

H RTP PROMISING PRACTICES

The Industry Partnership Itself Is a Priority

Second in the series: *Promising Practices Illustrating the Four Essential Elements of High Road Training Partnerships*

UC Berkeley Labor Center
July 2020

Overview

This brief provides a deep dive into the essential element of a High Road Training Partnership (H RTP) that the industry partnership itself is made a priority. It details a number of promising practices gleaned from the field for how to implement the critical components of this essential element. It also offers some specific examples of where and how these promising practices have been developed from the H RTPs that participated in the California Workforce Development Board's (CWDB) demonstration initiative. A listing of each of the H RTPs that is referenced throughout is provided at the end of this brief.

Critical Components

Promising practices have been identified for each of the following components that enable a H RTP to function successfully as an industry partnership. Those practices come from partnerships at all stages of development and across various industries.

- ❖ **Composition:** Includes major stakeholders in the industry
- ❖ **Commitment:** Leaders—at all levels—are committed to the partnership itself
- ❖ **Infrastructure:** Has developed structured ways to work together
- ❖ **Culture:** Values a collaborative problem-solving culture
- ❖ **Capacity:** Invests in ability to sustain the work
- ❖ **Comprehensive:** All components are in play and can deliver results on multiple levels

Promising Practices

❖ **Composition:** Includes Major Stakeholders in the Industry

The term “partner” is often used broadly to mean any organizations that work together on a particular program or initiative. What is different about the industry partnership approach undertaken through HRTPs is that the partnerships are formally comprised of leaders in the industry—including both employer and worker representatives—and dedicated conveners or intermediaries, all committed to sustained involvement. They invest the time, energy and resources to work together and build the partnership itself.

Promising Practice: At a Minimum, Have the “Three-Legged Stool”

Ideally, a HRTP is comprised of the major stakeholders in an industry and has, at a minimum, three legs of the stool: those representing employers, those representing workers and an intermediary or sustained convener. Together they share authority and decision-making over the direction of the programs needed to meet the industry’s needs.

In partnerships that may have more representation from some parts of the industry than others, HRTPs have found that an important way to solidify the high road nature of the partnership is to get all three of the primary stakeholders to be as actively involved as possible.

Example: **Jewish Vocational Services (JVS)**, long a leader in training and workforce development, has been partnering with BAYWORK, a consortium of 30 water and wastewater utilities to create a HRTP for public utilities systems in the Bay Area. Through their Water Utilities Career Pathways Project, JVS acts as the intermediary helping BAYWORK increase its membership of public utility employers and convening a consortium of water industry union leaders.

Example: **The West Oakland Job Resource Center (WOJRC)** is a workforce intermediary creating a HRTP to address local hire workforce needs through its Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (TDL) Workforce Pipeline program. WOJRC is partnering with the Northern California Teamsters Apprenticeship Training and Education Trust Fund and the Oakland Airforce Base and Port of Oakland employers to create the TDL Pre-Apprenticeship Training and Teamsters TDL Apprenticeship Program.

Promising Practice: If Adding Other Partners, Make it a Formal Commitment

When other collaborators beyond the employers, workers and intermediary are added to the partnership itself, they join the partnership in formally and it is clear what role they play in the structure and decision making. This does not preclude the partnership from engaging with others in discrete and even on-going ways, but it makes clear which voices are committed to the partnership itself and making decisions on behalf of what the industry needs.

Example: **The Building Skills Partnership (BSP)** represents a unique partnership between labor and management with a third of its board representing the Service Employees International Union (SEIU)-United Service Workers West (USWW), a third representing building service employers and client building owners, and a third representing the broader community. Despite coming from diverse backgrounds and working for organizations that are often on opposite ends of the bargaining table, BSP Board members are united in their commitment to the BSP's mission. In addition to its formal governing board, BSP has a standing Advisory Committee that includes the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) that allows the partnership to benefit from the expertise and industry knowledge of that Council. While not on any formal governance body, the roles are clear for the different entities.

❖ Commitment: Leadership Is Committed to the Partnership Itself

Successful partnerships make sure key leaders within the industry are committed to the partnership—at all stages of development and at all levels of the partnership. Finding common ground and reasons to work together on a sustained basis is not always easy, especially if the parties have been historically adversarial or inexperienced in working collaboratively together. This can be true between labor and management, or between multiple employers who have had to compete with one another in the industry. HRTPs have developed a number of ways to build these multi-party commitments.

Promising Practice: Identify Industry Challenges and Opportunities

HRTPs make sure to look at challenges/opportunities that come from various sources, such as:

Legislative or Policy Changes:

Example: Various H RTPs in this initiative have identified Local Hiring policies/ordinances, air quality/zero emissions and legislated environmental targets, expanded health care coverage under the Affordable Care Act, labor law changes and other legal requirements as some of the external factors that provide incentive for the partners to come—and stay—together.

Demographic Trends:

Example: Almost every H RTP in this initiative has identified the “silver tsunami” of retirements expected in their industry as a major challenge they need to get ahead of, coupled often with a lack of qualified workers in the pipeline that would take care of the challenge on its own. Beyond changing workforce demographics, the aging population is affecting the use of services, such as in health care or transportation. On the other end, a younger, more tech-savvy demographic is changing expectations that industries must respond to in order to stay relevant.

