

Jobs to Careers

*Promoting Work-Based Learning
for Quality Care.*

The *Jobs to Careers* Sustainability Planning Tool

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The *Sustainability Planning Tool* is a set of worksheets that educators and employers can use to begin creating a long-term plan to maintain and expand upon an initiative focused on the career advancement of incumbent workers. Developed from the practical experience of employer/educator partnerships funded through the Jobs to Careers initiative, this tool is relevant to workforce development efforts that are concerned with sustainability. An explicit focus of Jobs to Careers is to continue innovations and increased access to training opportunities made possible through the initiative.

The emphasis on sustainability is an ongoing concern for many workforce development practitioners, who want to know how the methods and practices developed during the course of a project can continue to improve the advancement opportunities of employees beyond those immediately targeted for services. Project managers can use the *Sustainability Planning Tool* to engage senior leaders and others on the project team in identifying aspects of their work that can and should be sustained, and in identifying sources of revenue to support the work going forward. Fiscal managers can obtain estimates of costs associated with sustaining particular components of the work. Work teams can develop overarching plans and goals for moving their work forward.

Use this tool to engage senior leaders in your organization in a discussion about sustaining your project. As you work through the questions, think about the elements of your

current project that you intend to sustain as they are and those that may change. Begin with a discussion about your vision for frontline employee development. Then work through each individual question in the chart. Be sure to think about the budgetary impact of each element you plan to sustain.

How To Use the Sustainability Tool

A project team needs to accomplish two activities before using this worksheet:

1. Through reflection on their project progress, the team identifies what elements of a project are effective.
2. The team reflects on the metrics they have used to determine the value of the project to the organization or organizations in the partnership.

The second answer is necessary because the tool asks the project team to quantify the cost of each plan element they wish to sustain. The organizations in a partnership can only commit to sustaining the project and its costs when the costs can be compared with the project's value.

Having answered these questions, the next step is to begin using the *Sustainability Planning Tool*.



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Worksheet 1

A clear vision is essential as a basis for determining what needs to be sustained. The worksheet asks the project team members to:

- Establish their vision for employee advancement;
- Identify what strategies they will pursue to achieve that vision; and
- Identify how they will support those strategies.

Worksheet 2

Next, analyze elements of the project design and identify those elements that they intend to sustain as they are and those elements that may change. The elements in the worksheet include:

- Specific employees who will be the focus of work going forward. Often the goal is to broaden a project to include more employees and those in different job categories. In other cases, the organization may wish to target employee groups based on the needs of the labor market for more skilled workers in a particular job.
- Training strategies to be used, to ensure that this program is accessible to the workforce and sustainable by the partners involved. The strategies include the specific combination of work-based learning, classroom-based training, and other training tools.

- Other strategies that will support effective training. Any working adult's ability to complete a training program depends upon the personal and financial resources available. Entry-level workers may need additional help, including employee coaching, mentoring, and employee incentives, as well as the institutional policies that support accessibility, including financial assistance and release time. Finally, employee training often puts new demands on frontline managers; they may need additional training themselves in order to help with the overall success of an initiative.
- Potential funding sources. The worksheet requires a calculation of the cost of each element. Also, the team must identify potential funding sources, such as employer support, external grants, and financial aid.

Worksheet 3

Finally, based on the first two worksheets, develop a specific sustainability work plan. For each action step in the plan, identify the deliverables, a due date for completion of the step, and who will be responsible.

WORKSHEET 1

Setting the Vision

How has our organization's vision around employee development been informed by the project?

What is our current vision of employee development for our frontline workers?

Questions to think about:

- Moving forward, how do we plan on managing the balance between investing in senior level vs. and frontline employees?
- What return on our investment (both dollars and soft returns) in our frontline workers have we noticed? Are there any surprises? What returns do we anticipate by continuing with these efforts?
- When this grant is over, will there be a business case for our organization in these investments? If so, what it is? If not, why not?

WORKSHEET 2

Implementing the Vision

Elements to implement your vision	Budget Implications (FTE or dollars)
<p>When this grant ends, what employees will we invest in to achieve this vision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job classification, titles, or departments? • How many employees? 	
<p>What types of strategies will we use to help us achieve this vision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training? Which topics? • Coaching and other personal supports? • Remedial classes, work readiness, career planning, etc? 	
<p>How will we reward these workers for achieving these professional goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monetary incentives? • Non-monetary incentives? 	

WORKSHEET 2

Implementing the Vision

Elements to implement your vision	Budget Implications (FTE or dollars)
<p>If we use training, how will the institution make it accessible to frontline workers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships with external organizations such as community colleges? • Will work-based learning be used? • Online training? • Classroom training at the work site? • Paid release time? 	
<p>What additional strategies must our institution make so that this vision is successful?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisory training? • Communications strategies? • Retreats, seminars, etc? • Other cultural change strategies? 	
<p>What new funds will we need to accomplish this vision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are potential public sources of revenue? • What are potential private sources of revenue? • What are our long-term plans to move away from soft funding? 	

WORKSHEET 3

Sustainability Work Plan

Action Steps/Deliverables	Due Date	Person Responsible

About *Jobs to Careers*

Jobs to Careers supports partnerships to advance and reward the skill and career development of incumbent workers providing care and services on the front lines of our health and health care systems. The initiative is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in collaboration with the Hitachi Foundation and with additional support from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. *Jobs to Careers* supports partnerships of employers, educational institutions, and other organizations to expand and redesign systems to:

- Create lasting improvements in the way institutions train and advance their frontline workers; and
- Test new models of education and training that incorporate work-based learning. The core concept of *Jobs to Careers* is “work-based learning,” which represents a novel approach to meeting labor force needs in health care as well as in other fields.

Key Components of *Jobs to Careers*

- Work-based learning is a key component of an overall skill building strategy that may also include an array of other learning approaches, such as more traditional off-site, on-site, technology-enabled, or experience-based learning.
- Career paths are developed and are readily available to frontline workers.
- Both the employer and education partners develop and implement changes that recognize the needs of working adults and that improve access to and success in skill building efforts by frontline workers.
- Frontline workers are recognized and rewarded as they build skills and expand knowledge necessary for their current job responsibilities or for advancing to new positions.

Essential Elements of Work-Based Learning in *Jobs to Careers*

Work-based learning is focused on building the essential skills and knowledge to effectively conduct current job responsibilities of the frontline worker and/or to advance in job responsibilities and career steps.

- The program is learner-centered. Learning is co-created by the individual learner and the person responsible for facilitating that learning.
- Development of the curriculum is shared between the educational institution and the employer.
- The facilitation of the learning is shared between the educational institution and the employer.
- The learning process is embedded in the work process.

Core Components of the *Jobs to Careers* Work-Based Learning Model

- The curriculum is embedded in the work process.
- Learning is embedded in the work process.
- Co-workers and supervisors are active participants in the process.
- Assessment is embedded in the work process.
- There is a strong potential for recognition and rewards as frontline workers build skills and expand knowledge necessary for their current job responsibilities or for advancing to new positions.
- Rewards (raises, promotions, credentials) are given for engaging in the program.
- Educational partners make organizational changes to support work-based learning.
- Employers make organizational changes to support work-based learning.

Organizational leaders are engaged in the project and motivated to sustain the effort.