# An Alternative Revenue Stream for Colleges

The expansion of the corporate training market coincides with growing need for alternative revenue streams at community colleges. Many states have been slow to reverse the cuts to higher education funding made during the Great Recession. According to a College Board analysis, community colleges received only $4,560 in state and local appropriations per full-time equivalent student in 2011, compared to $6,180 in 2006.

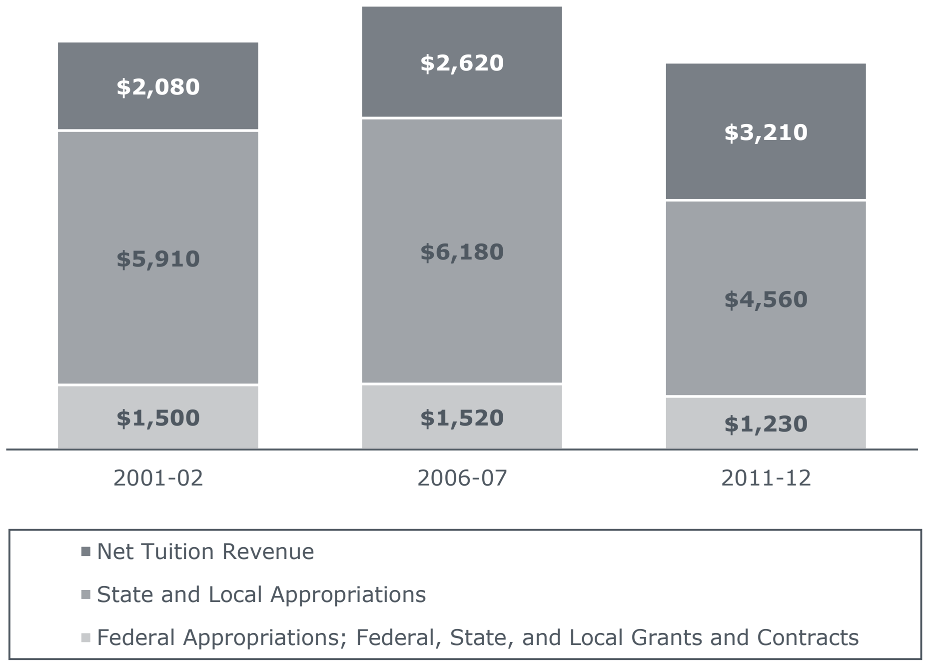
State disinvestment has left community colleges increasingly dependent on tuition revenue, which has proven extremely challenging to grow. As the economy improves and high school graduating classes shrink, the sector faces unprecedented enrollment competition from other postsecondary institutions. Furthermore, college leaders cannot significantly raise tuition rates because this strategy would undermine the affordability central to community colleges' mission.

Faced with declining state funding and few options to grow tuition revenue, forward-thinking college leaders are pursuing private sector funding sources. As employers reinvest in training, they provide new opportunities for community colleges to generate revenue through corporate partnerships.

## Interest in Corporate Training Grows as State Funding and Enrollments Decline

### State Disinvestment Leads to Tuition Dependency

*Institutional Revenues per FTE at Two-Year Public Institutions[1]*




### Business Model Unsustainable Without New Revenue Streams

*State Funding Slow to Recover*
Years after the recession, funding remains inconsistent and unpredictable, especially as states adopt performance-based models

*Difficult to Grow Enrollments*
Colleges struggle to recruit students as high school classes shrink and competition from other postsecondary sectors grows

*Can't Keep Raising Tuition*
To maintain affordability, access-focused colleges cannot continuously increase the price of attendance

*Need for Alternative Revenue*
College leaders turn attention to private industry resources, including corporate training and philanthropy

1) Net tuition revenue includes financial aid from federal, state, and other sources outside the institution. Revenue from private gifts, investments, and other miscellaneous sources do not appear in this chart.

Source: Sandy Baum and Jennifer Ma, "Trends in College Pricing," College Board, Nov. 2014; EAB interviews and analysis.

# From Passive Intake to Proactive Outreach

Many community colleges already offer training solutions aligned closely with employer needs. Instructors can design customized curricula and deliver training at employer sites. In addition, colleges provide this service at a competitive price point, especially compared to private sector training providers.

Despite the value of college-based training solutions, many employers lack awareness of them. In fact, according to a survey from the higher education software vendor Destiny Solutions, only 9% of U.S. employers maintain a formal training partnership with a college or university.

Current marketing strategies do little to promote community colleges as training partners. Often, college administrators invest in advertising channels that fail to reach business leaders. Advertisements may also present value propositions too generic to appeal to employers seeking customized solutions. Moreover, corporate training staff lack time and incentives to pursue new clients. This leads them to rely on inbound inquiries at the expense of outbound marketing.

## Current Reliance on Inbound Inquiries Constrains Training Revenue

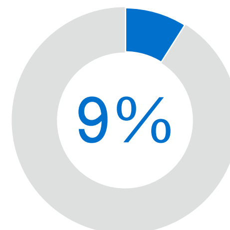
### Offering the Right Product…

**Customized Curriculum**
Designed to address the skill gaps of individual employers

**Flexible Delivery**
Offered onsite to maximize worker convenience

**Competitive Price Point**
Less costly than private sector—and often subsidized by grants

### …Without the Right Promotion




Percentage of employers that maintain a formal training partnership with a college[1]

### What Prevents Employers from Hearing About Us?

*Ill-Suited Marketing Channels*
Mass advertising fails to reach target audience

*One-Size-Fits-All Value Proposition*
Generic outreach yields low response rates

*Overreliance on Inbound Requests*
Few incentives to prioritize outreach to new clients

### Can't Afford to Wait for the Phone to Ring

"Our college is what you might call an 'order taker.' A company will call us and tell us that they need something. But to grow our partnerships, we need to proactively get out in the community to ask about needs. With our limited marketing dollars and just a few corporate training staff, that's a real challenge for us."

*Vice President of Workforce Development*
*Midwestern Community College*

1) N=200 midsize to large employers in health care, business, and technology

Source: "The Voice of the Employer on the Effects and Opportunities of Professional Development," Destiny Solutions, May 2012; EAB interviews and analysis.