Market Disruption:

Example: Many of the industries in this initiative are facing fundamental changes in how their industry provides goods and services, including the movement toward Airbnb rentals in the hotel industry, “smart” cars and buses in the transportation industry, and robotics and automation in the health care and goods movement industries.

Increased Competitive Advantage:

Partners may buy in to the partnership if they believe doing so will increase their competitive advantage (employers) or retain/increase the number of quality jobs for members (labor).

Example: While there is no legal requirement that buildings adopt LEED standards under a move toward more green building practices, participating in the training programs that **BSP** developed in partnership allows the buildings to earn additional points toward achieving coveted LEED ratings.

Example: Labor unions have found value in working in partnership to devise training programs that benefit workers because it can help grow membership in that industry or deepen member loyalty to the union. **The California Federation of Labor** has listed a number of reasons for working in partnership that are convincing to many labor leaders looking to lead the way into the future.

Promising Practice: Address Internal and Operational Challenges

Many of the HRTPs in this initiative identified internal challenges, such as workplace safety, employee absenteeism, or the need to improve equity among their workforce as important reasons why their partners had come together to work collaboratively on problems they had yet to solve on their own or through other means. Knowing they would jointly commit to address these issues provided the incentive that many of the partners needed to participate. Having data and candid conversations about what had worked or not worked in the past was often critical to the partners' buy-in for the new approach and commitment to a durable partnership to solve not only these challenges.

Example: One reason industry partners came together to create a HRTP at the **Port of Los Angeles (Port of LA)** was to improve workplace safety. In 2016, the Los Angeles/Long Beach Joint Accident Prevention Committee, made up of members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), wrote a white paper recommending improving safety and training for lashers, inspiring implementation discussion among ILWU, PMA, and the Port of LA.

Example: Equity in Los Angeles County hiring is one central purpose of the County's Local and Targeted Hiring policy and so in recommending possible entry-level workforce development pilot programs, the **Worker Education and Resource Center's (WERC)** 2018 study included an Equity Audit. The audit looked to find any job classifications, groups, and departments where the presence of any one ethnicity or gender was acutely disproportionate. Their review indicated several areas where workforce development efforts could improve opportunities for underrepresented populations and those who experience apparent barriers to employment in specific parts of the County workforce.

Promising Practice: Use Structured Exercises to Get Shared Understandings

HRTPs have used various tools and processes to arrive at shared understandings of challenges facing their industry, helping to solidify commitments to working together on a sustained basis.

Example: HRTPs have jointly undertaken industry-led industry analyses, stakeholder mapping exercises—in which the partners sit together to review and assess how they can meet the challenges ahead—and one-on-one or small group conversations between critical players in the industry to talk through how a partnership approach can help meet the challenges together.

Promising Practice: Utilize Champions Across the Industry

Champions can come from many quarters and HRTPs have found it usually takes more than one, regardless of the stage of partnership development. In utilizing champions, many HRTPs have found it helpful to have a “like speaks to like” approach, meaning, for example, that labor leaders already invested in the partnership reach out and talk to other labor leaders and likewise management to management. Often, it is simply who has the best relationship and ability to reach out to particular players. Sometimes, the intermediary is best suited to talk to different parties, unifying the work around common challenges, specific industry needs, or findings from data they may have compiled. This can be especially true if there is perceived competition between the parties or no existing channels for communication as buy-in is being developed.

Example: To deepen the work of the partnership into more departments and positions across the County of Los Angeles, **WERC** was able to cultivate champions at multiple levels, including the director of a contracted service provider, elected officials serving on the Board of Supervisors, individual department heads working at the County, and front-line supervisors, workers and their union willing to be on the cutting edge of a new approach.

Example: At the **Port of LA**, having union leaders willing to champion the partnership both “up and out” while working with colleagues on the employer side who were also committed to advancing a new approach helped bring a new partnership together, with the strong support of public officials as champions at the City and State levels.

Example: In the public transportation industry, **California Transit Works! (CTW!)** partners have years of experience utilizing champions effectively to build and expand buy-in. CTW! has developed best practice guidance for this critical component that spells out the attributes of a champion for the purposes of partnership:

- A champion personally believes in/supports the need for partnerships.
- A champion has the ability to lead and/or effect change within his/her organization.
- A champion has earned the respect and trust of coworkers through personal example.

Promising Practice: Build Off of Tangible Results and Data

Another way to build leadership support is to have concrete examples, data and proof of improvements achieved through working in partnership. There is a robust body of work showing this in various industries and H RTPs in this initiative have been able to leverage their own partnership results to deepen or expand their work to more stakeholders.

Example: **BSP** has been able to promote tangible results achieved from its Green Janitor Education Program (GJEP), a green buildings program that has been validated by a third party. SeedLA found significant improvements in energy efficiency, waste diversion, costs, and health, among other positive outcomes.

Example: Similarly, **CTW!** reports measurable results through partnerships in public transportation, such as reduced absenteeism and worker passenger complaints, an increase in miles between road calls and improved worker retention.

Example: **WERC** found that, as they sought to expand partnership training programs beyond the health department to the full County of Los Angeles, having the quantitative and qualitative data down to specific budgeted positions was key. Presenting the findings to County officials and the Board of Supervisors helped build buy-in for the expanded efforts.

