Guide for Forming School-Industry Partnerships

Identify where you are on the flowchart and create a Smart Goal to guide your next step.

Specific:

Measurable:

Attainable:

Relevant:

Timebound:

#1 Collaborate with stakeholders within your organization to evaluate your readiness for forming school-industry partnerships

- Why do you desire school-industry partnerships? What would they look like?
- What does your organization hope to gain? (desired outcomes)
- What data supports the creation of school-industry partnerships? (labor market data, student/community survey data, etc.)
- How would partnerships support the mission and vision of your organization?
- Does your organization have the resources to commit to partnerships? (time, personnel, funding, materials, facility, etc.)

#2 Identify potential partners and begin a dialogue

- Are there organizations already collaborating with you in some capacity?
- Identify potential partners that align to your organization's needs, interests and relevant data.
- Reach out to potential partners with broad ideas from your stakeholder team and invite them to explore partnership ideas.
- Share the following with your potential partners: relevant data, the resources your organization has to offer, your desired outcomes, your vision and mission.
- LISTEN to the ideas of your potential partners and remain FLEXIBLE as new and creative ideas may result.
- Be honest about your concerns, constraints, and needs. Stay true to your vision and mission.
- Determine if partnership meets the interests of both organizations and commit a team of joint stakeholders to drive the partnership.

#3 Create the partnership agreement and project details

The joint stakeholder team consisting of leaders from both organizations will:
- Define the nature of the partnership: career talks, design challenge, job shadowing, internships
- Identify the leader of the project at each organization. Who is the point of contact?
- Identify participants in the project (employees, students, teachers, etc.) and create roles and responsibilities for each group of participants.
- Determine skill and knowledge level required of participants. Manage expectations so that participants are not frustrated.
- Create SMART goals and list desired outcomes.
- Determine how outcomes will be measured throughout the project and at the conclusion.
- Create timeline with specific dates, times, rain dates, etc.
- Define facility and security needs: meeting rooms, parking location, visitor badges, security requirements.
- Identify required resources and determine which partner will provide them. Or identify outside suppliers.
- Create liability waiver and contract.
- Identify constraints and brainstorm countermeasures throughout the process.

#4 Educate broader community and invite participants

- Educate organizations about the partnership. (parents, students, employees, etc.)
- Enlist support staff and participants. (student permission slips, employee process for missing work)
- Educate all participants about their roles and responsibilities.
- Listen to feedback from greater community and participants. Revise project as needed.

#5 Implement the project

- Communicate regularly with point of contact. Be proactive about concerns!
- Engage in collaborative problem solving.
- Collect feedback regularly to evaluate effectiveness.
- Modify as needed and remain flexible.

#6 Celebrate - Communicate - Evaluate

- Hold a partnership celebration (showcase) and invite all stakeholders and the community.
- Communicate with organizations and community about the successes and outcomes.
- Survey stakeholders. Evaluate the intended and unintended outcomes.

#7 Plan Future Projects

- Use survey data to inform next collaborative project.
- Create SMART Goals for next project.