# Adopting Lessons from B2B Marketing

Most community colleges have limited marketing budgets, so they must carefully allocate spending toward high-return channels. Corporate training advertisements have a narrow target audience; only business executives with budget authority can purchase the product. As a result, the mass media channels used to promote consumer goods (e.g., television, billboards) tend to have low returns when used to promote corporate training.

To better align their marketing strategy with employers' purchasing processes, college administrators should adopt the principles of business-to-business ("B2B") marketing. In a B2B transaction, a provider sells goods or services to another business, instead of an individual consumer. While consumer marketing relies on mass media, effective B2B marketing prioritizes industry-specific channels, such as trade presses and business events.

In addition, B2B marketing must also account for the large size and complexity of the typical B2B contract. This demands a more relationship-driven approach, in contrast with the product-driven approach of consumer marketing. Furthermore, while individual consumers often make quick purchasing decisions, B2B transactions commonly require a multi-step sales process.

## Contract Sales Depend on Relationship-Building, Not Advertising

**Risk of Reaching Large But Wrong Market**

"When I first started, we were showing corporate training commercials in the evenings during televised baseball games. We spent $75,000 on these spots—plus the cost of producing the commercial—and we did not receive one phone call. That's 50% of our marketing budget flushed down the toilet."

*Executive Director of Corporate Training*
*Midwestern Community College*

### Shifting Our Strategy from B2C to B2B

| Business-to-Consumer | | Business-to-Business |
|---|---|---|
| Mass advertising (e.g., TV, radio, billboards) | → | Industry-specific advertising (e.g., events, trade press) |
| Product-driven marketing | → | Relationship-driven marketing |
| Short-term buying cycle | → | Multi-step sales process |

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

# Lead-Generating Event Sponsorship

Two years ago, Cuyahoga Community College[1] (Tri-C) began to invest in an ideal channel for B2B marketing: event sponsorships within their local business community. These events include conferences and award ceremonies hosted by chambers of commerce, trade presses, and professional associations.

As a paid sponsor, Tri-C's Corporate College has the opportunity to introduce their training solutions on stage, host an information booth, and network with local business leaders. The college also receives a list of event attendees, who serve as warm leads for future outreach. After each event, sales staff may call these leads to discuss potential training opportunities.

The typical event sponsorship in a midsize metropolitan area costs about $15,000, but it yields a high return. On average, Corporate College receives 10 inquiries per sponsored event, 6 of which translate into signed training contracts worth an average of $20,000 each.

## Industry Events Expose Prospective Clients to Tri-C's Brand and Services

### In Exchange for Podium Time

*Benefits of Paid Event Sponsorship*

- Opportunity to introduce college's training services from podium
- Information booth to distribute collateral and answer questions
- Occasion to network with business leaders in attendance
- List of attendees for sales team to follow up with after event

*Potential Event Hosts*

- Chambers of commerce
- Professional associations
- Trade presses

**$15K**

Average cost per event sponsorship

### A Corporate Training Sales Funnel

*Outcomes from Average Sponsored Event*

**10** Inquiries from prospective clients

**6** Training proposals accepted

**$120K** Gross revenue

**$60K** Profit

See page 29 for guidance on the selection of event sponsorships.

1) Located in Cleveland, OH (large city), enrolls 27,900 students (34% full-time).

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

# Executive Advisory Council

In addition to sponsoring industry events, college leaders can proactively create opportunities to build relationships with local business leaders. In 2012, Lone Star College[1] assembled a an advisory council of business executives within the oil and gas industry and related manufacturing firms. This council meets quarterly with the chancellor and his leadership team to provide ongoing insight on training needs across the industry. Because senior-level college executives attend each meeting, participating employers prioritize attendance and value these events as networking opportunities.

In contrast to a program advisory board that provides feedback only on specific credentials, this executive council explores partnership opportunities across the college. These opportunities to fulfill workforce needs may include degree and certificate programs, contract training, and work-based learning.

## Lone Star Convenes Industry Partners Quarterly to Discuss Talent Needs

### Create Your Own Networking Opportunity

Lone Star College

**Industry-Specific Focus:** Chancellor's Advisory Council consists of 30 oil and gas and related manufacturing firms with local presence

**Quarterly Meetings:** Participants meet once every three months for two hours over lunch

**Senior-Level Audience:** Meetings allow executive attendees to network with peers

*Industry:* CEOs, vice presidents, senior human resources officers

*College:* System chancellor, associate vice chancellor of workforce development, campus presidents

**Executive Audience Provides "Big Picture" Perspective**

"We all have program advisory boards that work with faculty on individual program curricula, but this isn't that. This is taking it to a higher level to view the entire company from a big picture perspective and understand where the college can help through more than just one program."

*Linda Head, Associate Vice Chancellor of Workforce Education and Corporate College*
*Lone Star College*

1) Located in The Woodlands, TX (small city), enrolls 64,100 students (31% full-time).

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

# Discovering College-Wide Partnership Opportunities

At each quarterly meeting of the advisory council, attendees divide into small groups to discuss their hiring and training needs. A college representative joins each group to listen for ways the college can address any talent shortages expressed. When appropriate, college staff may follow up with council members after the meeting to propose contract training.

About half of all council members have since purchased training from the college. Many other members have hired program graduates, sponsored scholarships, and donated equipment.

In response to this success, Lone Star has since launched two additional executive advisory councils to build relationships with potential training partners—one composed of hospital executives and another composed of chief information officers.