Promising Practice: Continually Reinforce the Partnership

Successful H RTPs cannot stress enough the need to continually care and attend to the partnership itself. Ways that H RTPs have found to continually reinforce buy-in include:

Partnership Retreats and Strategy Re-Fresh Sessions:

Example: **CTW!** has identified partnership retreats and dedicated time for the partners to meet especially helpful in deepening not only programmatic work but the partnerships themselves that are growing across public transportation.

Example: Similarly, even though their partnership with hospital employers and the SEIU has been successfully working for years, the **SEIU-United Healthcare Workers (UHW) Education Fund (The Ed Fund)** has found it valuable to have full day sessions to kick off the partnership in new content areas with key players involved in that particular project. It ensures the parties are trained in partnership principles and collaborative decision-making as they tackle new work streams.

Example: Strategy re-fresh sessions can also reinforce the partnership, with tools like the **Strategic Roadmap** providing a practical exercise of partnership problem-solving.

Exposing Leaders to the Work Itself:

Each of the H RTPs in this initiative makes sure to invite senior leaders of the partnership to graduation ceremonies so leaders can witness or participate in the celebrations with the training participants.

Example: **WERC** reports that not only does this provide a qualitative metric that reinforces buy in for leaders, it also validates to the workers their importance to the mission of the organization and the role their union plays in supporting their career goals.

Taking Advantage of External Forums:

The H RTPs in this initiative have also taken advantage of public meetings, conferences and other industry gatherings to get leaders in the partnership to speak to their work and approach, share their results with others they may be trying to recruit into the partnership, and reinforce the value of doing business this way.

Example: Public transit partnerships in **CTW!** have had labor and management leaders speak at numerous conferences and a wide range of events, which both inspires others in the industry to take up this partnership approach, while also solidifying the buy-in of leaders and workers already involved.

Testimonials/Promote Through a Wide Range of Media:

Utilizing social media, story-telling, newsletters and industry/union publications allows the partnership to be validated and leaders working in the partnership to be shored up as champions.

Example: **BSP**, for example, has done many promotional events with the Mayor of Los Angeles regarding their successful green building programs. Other examples include the press release that Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis issued supporting the innovative training programs done through the partnership that **WERC** convenes and compelling publicly shared videos that **CTW!** has created showing the value of the partnership approach to improving outcomes in public transportation.

❖ **Infrastructure:** Create Structured Ways to Work Together

There are various ways that partnerships can structure themselves, but it's critical that there be explicit understandings of how the partnership itself will operate, make decisions, share information, and support continuity in the partnership as leadership may change over time.

Promising Practice: Set Up Appropriate Governance Structure

How HRTPs establish themselves falls along a continuum—from less formal, with simply voluntary commitments in place that identify the work, roles and responsibilities of the parties—to more formal that can include operating under federal and state laws governing labor-management relationships and/or formal non-profit status for tax and other purposes.

Which approach a partnership takes can evolve over time as the partnerships themselves change. What is important is that the parties explicitly commit to ongoing joint work and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. HRTPs have found a range of ways to set themselves up organizationally.

Legal Status:

Generally, there are four ways a HRTP can operate:

1. As a voluntary agreement between the parties that is not legally binding. This can be under a simple charter or memorandum of understanding.
2. As a non-profit entity, often called in short-hand a "501 (c)(3)" because it is based on the provision in the federal tax code that exempts the entity from taxation if it meets educational or charitable criteria and allows donations made into it to also be exempt from taxation. This approach is often chosen if the HRTP wants to receive philanthropic funding, to include more entities other than unions and employers covered by collective bargaining agreements, or the HRTP has been built out from a previously existing non-profit organization that now serves as the formal intermediary for the HRTP.
3. As a Taft-Hartley Trust, often called in short-hand a "Taft-Hartley" based on provisions in federal labor law that govern how private sector employers and unions representing employees can work together. This approach is necessary when funding is provided from the employer under a collective bargaining agreement.

4. As both of the above—concurrently as a non-profit organization and a Taft-Hartley Trust.

The HRTPs in this initiative illustrate the range of legal structures being utilized and how some have evolved over time.

- Started as a non-profit, then collectively bargained funding so added a separate Taft-Hartley Trust Fund and now operates as both:
 - » Example from private sector health care industry: **Shirley Ware Education Center (SWECC)** has operated as a non-profit 501(c)(3) since 2001. The Ed Fund has operated as a Taft-Hartley Trust Fund since 2004.
- Started as a Taft-Hartley Trust Fund, then secured non-profit status and now operates as both:
 - » Example from building services industry: The **Leadership Training and Education Fund (LTEF)** has operated as a Taft-Hartley Trust Fund since 2000. **BSP** has operated as a non-profit 501(c)(3) since 2008.
- Operates as both a non-profit organization and a Taft-Hartley Trust:
 - » Example from hospitality industry: The Hospitality Industry Training and Education Fund, known as the **Hospitality Training Academy (HTA)**, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit institution and a labor-management partnership/ Taft-Hartley fund. The HTA provides benefits to Local 11 with its over 160 employers and over 31,000 union members in Los Angeles and Orange County, and the state of Arizona.
- Operates as a non-profit organization:
 - » Example from County Government: **WERC** has operated as a non-profit 501(c)(3) entity since 2002.
- Operates under a voluntary charter that is non-binding:
 - » **Port of LA, PMA, and ILWU:** The training partnership is currently in the start-up phase and utilizing a charter that respects the binding and super-ceding nature of the existing collective bargaining agreements between the employers and unions.

