
Aligning Data and Resources to Connect Workers with Jobs An Analysis of our Region's Manufacturing and Healthcare Industries

Convening Committee Meeting #2
October 7, 2014, 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Smith Memorial Student Union, 1825 SW Broadway, Room 047A
Meeting Recap

Preliminary research results

- Self-Sufficiency Analysis
 - Group voiced support for more self-sufficiency wage analysis specific to these occupations, as the results were useful and perhaps surprising.
- Workforce Demographics Analysis
 - It was pointed out that the occupations selected were not very comparable, because Construction Supervisors require much more experience than the other jobs, which can be entry-level. More broadly, we should consider the stage of a career pathway that an occupation represents when making any assessments of an occupation.
- Skills Gap Literature Review
 - Support was voiced for wider dissemination of this report because it may help to promote a more nuanced and critical perspective on the skills gap in these industries.

Feedback on proposed new research

- Supply-Demand Analysis
 - Overall feedback:
 - This data would be a useful way to assess the employment prospects for people completing training for these occupations.
 - Methodological feedback:
 - Workforce supply should include people working in related occupations that could be “promoted” into this occupation, because they are a real source of labor. As with point above, we should consider this occupation’s stage in a typical career pathway.
 - Apprenticeships should be somehow included in the count of the number of program completers for each occupation, as they are the only training programs for many of these occupations, especially skilled trade.
 - The Office of Degree Authorization may be able to provide employment and wage performance of private school completers to round out this data.
- Pipeline Demographics Analysis
 - Overall feedback:
 - The group generally supported this analysis because it would help to understand how well the training system is able to diversify these occupations
 - A more detailed analysis of not just those completing training programs, but those who are applying, being admitted and enrolling in these programs would be especially useful, as we could identify where the training system is breaking down.
 - This data might also help to inspire young people to see that an occupation is becoming more diverse, as people of similar backgrounds to them are successfully joining these occupations

Feedback on overall research approach

- The data is great and interesting, but how do we make it actionable? How do we tailor it to the many audiences that would find this information valuable?
- A few different audiences were identified for this research:
 - Training providers (most notably, community colleges)
 - Organizations that make workforce investments (WIBs, community organizations)
 - Policymakers (especially at the state level)
 - Industry representatives
 - Potential future students
- Two areas were identified that could be explored further:
 - Role of support systems: Many people experiencing poverty do not have the resources (financial, time, child care, transportation, etc.) to even consider investing up to two years in a training program. This barrier should not be overlooked.
 - The costs of providing public assistance to keep people out of poverty might be more efficiently spent if the assistance was significant enough to provide people the resources they need so they can enter a training program, because their lifetime earnings would increase and future costs of assistance would be lower.
 - This is analogous to a study in progress by the Northwest Economic Research Center on the costs of homelessness in Washington County. The second phase of this project will perform a cost-benefit analysis comparing the costs to the costs of simply housing the homeless.
 - Coverage of the research in [The Oregonian](#).
 - Research report: [A Study of Emergency Service Provider Costs for Chronically Homeless Persons in Washington County, Oregon](#)
 - Role of employers and partnerships: Several in the group emphasized the importance of employers and partnerships, both within industries and with the public sector training system. In general, there is a concern that firms aren't doing enough to support new workers and may be attempting to push industry-training costs, historically covered by firms, on to the public sector.
 - There may be potential to review models of employer partnerships as part of this research. This might also include exploring how public incentives could be reconfigured to support these types of partnerships that would expand training options for some of these occupations.