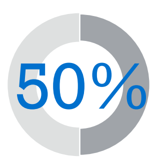
## Council Members Participate in Contract Training, Hiring, and Philanthropy

***Sample Quarterly Meeting Agenda***

1. **Introductions:** New and returning attendees introduce themselves
2. **Update on College Initiatives:** College reports on activities undertaken in response to industry feedback from previous meetings
3. **Discussion of Employer Needs:** Attendees divide into small groups moderated by college representatives to discuss preset topics such as:
   - Hardest-to-fill positions
   - Demand for hands-on training
   - Gaps in professional skills (e.g., communication, languages)

### Outcomes from First Three Years

*Contract Training*




Share of advisory council members that have purchased contract training since the council's launch

*Additional Contributions*

- Job placements for graduates
- Student scholarships
- Equipment donations
- Validation of market demand for proposed academic programs

See page 30 for additional ideas for advisory council meeting agendas.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

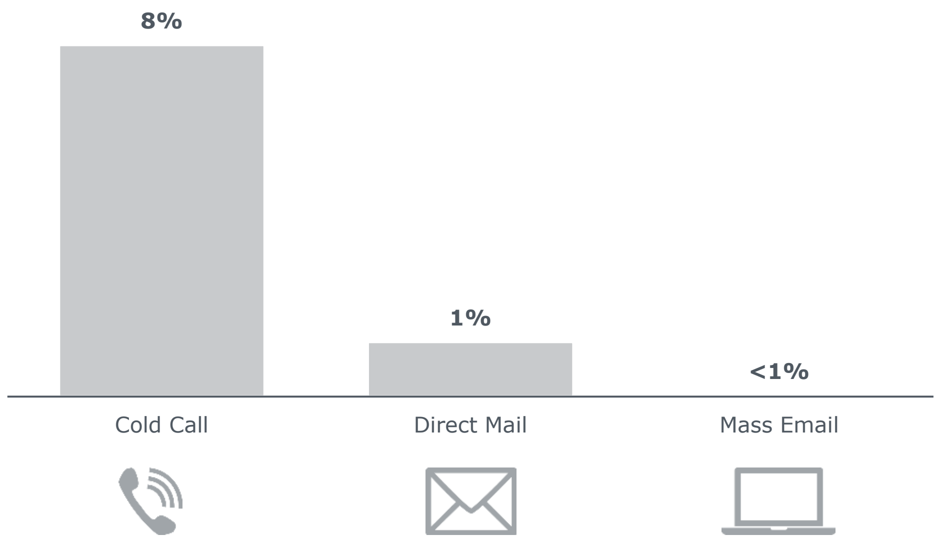
# Moving Beyond the Cold Call

As colleges recruit new training clients, many administrators express frustration at the low return on outreach activities. According to the Direct Marketing Association, cold calls generate only an 8% response rate, while direct mail and mass email campaigns generate response rates of 1% or lower. These figures do not reflect the even lower sales rates that occur after initial responses.

Because most community colleges have few staff dedicated to employer outreach, they can rarely afford to invest in these generic forms of outreach that yield low response rates. Instead, they must search for outreach methods that better target the individualized needs of local business leaders.

## Poorly Targeted Sales Outreach Yields Low Return on Staff Time

**Cross-Industry Response Rates to Generic Outreach**




**Maximizing Our Limited Staff Resources**

"We only have one corporate relations manager. If she had to call 1,000 companies, outreach would be inefficient or even impossible. She needs expertise on what's most valuable to the company and what would make them most likely to engage us."

*Todd Oldham, Vice President of Economic Development*
*Monroe Community College*

Source: Direct Marketing Association, "DMA Response Rate Report," June 2012; EAB interviews and analysis.

# Needs Assessment Survey

To overcome employers' resistance to cold outreach, Monroe Community College[1] (MCC) partners with industry associations to survey local employers about their skill gaps. For example, they recently designed a 6-question electronic survey that allows advanced manufacturing firms to denote any gaps in technical skills or soft skills across their workforce. A regional manufacturing association sent this survey to 75 member organizations on the college's behalf. Organizations that respond to the survey become warm leads for corporate training sales.

MCC uses survey responses to craft customized outreach emails that explain how the college's training programs can address company-specific skill gaps. Because these emails resonate with employers' needs, they receive higher response rates than generic outreach. MCC uses these emails to schedule face-to-face needs assessment meetings, which may then lead to formal training proposals.

## MCC Surveys Identify Employer Pain Points Before Sales Begin

### A Written Needs Assessment

Monroe Community College
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

*Advanced Manufacturing Survey*

- Sent to CEOs and HR specialists at 75 local manufacturing firms
- Contains 6 multiple choice and Likert scale questions
- Questions assess talent gaps in technical skills, soft skills, and basic academic skills
- Co-branded with and distributed by Rochester Technology and Manufacturing Association

### The First Step Toward Customized Outreach

**Survey**: Partners with professional association to send association members an industry-specific questionnaire about skill gaps

**Targeted Outreach:** Sends email to survey completers customized to reflect specific talent gaps expressed in responses

**In-Person Meetings:** Meets face-to-face with prospective clients to map MCC training solutions to company needs

**Training Proposal:** Drafts a formal proposal after 2-3 needs assessment meetings with each prospective client

See pages 31-34 for sample survey questions and a comparison of survey vendors.

1) Located in Rochester, NY (large suburb), enrolls 16,500 students (62% full-time).

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

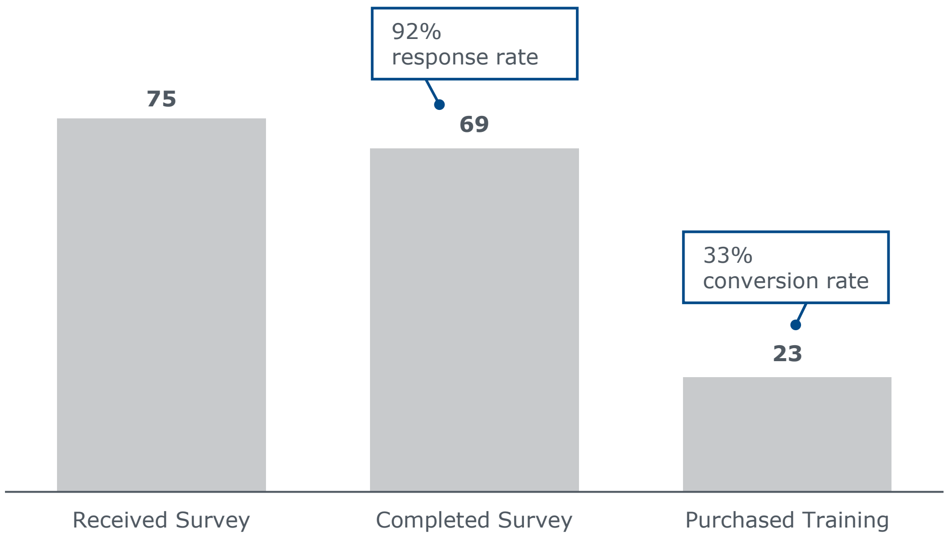
# A Pipeline of Warm Leads

Surveys that target industries with perceptible skill gaps can yield exceptional response rates. Of the 75 companies that received MCC's advanced manufacturing survey, 92% completed it. Moreover, one-third of the survey completers subsequently purchased training from the college.