Promising Practice: Set Criteria for Governing Bodies

This too can vary, but what is critical is that the composition of and criteria for serving on governing boards be clearly spelled out in governance documents, charter or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), including how members are chosen to fill the allotted slots. For Taft-Hartley Trusts, federal rules will specify the responsibilities of trustees and the requirement of equal representation from management and labor. For HRTPs that operate as both a non-profit organization and a Taft-Hartley Trust, the board of directors of the non-profit may be the same as the trustees of the Trust, if that makes the most sense for the partnership, or they can be different.

The most common approach for naming particular individuals to designated leadership roles is often summarized by the maxim that “labor picks labor and management picks management and community picks community,” meaning each partner is responsible for choosing its own particular representatives to the particular role.

Additional Committees:

In addition to the official governing bodies, many HRTPs have found it valuable to establish other types of committees or work groups to serve different purposes. Critical to their success is that they are clearly defined and have clear reporting up and out processes to senior sponsors or governing bodies.

Advisory Committees:

These are helpful to provide regular additional expertise.

Example: **BSP** has a standing advisory committee meeting as an integral part of their processes that includes the USGBC. While the USGBC does not serve on any formal governing body, having them on the Advisory Committee allows the partnership to benefit from the USGBC’s industry knowledge. The partnership then does not need to reach out in ad hoc ways when USGBC’s expertise is called for because the USGBC is formally involved through this advisory committee and its role is clear.

Labor Management Committees (LMC):

These formal committees provide a specific process to ensure that the employers and unions are actively involved and take advantage of more traditional labor management structures that may already exist in unionized industries.

Example: **BSP** facilitates a regular in-person meeting of an LMC that includes property service workers, contractors, property managers and the SEIU-USWW that helps ground the program in the priorities and needs of the industry.

Work Groups:

These can be staff level technical or task-oriented groups to drive the priorities set by the governing board or other joint committees.

Example: Staff of the **Port of LA** convenes regular meetings of staff from the PMA and leaders in ILWU local unions to develop and drive programmatic approaches as the designated “Technical Committee.”

Example: Specific partnership work groups may also be created to drive a particular sub-set of larger partnership efforts, such as the one created by **The Ed Fund** to bring together hospital employers and the SEIU to craft new apprenticeship programs in health care.

Apprenticeship Committees:

If the partnership is operating a state or federally approved apprenticeship program, they must have a joint apprenticeship committee.

Example: The Santa Clara Valley Transit Authority (VTA) Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (JATC) is a subset of the Joint Workforce Investment (JWI) partnership in public transportation, overseeing four apprenticeship programs as well as the development of new apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship activities. The VTA JATC is a formal joint apprenticeship committee operating under the rules and regulations of the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) and the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship (USDOL). The JWI is a core H RTP in the **CTW!** consortium of public transit partnerships.

Promising Practice: Clarify Roles and Responsibilities

Regardless of what type of governing, advising or working body is set up to drive the work, H RTPs have found it is helpful to lay out clear expectations for how the group will operate.

Example: Formal by-laws may be necessary for the official governing body, but for all others, a simple charter document can make sure everyone is on the same page with important questions like what’s in and out of scope for the group’s work; when, where and how often the group will meet; and how the work will be communicated and to whom, including confidentiality expectations. Sometimes simply going

through the creation of a charter together helps build the partnership itself, generating greater trust and buy-in, especially when the group or its particular players are new.

Promising Practice: Define What Decision-Making Process to Use

A critical component of successful HRTPs is having agreed upon ways to address problems, come to shared understandings and make decisions collaboratively. Once those have been agreed to, we've found it is also important to then train leaders on how to use those ways—and consistently use them—so they become ingrained in how the partnership operates. This is especially important if they're setting up a different way of working together than exists in other settings, such as traditional collective bargaining or using Roberts Rules of Order and majority voting.

Example: Two approaches, which often work well together, can help make sure that the partnership operates toward shared interests that gets everyone's buy-in. They are:

- **Interest Based Problem Solving (IBPS):**
This approach helps partnership teams address issues or solve problems where there may be diverse individual or group interests. Participants work together to reach an agreement by sharing information and remaining creative and flexible, rather than by taking adversarial positions. It is often used in tandem with consensus decision making because it allows issues to be addressed collaboratively prior to bringing them to a formal decision.
- **Consensus Decision Making (CDM):**
This process allows consensus to be reached on a proposal or recommendation when all members are willing to accept a decision as the best solution for the group at that time. While often misunderstood to mean complete or unanimous agreement, under CDM, not everyone has to agree but they are willing to support it and they have made the decision in a fair and open manner. One general rule of thumb way to “measuring” consensus is that consensus is reached when all decision-making members are at least 70% comfortable with the decision and will support the decision 100%. In other words, arriving at consensus means arriving at a decision “everyone can live with.”

This can be a particularly effective approach for an HRTP because it reinforces the value of collaboration, surfaces resistance from any of the partners that can impede implementation and builds trust so the partnership can take on increasingly complex challenges.

