

Internal Marketing Material for Workforce intermediaries

Use this resource to:

- Communicate overview, goals, and objectives: Sell the concept and long-term benefits of career ladders.
- Identify benefits for workforce intermediaries: Determine if a career ladder will meet the expressed needs of the workforce intermediary and its constituents.
- Build commitment to the career ladder: Build the case for workforce intermediary leadership of a career ladder initiative by presenting a solution to employers' recruitment, retention, and the skill development needs, as well as an advancement strategy for workers.

Use this text as the basis for a memo or letter to a workforce intermediary's leadership for the purposes of persuading it to adopt a career ladder initiative.

Area employers work hard to get the workforce that they want, while many workers struggle to advance in the labor market. We can provide a solution, customized to meet specific needs, that addresses high turnover, problems filling vacancies with qualified candidates, and performance-related limitations on productivity.

Several issues have brought workforce development to the top of the agenda of large and small firms:

- Persistently tight labor markets in some key industries;
- Rising skill requirements, even for entry-level occupations;
- The costs of recruiting and screening candidates and the turnover costs of those who are hired;
- The retirement of long-term, higher-skilled workers; and
- New technologies and structures of work organization.

Employers face pressing workforce concerns—concerns that drove businesses responding to recent surveys by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers to identify workforce issues as a top priority.

A career ladder initiative—linking skills in seemingly unrelated occupations into a series of rungs along which workers can advance and employers can recruit trained workers—provides workforce

intermediaries with the strategies to solve workforce development problems, respond to employers recruiting concerns, offer workers expanded opportunity for advancement, and potentially tap into new public and private funding sources.

Career ladders make it possible for workforce intermediaries to facilitate a win-win for employers and for individuals with few skills who want the opportunity to move up in the workforce. Workforce intermediaries can facilitate this win-win by aligning recruitment and screening, education and training, and support services with employer needs and by developing better opportunities for career development.

Career ladders benefit employers' bottom line while helping communities. By reducing turnover costs, providing a pool of skilled workers, and creating a system of worker training that meets employers' specific skill needs, career ladders save time, money, and resources, and they boost productivity. Communities benefit from a local approach to workforce development—one that is geared to filling vacancies that are in high demand and that either begin in or lead to relatively high-paying careers.

Career ladders strengthen the relationship between workforce intermediaries and employers, and they enhance an intermediary's public image as an organization that can bridge the gap between employers' demand for skill and workers' need for careers. By adopting an entrepreneurial approach to managing the supply of labor to firms with occupations in high demand, intermediaries facilitate a more effective match between the supply and demand sides of the labor market.