To generate high response rates, colleges should partner with professional associations or trade presses to distribute surveys. Employers that have no prior relationship with the college may be more likely to respond to a survey if a reputable organization within their industry co-sponsors it. Colleges can also reduce the time commitment required to complete the survey to encourage participation. For example, MCC limited their advanced manufacturing survey to just 6 questions, and they auto-populated each company's contact information from Salesforce to excuse respondents from completing extra fields.

## Brief Co-Branded Surveys Yield High Response and Conversion Rates

**Outcomes from MCC's Advanced Manufacturing Survey**




**Strategies to Increase Survey Response Rates**

- **Co-Brand with Industry Association:** MCC often includes partner associations' logos on their surveys; associations may also distribute surveys on MCC's behalf
- **Minimize Survey Length:** Respondents can typically complete MCC's industry-specific surveys in 10-15 minutes
- **Auto-Populate Basic Fields:** MCC uses Qualtrics survey software to fill in company contact information from Salesforce
- **Target Best-Fit Contacts:** MCC typically addresses surveys to HR directors at large companies or CEOs at small companies

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

# Serving a Fragmented Market

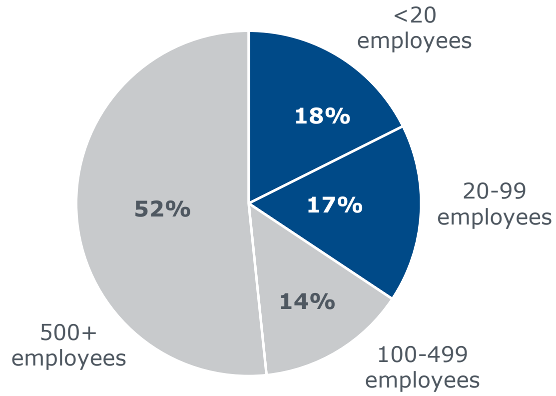
In service areas dominated by a few large employers, colleges can earn significant training revenue from a small number of partnerships. However, many community colleges serve fragmented markets composed of numerous small employers. This challenge is prevalent among rural colleges, but it also impacts many urban and suburban colleges. In fact, one-third of all employees in the U.S. work for organizations with fewer than 100 employees.

Few small businesses can afford the high fixed costs of customized training. Moreover, they rarely have enough workers who need training in any given skill set to fill an entire training cohort. Although open enrollment courses remain viable, employers may find these courses insufficiently customized to their needs.

## Conventional Contract Training Out of Reach for Smaller Employers

### Small Businesses Employ One-Third of Workforce

*Share of U.S. Employment by Employer Size*




### Market Lacks Customized Yet Affordable Solution

**Limited Training Budget**
High fixed costs of customized training often result in price points that smaller employers can't afford

**Unable to Fill Training Cohort**
Smaller employers rarely have enough workers seeking a given skill set to purchase contract training at scale

**Needs Unmet by Open Enrollment**
Because employers cannot customize open enrollment curricula, offerings may be insufficiently targeted to their needs

Source: Anthony Caruso, "Statistics of U.S. Businesses Employment and Payroll Summary: 2012," United States Census Bureau; EAB interviews and analysis.

# Small Business Training Consortium

In response to the dearth of training solutions available to small businesses, Kirkwood Community College[1] created a training consortium that balances the efficiency of open enrollment courses with the customization of contract training. Each year, over 20 employers purchase "season tickets" for college's Business Partners Training Consortium, which meets once per month. Each meeting covers one professional development topic broadly applicable to all employers (e.g., delegating authority, professionalism).

Because the season tickets are transferrable, employers may send different staff to each session. For example, new manager may attend a session on delegating authority one month, while an entry-level worker may attend a session on professionalism the next month.

As of 2015, Kirkwood offers three cohorts of the consortium, each based in a different location across its service area. Not only does this reduce travel for participants, but it also allows the college to customize each cohort to the needs of the local community.

## Kirkwood Convenes Employers with Similar Pain Points for Shared Trainings

### Season Tickets for Collective Sessions

Kirkwood COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Monthly Sessions**: Business Partners Training Consortium meets once a month for 4 hours per session

**One-Year Subscription**: Participating employers each buy 1-6 "season tickets" valid for one year of training sessions

**Transferrable Seats**: Employers may fill seats with different staff each month, depending on session topic

**Choice of Three Locations**: Cohorts offered at main campus and two satellite locations to minimize driving distance

***Sample Session Topics***

- Professionalism
- Customer Service
- Critical Conversations
- Meeting Management
- Delegating Authority
- Organizational Change

1) Located in Cedar Rapids, IA (midsize city), enrolls 15,100 students (46% full-time).

Source: "Business Partners Training Consortium 2014–2015 Training Schedule," Kirkwood Community College, EAB interviews and analysis.

# Tailor-Made for All Participants

Although Kirkwood's training consortium serves many employers at once, all participants have the opportunity to provide input on the curriculum. Before the consortium launches each year, college administrators invite participating employers to attend a focus group to discuss skill gaps within their organization. These focus groups allow administrators to identify the training topics most relevant to consortium members' needs.

By offering relevant training at an affordable price, Kirkwood's consortium retains existing participants and attracts new ones each year. In 2014–15, about 25 employers collectively purchased 56 seats in the consortium, which generated over $100,000 in gross training revenue. Moreover, all but three of the participating organizations had fewer than 250 employees, which suggests they would have found customized training infeasible in the absence of a shared training model.