❖ **Culture:** Value Building a Collaborative, Problem-Solving Culture

While getting buy-in to the work and establishing structured ways to work together are critical, what really allows a partnership to thrive is creating and sustaining a culture that allows sustained, collaborative problem solving. The following attributes, which are interrelated, are critical. When teased apart, they elicit a number of promising practices that help promote the core aspects of such a culture.

Promising Practice: Develop Collaboration and Trust

Building trust among the partners can be helped along by choosing problem solving methods that allow everyone to be heard, by working toward common ground, identifying tangible goals and racking up small victories that validate the joint effort. Sometimes it means having different partners separately sort through what they need and want and then bringing them together to find the commonalities and focus on the overlap. Here is where the role of a convener, neutral facilitator or intermediary can help.

It's also helpful to have the expectation that no one can just raise a problem without also leaning in to help identify a solution. And, when action plans are agreed upon, it builds trust to make sure each of the parties follow through on their role in implementation. Delivering on solutions in a timely manner also helps build trust. These may all seem obvious, but the key learning from the field is that the parties need to attend to this and perpetually reinforce it.

Example: The Joint Workforce Investment (JWI) is a foundational partnership within the consortium of public transit partnerships in **CTW!** The JWI Apprenticeship did not begin with a goal of starting apprenticeship programs. Rather, VTA and the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) representing workers invested in an experienced intermediary to guide an investigative process of identifying shared challenges and potential solutions. As reported in a case study of their work by COWS, "This commitment to finding common ground helped establish trust among the partners and a willingness to work differently. Workers were included at all stages of the process. Management and labor developed trust-based feedback systems for gathering information from the field, including bimonthly mentor meetings and the Vegas Rule. These improvements created the conditions for determining if and how apprenticeship could address the challenges facing VTA's workforce."

Promising Practice: Clarify Communication Methods

H RTPs emphasize open communication and a commitment to having all voices be heard. Having explicit understandings around what will and will not be shared can be very helpful.

Example: Knowing that the group will agree at the end of every meeting as to what part of the meeting will be communicated out to other parties, when and how, can build trust and prevent undermining of collaborative efforts. Parties in the **CTW!** transit partnerships have found it helpful to have the Vegas Rule for some working sessions to allow each party to openly discuss its concerns/fears/hesitations/dreams and explore new approaches together, without fear of retribution or backlash.

Once it is decided what can and should be shared, H RTPs have also found that, as a practice, it is almost impossible to over-communicate. Partnerships involve multiple parties, each with many stakeholders within complex organizations, so it is important to make sure there is regular, ongoing, and even repeated forms of communication about the work of the partnership. This is especially important when the H RTP reaches critical decisions or results are celebrated.

Example: Several H RTPs use newsletters, videos, standard templates for meeting report outs that can be forwarded, town halls, webinars, and each partner's own internal communication channels to reinforce the work. Individuals can be identified to take responsibility for updating other key players/sponsors on a regular basis or at critical junctures to ensure there is clear understanding of what the partnership is doing.

Promising Practice: Embrace Innovation

H RTPs try to operate their partnerships in a mode of continuous learning to enhance their ability to try new approaches and problem solve to the realities of a changing environment together. This helps guard against the partners potentially falling back into positional—and potentially adversarial—stances if that has been their history prior to partnership. There are a number of ways H RTPs have found to do this.

Use Pilots to Test Approaches:

Invest in rigorous prototypes that can generate methods to be replicated and brought to scale once tested, evaluated and iterated to reach the goals of the partnership.

Example: **The Ed Fund** created the first registered apprenticeships in health care in California by first developing a pilot for ambulatory coders with one large health care employer and then sharing what they learned from that as they began another pilot with a different large health care employer, all moving towards a statewide plan for coders across all partnership employers. Their approach included an exploratory phase, planning stage, then implementation, with specific lessons learned written and shared as they moved along.

Example: The H RTP at the **Port of LA** is clear they will build the culture and processes of tackling larger challenges by being successful first in piloting a training for casual employees who lash the container ships to the docks, collect data on the pilot, and refine ways to design, deliver and expand the program.

Be Data Driven to Assess/Improve Innovative Approaches:

Base assessments of how innovative approaches are working with data and input from a range of sources. This can reinforce the problem-solving nature of the partnership and provide “neutral” reasons to embrace things beyond what may have been more positional and adversarial relationships in the past. Looking at and evaluating data together can help build common ground for solutions that the parties can then share with others they may need to convince for buy-in. It also ensures that any expansions are undertaken on their merits and because they drive results, not simply the interests of one of the parties.

Example: **JVS** partners with BAYWORK agencies to build awareness among high school and middle school teachers by offering paid externships. These teacher externships, hosted by local water agencies, are an innovative way to help teachers connect the curriculum they are teaching in class to the real world and build an interest in careers in the water industry. JVS has hired a vendor to do an evaluation of the program and survey the teachers to measure its impact.

Example: Similarly, **The Ed Fund**'s pre-apprenticeship program in health care is collecting data before and after the pilots to share with their partners to help design ways to bring the effort to scale.

Example: Action Plan assessments are another promising way to provide regular feedback, not just on particular projects, but on how well the partnership is working overall toward its goals. Using the Strategic Road Map tool and structured discussions around the results of action plans helps the partners continually assess and improve their joint efforts.