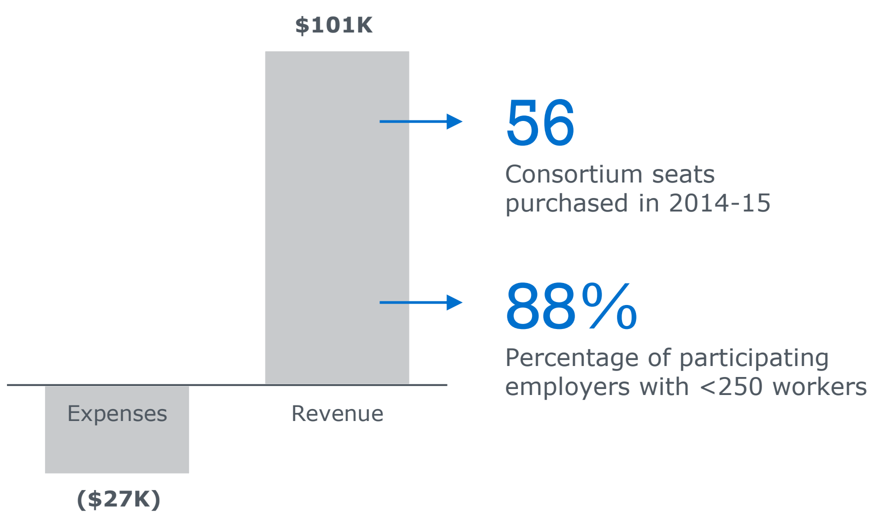
## Opportunity to Jointly Customize Training Increases Value to Employers

### Focus Groups Select Training Topics

- **Open invitation:** All current and previous training consortium members are invited to attend a focus group
- **Minimal time commitment:** Focus groups meet over breakfast or lunch for one session
- **Focused on employer needs:**
  - What are your staffing pain points?
  - Which skills do emerging leaders in your organization lack?
  - In which proposed training topics do you have the greatest need?

### Strong Uptake Among Smaller Businesses

*Kirkwood's Consortium Outcomes, 2014–15*




Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

# Reimagining Our Sales Force

Many community colleges seek to expand their employer partnerships by maximizing existing resources. However, current staffing structures and incentives do little to promote revenue growth.

Leaders at the most progressive colleges seek to address several common challenges to building an effective sales team. First, they want to incentivize staff to proactively pursue new training clients. Next, they want to motivate staff to convert those clients into repeat customers. Finally, they want to recruit and retain high-performing salespeople, many of whom bring experience from other industries. Because these individuals command high salaries in the private sector, colleges often struggle to extend competitive offers.

## New Staffing Models Provide Opportunity to Incentivize Revenue Growth

### Key Challenges to Staffing an Effective Sales Team

*Incentivizing Proactive Outreach*

"If we keep waiting for employers to come to us, they might go to another training provider first. How do we get staff to seek out clients before they start shopping around?"

*Encouraging Repeat Purchases*

"We all know it's cheaper to retain an existing client than to recruit a new one. How do we ensure our staff treat existing clients with the same VIP service prospects receive?"

*Recruiting Experienced Talent*

"It's much easier to teach higher education to a salesperson than to teach sales to an educator. How can we extend competitive job offers to experienced salespeople?"

*Retaining Top Performers*

"My sales staff visit employers all day long, so the good ones get a lot of job offers. How do we hold onto them when they have so many options?"

See page 36 for a sample job description for a corporate training sales position.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

# Performance-Based Staff Compensation

The most progressive college leaders are considering the use of sales commissions to better incentivize, recruit, and retain their staff. Among the first college-based training providers to implement this model was Invista Performance Solutions, a collaboration between Tacoma Community College, Pierce College, and Clover Park Technical College.

Invista's business development managers qualify for a 5% commission on every training contract they sell. In addition, their project managers (who oversee training delivery) qualify for a 5% commission on any revenue from a client after the second year of partnership. This incentive motivates project managers to prioritize client service and cross-sell clients on further training. Finally, the executive director (who supervises both the business development and project management teams) receives a 1% commission on all revenue generated.

Not only does this model motivate staff to identify and retain clients, but it also helps Invista recruit and retain staff who value the opportunity to earn additional pay.

## Sales Commissions Incentivize Client Recruitment and Retention

INVISTA
PERFORMANCE SOLUTIONS

### Commission Model for Revenue Staff

| Staff Role | Commission Rate |
|---|---|
| **Business Development Manager**<br>Conducts initial sales | 5% in first two years of contract |
| **Project Manager**<br>Serves as primary contact after sale | 5% after second year of contract |
| **Executive Director**<br>Oversees all revenue-generating activities | 1% during all years of contract |

**Benefits of Invista's Commission Model**

- Incentivizes sales staff to proactively identify clients
- Encourages project managers to prioritize client retention
- Helps recruit and retain staff who value further compensation

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

# Testing the Waters on Sales Incentives

Because performance-based pay is rare within community colleges, college leaders face many considerations before implementation. Some of the most pressing considerations relate to eligibility. For example, should all staff within the college's corporate training division—or only client-facing staff—qualify for commissions? Moreover, can the college offer commissions to corporate training staff but not to staff within other revenue centers, such as the bookstore?

Not all college leaders consider commissions viable within their institutions. However, alternative methods exist to motivate revenue-generating staff. These methods have less direct impact but may be more amenable to administrators. For example, some colleges include sales metrics (e.g., net revenue generated, contracts signed) in staff performance reviews. Other colleges offer merit bonuses for staff who meet goals at the end of each review cycle, thus rewarding their performance without offering a commission for every sale.

## Considerations for Introducing Performance-Based Pay

### From Evaluation to Implementation

***Discussion Questions for Campus Leaders***

- **Eligibility:** Will corporate training support staff, in addition to client-facing staff, qualify for commissions?
- **Parity:** Do we need to extend staff commissions to the college's other revenue-generating units?
- **Amount:** What percentage commission should we offer? Should we place a cap on total compensation?
- **Schedule:** How frequently should commissions be distributed?

### A Spectrum of Options to Incentivize Revenue Generation

*Lower Impact, Easier to Implement*

*Higher Impact, Harder to Implement*

**Performance Evaluations**
Integrate sales metrics (e.g., net revenue generated, new clients secured) into staff reviews

**Merit Bonuses**
Reward staff who exceed revenue goals during each performance evaluation cycle

**Sales Commissions**
Offer staff a percentage of the revenue from each training contract they secure

See pages 37-38 for guidance on how to initiate and manage conversations about performance-based pay.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

# Employer Outreach Implementation Toolkit

# Table of Contents

## Employer Outreach Implementation Toolkit

# Event Sponsorship Selection Guide

## Purpose of the Tool

Sponsorship of a corporate event, trade show, or industry award ceremony offers community college leaders a unique opportunity to introduce their training solutions to a captive audience. However, the audience, sponsorship costs, and overall marketing potential vary significantly by event. Accordingly, college administrators should carefully examine their marketing priorities and resources before they select events to sponsor. The diagnostic questions below help administrators evaluate whether a given event aligns with the college's goals.

## Target Audience

| | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Does the event serve an industry in which the college has training expertise? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. Does the event primarily cater to companies based within our service area? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. Does the event attract enough industry executives to warrant sponsorship? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4. Do attendees have the authority to purchase training on behalf of their companies? | ☐ | ☐ |

## Cost and Feasibility

| | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| 5. Is the cost of sponsoring this event within the college's marketing budget? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6. Does the event offer multiple sponsorship levels to accommodate varying budgets? | ☐ | ☐ |

## Marketing Potential

| | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| 7. Does the event provide enough podium time to articulate the value of our training? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 8. Does the event include an networking opportunity before or after the main ceremony? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 9. Does the event allow us to place our brand and logo in multiple locations? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 10. Are the event and its sponsors advertised in relevant trade magazines? | ☐ | ☐ |

***Evaluation***

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Number of "Yes" Responses* | 8-10 | 4-7 | 0-3 |
| *Value of Sponsoring Event* | High | Medium | Low |

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

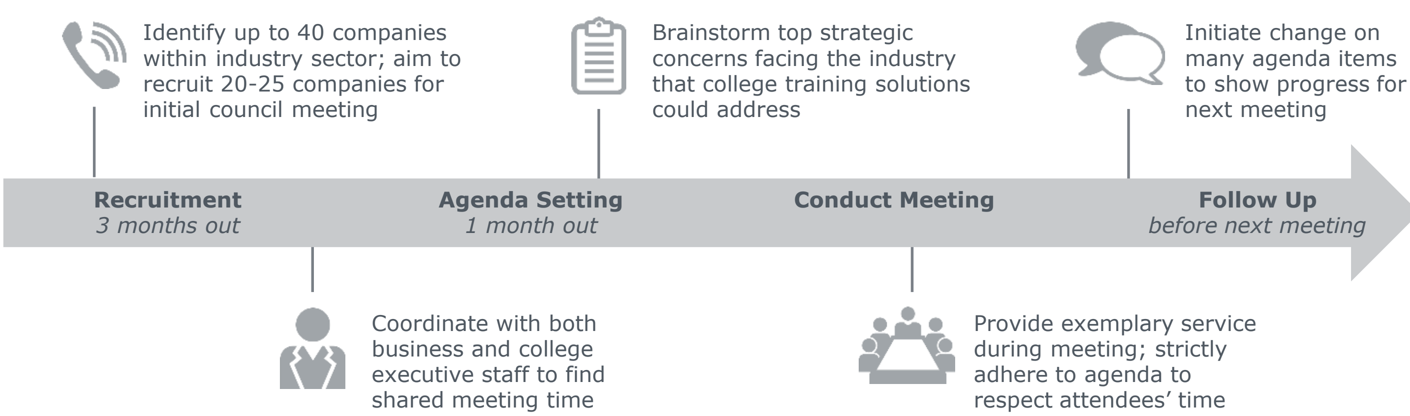
Tool #2

# Executive Advisory Council Agenda Template

### Purpose of the Tool

Executive advisory councils provide forums for business and college leaders to discuss shared strategic solutions to long-term talent needs. Unlike program advisory boards that focus on specific curricula, these advisory councils address training and hiring solutions available across the college. Given the incredibly busy schedules of the executive attendees, council meetings require extensive preparation and coordination. This tool outlines the steps to launch an advisory council, in addition to the most important components of a meeting agenda.

### Overall Planning Timeline




#### Sample Executive Advisory Council Agenda

11:00 a.m. **Introductions**
*Allow each attendee to introduce themselves and share at least one critical concern regarding talent acquisition or development*

11:10 a.m. **EAB College's Progress**
*Spend approximately ten minutes to update attendees on the college's progress on last meeting's agenda items; progress motivates continued participation from attendees*

11:20 a.m. **Chancellor's Address**
*Highlight the college's most pressing educational initiatives and articulate the importance of the partnerships with employers*

11:30 a.m. **Lunch Break**
*Allow time for attendees to serve themselves before group discussions begin (see below)*

11:45 a.m. **Group Discussions**
*Appoint a college representative to facilitate and take notes on a discussion at each lunch table, using questions written in advance by college executives; provide breaks in the discussion with room-wide activities, such as clicker surveys*

12:45 p.m. **Closing Remarks**
*Conclude the meeting with words of appreciation to council attendees and organizers; provide a preview of next quarter's meeting*

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

# Needs Assessment Survey Template

### Purpose of the Tool

A needs assessment survey helps college administrators diagnose an employer's training needs. Corporate training sales staff can use survey responses to customize their outreach to businesses. The template below includes six questions that elicit enough information to shape outreach, without requiring an unreasonable time commitment from respondents. These questions are adapted from a survey created by Monroe Community College. A well-informed human resources specialist should be able to answer these questions in 10–15 minutes.

EAB **Needs Assessment Survey** The Advisory Board Company

Co-brand with respected industry associations or educational partners to increase response rate

1) In 2015, how do you expect employment to change at your company?
   - ❑ Increase greatly
   - ❑ Increase
   - ❑ Stay the same
   - ❑ Decrease
   - ❑ Decrease greatly

2) How much difficulty does your business experience filling particular positions?
   - ❑ No difficulty
   - ❑ Some difficulty
   - ❑ Moderate difficulty
   - ❑ Great difficulty
   - ❑ Cannot find any suitable candidates

3) List the job titles of the most important and difficult to fill positions:
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________

Request specific job titles to gain added insight for sales follow-up

3) Which of the following skills present the greatest challenge for newly hired workers? (May select more than one)
   - ❑ Reading/Writing
   - ❑ Math/Logical Reasoning
   - ❑ Computer/Technical Skills
   - ❑ Communication/Interpersonal Skills
   - ❑ Leadership/Professional Skills
   - ❑ Other____________________________

List broad categories to focus follow-up discussions on relevant content areas

Source: "Rochester Area Skill Needs Assessment and Business Climate Survey, May 2014," http://www.workforceforward.com/reports; EAB interviews and analysis.