Example: Building in formal feedback loops, such as focus groups, surveys, and “listening tours” around programs that include front line workers can also reinforce the culture of continuous learning as well as valuing the “voice of the worker.”

Use Innovative Technology/Social Media:

Find innovative ways to capitalize on the various means by which adults and organizations learn, build community and find solutions to problems in an increasingly “wired” and virtual world. Almost all of the HRTPs in this initiative have been creative in how they embrace new approaches.

- **For the Partnership:**
CTW! reports that social media tools have transformed their ability to move things quickly and get people together. Upper level management have a lot of meetings so often a more virtual approach makes it easy for them to participate in the partnership. Recoding meetings and interviews from different perspectives and peers helps solidify the partnership; as does writing up the history and lessons learned, sharing best practices and worker stories through websites and other technologies.
- **For Training:**
BSP, among others, has developed online apps to help train workers and teach English.
- **For Industry Connectivity:**
HTA is developing a new industry-wide app-based system for hotel room attendants to sign up for additional shifts with participating hotels in coordination with UNITE HERE Local 11. This is an innovative way to link employers with employees across multiple employers and allow workers to obtain additional hours and move toward self-sufficiency. This new method also helps employers with the retention of employees.
- **For Expansion:**
WOJRC is developing marketing materials and employing a social media platform to educate and introduce themselves to industry employers. This will help them expand beyond their initial catchment area to larger portions of the East Bay in the years to come.

Tap Expertise of Others:

HRTPs have found that knowledge exchange with others can prevent the need to “reinvent the wheel” and can build the essential culture of innovation and collaboration.

They've found effective ways to utilize outside conveners, get technical assistance, and share tactics with those who have tested approaches elsewhere.

Site Visits and Interviews:

When building buy-in for a particular training or programmatic approach, the HRTPs in this initiative found value in site visits to others in their industry who had already been working on a particular challenge or doing something similar.

Example: Helpful to grounding the new partnership at the **Port of LA** was a trip to an established training program in Vancouver, British Columbia that allowed leaders from all of the stakeholders to see another approach from what they currently had in place for training workers, and to see a successful training program in the maritime industry that was developed from significant involvement of both labor and management.

Example: Similarly, **WOJRC** tapped into the expertise developed by the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) with a site visit to see the industry wide approach taken in Wisconsin. WOJRC also conducted a series of in-depth interviews with Alternative Staffing Organizations (ASO) around the country to fully understand the structures and operations of successful staffing agencies. WORJC reports these have proven invaluable in their effort to form a socially responsible staffing agency that prioritizes job seekers with multiple barriers while assisting employers to meet their local hire goals. WOJRC is a leading a new paradigm of lifting up the warehousing industry.

Example: In health care, **The Ed Fund** found value in sending staff to visit sister health care organizations represented by the same union on the east coast to look at training programs and specifically apprenticeship programs as The Ed Fund breaks new ground in that area in California. Even though The Ed Fund has been successfully running health care training programs for more than a decade, such knowledge sharing is still part of a continuously learning culture.

Use Others' Materials/Tools:

To not reinvent the wheel, HRTPs have found they get farther faster by using materials developed by others when helpful.

Example: The national health care consortium Healthcare Career Advancement Program H-CAP provided apprenticeship checklists and support for federal approvals for health care apprenticeships for **The Ed Fund**. Similarly, they borrowed

heavily from the team-teaching approaches developed by the Integrated Basic Education Skills and Training (I-BEST) that have been successfully used in Washington state and elsewhere for effective adult education. Meanwhile, **WORJC** is tapping into the time-tested Teamster unions apprenticeship approach as they develop new ones.

Example: The **Port of LA** is basing the new curriculum for their pilot Lashing Training program and the use of a fabricated walkway and more realistic configuration of training containers that are currently in use in British Columbia, with adjustments for their own unique situation in California. Interestingly, the training techniques that the Port of LA project reviewed in British Columbia were techniques that the British Columbia program took and modified from the training program currently at the Port of LA, showing an industry continuously going back and forth to work off each other's improvements.

Promising Practice: Celebrate Success/Tell a Story About the Results You Are Getting

Critical to reinforcing the culture and buy-in is to celebrate the successes derived from working in partnership and tell the story through as many venues as possible. One of the promising practices identified earlier in this brief is the celebration of programmatic success by having leaders attend graduation ceremonies of training participants. Not only does this deepen buy-in, but when those leaders further spread what they learned at other leader meetings, they reinforce the culture of partnership itself.

Example: Most of the HRTPs highlight the workers themselves, through videos promoted on websites, speaking events and newsletters. These are routinely and proudly done at **HTA, BSP, The Ed Fund, CTW! and JVS** among others. Sharing these stories help deepen union and worker support for the programs and the approach. Especially powerful is when an employer/management publication touts the value of the partnership and role of worker voice in its own employer or industry publications and vice versa a union or community organization's regular newsletters and websites.

❖ Capacity: Create Capacity to Sustain the Work

What makes partnerships unique as the vehicle for high road training is the commitment to work in partnership for the long haul. By definition, HRTPs live beyond any program, project or grant. That means it is critical to attend to all factors that can sustain the partnership itself. Promising practices to achieve this include:

Promising Practice: Develop Effective Intermediaries

The primary way partnerships have developed capacity is by having a strong intermediary organization that can advise, design and implement the partnership’s training goals and hire dedicated staff.

Example: Each of the long-standing HRTPs in this initiative have dedicated organizations that convene the partners and deploy professional staff to execute on the programs, such as **HTA, BSP, The Ed Fund, and WERC**. The newer partnerships, such as at the **Port of LA**, have hired staff dedicated to helping institutionalize the partnership. Others tap into staff working directly for the unions or employers participating in the partnership.

Promising Practice: Maximize and Diversify Funding

Often partnerships start with one source of funding—be it employer/employee contributions through a collective bargaining agreement or a grant from either the workforce development system or philanthropic organization—and come to rely on that only.

Example: HRTPs that “think beyond the grant” or the collective bargaining agreement and diversify their funding sources allow them to broaden their reach and viability for the long haul. Others have explored new ways to fund their efforts, such as **BSP** testing a new fee for service model to reach employers and unions not covered by their collective bargaining agreement. This allows them to scale what they are already doing, meet industry demand for their services, and sustain the partnership more fully.

Partnership values are important in any funding discussion. Some of the longest running partnerships shared their strong belief that organizations should be true to themselves and their purpose, versus changing their activities to meet grant or funding expectations unless those expectations are core to the partnerships’ mission. HRTPs have found that chasing money at the expense of principles causes an erosion of the core of the organization; and/or causes it to lose focus on its core mission; and/or causes it to become over-extended; or all three.

Perhaps the most effective way for HRTPs to maximize funding is to be results oriented for what the industry needs—to be truly demand driven as outlined in other briefs in this series. Then the industry itself is more willing to provide or help secure needed funding.

Example: In the trucking industry, there is a massive shortage of drivers. With the development of urban warehouse and logistics centers near the Port of Oakland,

WOJRC and the Teamsters offer a unique TDL apprenticeship training program to improve the quality and standards for good paying jobs. This labor/management partnership supported by the WOJRC ensures that the framework is employer-lead, worker-centered, and community-focused. In general, pilot projects initially funded through grants can more easily be scaled with support from employer and/or union contributions when the partners see the results.

Example: Similarly, philanthropies and public funding may be drawn to support programs that get disadvantaged or targeted populations placed and succeeding in high quality jobs rather than simply trained for potential jobs they hope to find on their own. **WERC** strategically combined philanthropic with other funding. As reported in a case study by COWS in 2018, “individual clinics could not afford to prototype a Care Navigator model. Support from The California Endowment ensured curriculum development and training costs. LA Care Health Plan provided apprentice wages, investing in the concept of the registered apprenticeship as an opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of navigators in several Healthcare LA community health clinics. Having offered a solution to a critical industry challenge, WERC gained leverage with funders and employers to design for equity.”

Promising Practice: Support Partnership Champions

The H RTPs also found that, while funding is important, sustainability isn't just about money. To work in partnership on increasingly complex challenges over the long haul, a partnership needs to support its champions—especially as it broadens into new work.

Example: **CTW!** has found that supporting the labor and management champions of existing partnerships in public transit helps drive the expansion to more transit agencies and unions and sustain the partnership approach in the industry. CTW! has developed a comprehensive approach to identify and support champions, which can be a model for any industry.

Promising Practice: Develop and Empower Leaders

Many of the H RTPs in this initiative solidify their partnerships with committed efforts toward leadership and staff development. They cultivate the expectation that the leaders will undertake partnership as the “way we do business”—that working in partnership is not some separate or additional side bar activity to their regular work or ways of problem solving.

Example: **CTW!** reports that the partnerships in public transit agencies has developed to the point where the leaders—labor and management—are more and more turning to each other for their day-to-day work and are seeing themselves as a community. This manifests in how leaders reach out and talk to each other about issues and ideas, at both the worker and management level.

Example: By operating in partnership, the day-to-day culture can be fundamentally changed. For example, the GJEP training program in the building services industry also serves as a leadership development tool. **BSP** reports that workers become agents of change, with new types of interactions, roles and lines of communication with contractors and building managers. For the workers, it “brings them out of the shadows” and provides more dignity and respect for their work. They can also be proud of the part they play in the environmental sustainability movement. As reported by the USGBC, “In its totality, the program is also an example of social equality, whereby everyone participates in the management and maintenance of a building. Janitors, alongside building owners and managers, are empowered to actively engage in the goals of the LEED rating system.”

❖ **Comprehensive: All Components Are in Play**

While this brief has tried to tease out the component parts of a successful partnership, they are intertwined and reinforce each other, just as the essential elements of a H RTP do. Success requires all of them to be attended to in a comprehensive way.

Example: To see the totality, **CTW!** has summarized what it has found to be best practices for partnership below and a number of brief videos also explain the principles and success factors that have been developed and refined through this initiative:

- Recognize that building strong partnerships and sustaining positive relationships at all levels, are the key to any individual program’s success.
- Identify common values, vision, and goals for industry/agency/organizations.
- Create an effective decision-making partnership leadership structure that meets regularly, especially in start-up phases.
- Emphasize open communication and positive, problem-solving approaches for issues that will arise at all levels.