# Needs Assessment Survey Template (cont.)

5) In what ways have you provided training in the last year?

- ❑ Private training firm
- ❑ Academic institution
- ❑ Internal professional development
- ❑ Tuition reimbursement
- ❑ No training

6) Which of the following constitutes the ideal training scenario for your workforce? (May select more than one)

- ❑ In-house, customized training
- ❑ On-site, expert consultation
- ❑ External, classroom-based education
- ❑ Excusive partnership with academic institution
- ❑ No training

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------

EAB Community College
Workforce Development Center
1 Davis Ave
Stuartsville, SD 00499

Phone: 555-867-5309
Fax: 555-202-2020
www.eabcc.edu/workforce

Ask about current training partnerships to gain understanding of competitive landscape

Include “No training” option to immediately gauge interest level of prospective client

Take the opportunity to advertise your workforce development center and website

Source: “Rochester Area Skill Needs Assessment and Business Climate Survey, May 2014,” http://www.workforceforward.com/reports; EAB interviews and analysis.

# Survey Software Vendor Comparison

### Purpose of the Tool

Needs assessment surveys allow college administrators to efficiently generate and evaluate corporate training leads. However, survey platforms vary widely in features and cost. The following tool provides a basic overview and price structure for nine leading survey platforms. Administrators may use the scorecard that follows to determine which platform best meets their employer outreach needs.

### Guide to Survey Software Vendors

qualtrics

| | |
|---|---|
| **Profile:** | Prominent survey platform used by over 1,300 colleges and university clients worldwide |
| **Price:** | Free trial and customized quotes available to educational institutions |
| **Selected Customers:** | Yale School of Management, University of North Carolina, Monroe Community College |
| **Website:** | http://www.qualtrics.com/research-suite/ |

Google

| | |
|---|---|
| **Profile:** | Free survey platform integrated with Google's other products |
| **Price:** | Free |
| **Selected Customers:** | Macalester College, Madison Area Technical College, Burlington County Community College |
| **Website:** | https://www.google.com/work/apps/business/products/forms/ |

Client Heartbeat

| | |
|---|---|
| **Profile:** | Survey platform that specializes in benchmarking and measuring client satisfaction |
| **Price:** | Gold: $59/Month for 500 contacts, 5 users, CRM synching, and API Access<br>Platinum: $89/month for 1000 contacts, 10 users, 3 sub accounts, and concierge support<br>Enterprise: $449/Month for 10,000 + contacts, 50+ users, and 10 Sub accounts |
| **Selected Customers:** | Art of Smart Education, R&G Technologies, JBS Bookkeeping Services |
| **Website:** | https://www.clientheartbeat.com/ |

KeySurvey

| | |
|---|---|
| **Profile:** | Prominent Survey platform with focus on large, corporate research |
| **Price:** | Base price starts at $5,950/year, but cost varies based on project parameters |
| **Selected Customers:** | Iowa Area Education Agency 267. IT Industry Association, Education Adelaide |
| **Website:** | https://www.keysurvey.com/ |

LimeSurvey

| | |
|---|---|
| **Profile:** | Open source and community driven survey platform |
| **Price:** | Free |
| **Selected Customers:** | Not specified |
| **Website:** | http://www.surveygizmo.com/ |

Source: Ross Beard, "8 Customer Satisfaction Software Tools," http://blog.clientheartbeat.com/customer-satisfaction-software; EAB interviews and analysis.

# Survey Software Vendor Comparison

## surveygizmo

| | |
|---|---|
| **Profile:** | Prominent survey platform that offers 25% discount to academic institutions |
| **Price:** | Professional: $65/month for advanced custom reporting, custom branded links and data cleaning tools<br>Premier: $95/month adds HIPAA compliance, custom scripting, and custom questions<br>Enterprise: $199/month adds multiple users, application co-branding, and training |
| **Selected Customers:** | Not specified |
| **Website:** | http://www.surveygizmo.com/ |

## SurveyMonkey

| | |
|---|---|
| **Profile:** | The most widely used survey platform |
| **Price:** | Select: $26/month for 1,000 responses, skip logic, and cross-tabs & filters<br>Gold: $300/year for unlimited responses, A/B testing, and question/answer piping<br>Platinum: $780/year for multiple users, white label surveys, and HIPAA compliance |
| **Selected Customers:** | Facebook, Salesforce, Samsung |
| **Website:** | https://www.surveymonkey.com/ |

## QuestionPro
Online Research Made Easy™

| | |
|---|---|
| **Profile:** | Prominent survey platform |
| **Price:** | Free trial and customized quotes available to educational institutions<br>Professional: $144/year for branching/skip logic, data export, and 24 question types<br>Corporate: $899/year adds data segmentation, extraction, and 33 question types<br>Team Edition: price not specified, but adds a dedicated account manager and full feature set |
| **Selected Customers:** | Stanford University, Toyota, Hyatt |
| **Website:** | http://www.questionpro.com/ |

## Survey™ Project

| | |
|---|---|
| **Profile:** | Open-source and collaborative survey platform |
| **Price:** | Free |
| **Selected Customers:** | Not specified |
| **Website:** | http://www.surveyproject.org/Home/tabid/83/Default.aspx |

Source: Eric Leland, "A Few Good Online Survey Tools," http://www.idealware.org/articles/fgt_online_surveys.php; EAB interviews and analysis.

# Survey Software Vendor Comparison

## Vendor Comparison Scorecard

These ten diagnostic questions help college administrators decide whether a survey platform aligns with their priorities (e.g., cost, ease of use, level of analysis). The second column provides an example of how an administrator might use this tool to evaluate the hypothetical platform “EAB Survey Systems.” The column also includes the reasoning behind each answer in parentheses for illustrative purposes.

| | Criteria | Vendor 1: EAB Survey Systems | Vendor 2 | Vendor 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Functionality | 1. Does the platform support multiple users? | **Yes** *The platform allows 3 users in the basic subscription.* | | |
| | 2. Does the platform allow us to distribute an adequate number of surveys? | **Yes** *We plan to distribute 150 surveys, and the platform allows us to distribute 200.* | | |
| | 3. Can we integrate the platform with our client relationship management (CRM) software? | **No** *We maintain client records in Salesforce, and Salesforce integration costs extra.* | | |
| | 4. Does the platform have sufficient survey logic features (e.g., cross-tabulation, A/B testing, page branching)? | **No** *We require subgroup analysis, which is not included in the basic subscription.* | | |
| | 5. Does the platform allow customized branding of surveys? | **Yes** *The platform allows us to use our logo and colors.* | | |
| Usability | 6. Does the platform require minimal training to operate? | **Yes** *The platform interface is intuitive and easy to learn.* | | |
| | 7. Does the platform offer responsive customer support? | **Yes** *The platform offers a 24/7 live chat for customers.* | | |
| | 8. Does the platform work with other higher education clients? | **Yes** *The client list includes 10+ colleges and universities.* | | |
| Cost | 9. Do new users receive a free trial on the platform? | **Yes** *New users receive a 30-day free trial.* | | |
| | 10. Does the platform provide discounts to educational institutions? | **Yes** *Colleges and universities receive a 10% discount.* | | |
| | **Final Score** (Number of “Yes” Responses) | **8** out of 10 | | |

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

# Corporate Training Sales Position Description

## Purpose of the Tool

Many community college leaders are hiring sales staff to expand their corporate training portfolios. Because colleges have few precedents for sales positions in other departments, administrators must carefully define these newly created positions. This tool provides guidance on how to describe a contract training sales position and recruit qualified candidates. The sample job description below draws on language used to describe college-based sales positions across the country.

Avoid the word "sales" in the job title as it overemphasizes a single aspect of the position

### Business Development Manager

Explain how a corporate training sales position demands both creativity and strong people skills

The Business Development Manager oversees the expansion of corporate training and related services. This individual collaborates with team members and the Workforce Director to conduct industry outreach and set revenue goals. The role requires interpersonal skills, salesmanship, and ingenuity to initiate and pursue sales leads.

Specify the position's most crucial tasks

**Essential Functions**

1. Locates and acquires training contracts
2. Conducts needs assessments with employers and convert them into training opportunities
3. Represents the college during on-site visits and functions affiliated with the workforce training division
4. Coordinates with sales team and marketers to ensure cohesive and effective outreach efforts
5. Writes concise reports to inform business outreach
6. Assists in the recruitment and supervision of part-time instructors

Prioritize candidates with sales experience in services instead of products

**Qualifications**

1. Bachelor's degree required; Master's preferred
2. At least five years of experience in consultative sales for business-to-business solutions
3. Prior experience with community colleges preferred; out-of-industry sales experience welcome

Outline expectations for performance from the outset

**Criteria of Performance**

1. Autonomously produce and contribute to net revenue for the workforce development division
2. Maintain meticulous documentation of sales practices, outreach attempts, and communication with clients
3. Manages sales responsibilities and adhere to all deadlines
4. Demonstrate commitment to professional development
5. Receive favorable evaluations

Highlight unique benefits of a college sales position

**Benefits**

1. Flexible work and travel schedule
2. Competitive salary with sales performance incentives
3. Educational discounts and professional development opportunities

Source: Global Corporate College, "Position 14.02 Business Development Director," http://www.globalcorporatecollege.com/Jobs/position-14-02-business-development-director-/934c Frederick Community College, "Business Development Manager," http://apps.frederick.edu/download/hrjob/Business%20Development%20Manager.pdf; EAB interviews and analysis.

Tool #6

# Sales Compensation Change Management Guide

## Purpose of the Tool

Performance-based pay grants corporate training sales staff additional compensation based on the amount of revenue they generate for the college. It acts as a powerful staff incentive, and it helps colleges recruit and retain top sales talent amidst fierce competition from proprietary institutions and private sector training providers. However, administrators and faculty may express concerns about this compensation model because they lack familiarity with it. This tool helps college leaders initiate the discussion around performance-based pay for corporate training staff, and it anticipates the most likely objections from colleagues.

## Performance-Based Pay Conversation Prompts

**EAB Community College**
**Executive Council Meeting Agenda**
**May 5th, 2015**

EAB

1) What are the primary challenges facing our institution in the next few years (e.g., enrollment decline, student success, lack of state funding)?

_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________

2) How could additional corporate training revenue benefit our college? How might it help address the challenges listed above?

_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________

3) What are the most significant barriers to growing our revenue? Are staff currently incentivized to grow our corporate training revenue?

_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________

5) What are your primary concerns about performance-based pay?

_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________

6) What departments and staff members should qualify for performance-based pay?

_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

# Sales Compensation Change Management Guide (cont.)

| Common Objections to Performance-Based Pay | Potential Responses to Objections Raised |
| --- | --- |
| "We are an academic institution, not a business! It is against our mission to provide compensation based on profit." *Faculty Member* | Community colleges' workforce development mission mandates training to advance the careers of local workers. Corporate training revenue can not only bolster our workforce development services but also subsidize our ongoing student success initiatives. |
| "It's against our state and college policies to offer commissions." *Vice President of Human Resources* | Skeptics may question the legality of performance-based pay at academic institutions. States and colleges across the country have different policies regarding supplementary compensation. College administrators should understand the relevant regulatory statutes to assuage such concerns. |
| "It's unfair to give bonuses to only some revenue-generating staff and not others." *Bookstore Manager* | A corporate sales division faces unique pressure from external competitors and thus must spend considerable resources to acquire and retain clients. The college's other revenue-generating units, such as the bookstore and parking lot, maintain an ostensible monopoly on campus. |
| "I don't want to approve performance-based pay because I do not want a non-executive level employee to make more than me." *Vice President of Finance* | Some colleges intentionally limit annual performance-based pay so sales staff cannot earn more in a year than senior college administrators. |

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

EAB

# Advisors to Our Work

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