- Respect the outcomes of neutral focus groups. Follow up on problems/issues that arise during focus groups; deliver on solutions in a timely manner. (Action = building mutual trust.)
- Create mutual action plans, benchmarks, and metrics; and ensure timely, clear messaging, and follow through on action plans at all levels of the organizations.
- Regularly evaluate progress, make adjustments, and publicize/celebrate success.
- “Everything is a pilot project.” Acknowledge that the partnership is charting new ground and new ways of working together. Change is not easy. Learn from practical experiences and grow together.
- The Vegas Rule: build trust over time, that each party can openly discuss its concerns/fears/hesitations/dreams and explore new approaches together, without fear of retribution or backlash.
- Stay grounded and centered in industry/workforce/environmental emerging trends. Build partnerships and programs that address both current and future needs.

High Road Training Partnerships: Participating in the CWDB Demonstration Initiative— By Industry

Health Care	
Convener	Shirley Ware Education Center (SWEC) SEIU-UHW Education Fund (The Ed Fund)
Employer Representatives	Kaiser Permanente Dignity Health Alameda Health
Worker Representatives	SEIU-UHW West, SEIU Local 1021, and worker leaders
Hospitality	
Convener	Hospitality Training Academy (HTA)
Employer Representatives	JW Marriott Los Angeles L.A. LIVE The Ritz-Carleton Los Angeles Sheraton Grand Los Angeles Courtyard by Marriott Los Angeles L.A. LIVE Residence Inn by Marriott Los Angeles L.A. LIVE Concession Companies Operating At LAX
Worker Representatives	UNITE HERE Local 11
Goods Movement	
Convener	The Port of Los Angeles (The Port of LA) (Labor Relations & Workforce Development Division)
Employer Representatives	Pacific Maritime Association (PMA)
Worker Representatives	International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Locals 13, 63, 9

Public Sector	
Convener	Worker Education and Resource Center (WERC)
Employer Representatives	LA County Chief Executive Office LA County Depts of Health Services, Parks & Recreation, Public Works, Beaches and Harbor, Fire, and Internal Services Ambulance and transport companies
Worker Representatives	SEIU Local 721 Los Angeles & Orange County Building Trades Councils

Water	
Convener	Jewish Vocational Services (JVS)
Employer Representatives	BAYWORK consortium of water agencies City and County of San Francisco
Worker Representatives	IAM Local 1414 and AFSCME

Public Transit	
Convener	California Transit Works! (CTW!)
Employer Representatives	Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Alameda Transit District Golden Gate Transit District
Worker Representatives	Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Locals 192, 265, 1575

Distribution & Logistics	
Convener	West Oakland Job Resource Center (WOJRC)
Employer Representatives	Employers located at the Oakland Army Base (OAB)
Worker Representatives	Northern California Teamsters Apprentice Training and Education Fund, Teamsters Local 70 and business agents

Janitorial Services	
Convener	Building Skills Partnership
Employer Representatives	Over 40 Janitorial employers in California BOMA Greater Los Angeles Leadership Training and Education Fund (LTEF)
Worker Representatives	SEIU-United Service Workers West (USWW)

About This Series

Through the HRTP Initiative, the CWDB invested close to \$10 million to develop, refine, and expand the number of skill-focused, industry-based training partnerships that advance equity by linking workforce innovation to regional challenges of job quality, economic mobility and environmental sustainability. The UC Berkeley Labor Center was commissioned by the CWDB to gather key learnings from the field from the eight HRTPs that were funded in the demonstration phase of the initiative. This brief is part of a series that includes an overview and explanation of the Essential Elements of successful High Road Training Partnerships as well as promising practices and examples of those essential elements across all of the participating HRTPs. For further information on the specific projects undertaken by the HRTPs in this CWDB initiative and the impact they have had on advancing the goals of equity, climate resiliency and job quality, see the project overviews written by the UCLA Labor Center, commissioned by the CWDB to lead the evaluation process for the initiative. For more information about the HRTP initiative, see <https://cwdb.ca.gov/initiatives/high-road-training-partnerships/>.

H RTP Initiative

The California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) designed the High Road Training Partnership (H RTP) initiative to model a sector approach that can address critical issues of equity, job quality, and environmental sustainability. H RTPs are industry-based, worker-focused training partnerships that build skills for California's high road employers. These firms compete based on quality of product and service, achieved through innovation and investment in human capital, and generate family-supporting jobs where workers have agency and voice.

This brief is part of a series that includes an overview of the principles of partnership, snapshot profiles of each of the H RTPs participating in the initiative, an overview and explanation of the Essential Elements of successful High Road Training Partnerships, as well as promising practices and examples of those essential elements across all of the participating H RTPs.

For more information on the initiative and other briefs in this series, see <https://cwdb.ca.gov/initiatives/high-road-training-partnerships/>

Essential Elements of an H RTP

1) Industry-Led Problem Solving

Foundational is that the industry leads the problem solving for the workforce demands unique to that industry. Industry includes both employers and workers or their representatives.

2) Partnership Itself is a Priority

Industry leaders conduct their problem solving through a dedicated and sustained partnership.

3) Worker Voice

Worker wisdom is explicitly incorporated throughout all aspects of the partnership.

4) Industry-Driven Training Solutions

The development, delivery, and reinforcement of education and training programs derive from what industry partners decide is needed.
