



U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SERIES

# TALENT ORCHESTRATORS:

SCALING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT THROUGH  
BUSINESS-FACING INTERMEDIARIES



U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION  
Center for Education and Workforce



## **U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION**

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation (USCCF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce dedicated to strengthening America's long-term competitiveness by addressing developments that affect our nation, our economy, and the global business environment.

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## **U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's economy, young adults are increasingly disconnected from employment at a time when the business community is in dire need of talent. Half of employers are unable to fill vacant positions and only 11% of employers feel newly credentialed graduates are ready for work.<sup>1</sup> Failure to address this challenge has resulted in record youth unemployment rates that at times were double the national unemployment rate. The cost to society is lost taxes, growing entitlements, and missed chances for advancing economic opportunity.

To address this challenge, federal and state policies have increased the levels of investment in youth employment and career pathway initiatives that address both in-school and out-of-school youth. Corporate and private philanthropy are seeding new efforts to build a national movement of youth employment initiatives. There is also increased interest from employers given imminent retirements and a need to grow their talent pipelines. In fact, 65% of employers planned to hire newly credentialed youth in 2015, up from 57% the previous year.<sup>2</sup> However, even the most successful youth-centered programs have experienced a common hurdle: scaling to meet workforce needs.

Building on the 2015 paper *Making Youth Employment Work: Essential Elements for a Successful Strategy*, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation (USCCF) launched a Youth Employment initiative that is supporting employers and business associations championing scalable and sustainable solutions.<sup>3</sup> In particular, this effort focuses on building the capacity for greater employer leadership and identifying promising practices for how the business community can more deliberately engage youth as an overall part of their talent strategy. Through this effort, USCCF is releasing a series of papers that highlight youth employment strategies that are not just demand-driven, but employer-led.

This paper explores how employers and employer associations can leverage business-facing intermediaries as *talent orchestrators* to manage their human capital needs and scale youth employment efforts. It can also serve as a guide for how existing intermediaries can improve and scale in partnership with employers. First, the paper defines business-facing intermediaries and introduces a set of design principles for how this group can serve as talent orchestrators. Then it investigates how business-facing intermediaries are providing new opportunities for employers and business associations engaging in this space.

## BUSINESS-FACING INTERMEDIARIES AS TALENT ORCHESTRATORS

Intermediaries are not a new concept—they have been around in many different forms for years. They are generally described as organizations that bridge the divide among education and training providers, social services, and businesses, and they have been leveraged in career pathway initiatives, sector-based partnerships, and collective impact efforts across the country. While public agencies, nonprofits, business associations, and other collaboratives have taken on this intermediary role, even the most successful intermediaries continue to be challenged in three ways:

### **Obtaining employer buy-in.**

Intermediaries spend a substantial amount of time brokering introductions with employer networks and soliciting support for taking on interns or employees. However, many experience mixed results onboarding new employer partnerships and sustaining the relationship over time. At the heart of this challenge is the need to communicate a value proposition that resonates with the employer community. While many intermediaries are successful at appealing to the civic and philanthropic goals of companies, many struggle with translating their value to a quantifiable return-on-investment that garners buy-in from employers.

**Making a good match.** Intermediaries face a numbers game. Whether there is a larger pool of students than available positions or a larger number of available positions and not enough qualified students, intermediaries are often challenged to rectify the mismatch between supply and demand. Having the right mix of open positions and available talent is a balancing act that can often work against the intermediary, particularly when funding and performance are tied to placements. However, making a good match is not only critical to meeting the employer's need; it is also central to providing successful experiences for young adults.

### **Ensuring youth can add value on day one.**

With the decline in low-skill jobs, intermediaries feel more pressure to find youth with the skills and competencies that can add value to the employer partner on day one. Most intermediaries focus on connecting youth to employers, but not necessarily on supplementing gaps in their training or credentialing to ensure they are qualified for real and substantive work. As the skills gap persists, intermediaries must turn their attention to ensuring youth are qualified to enter and function within a professional work environment.

USCCF’s Youth Employment effort is exploring how intermediaries can effectively address these very challenges. Expanding on the concepts described throughout our Talent Pipeline Management initiative—which calls for employers to close the skills gap by leveraging lessons learned from supply chain management—there are firms that play an “orchestrator” role by organizing and managing a network of supply chain partners on behalf of their end-use customers. Supply chain orchestrators provide a service to businesses by setting up a unique combination of partners that deliver the best value based on their ability to manage time, quality, and cost.<sup>4</sup>

Intermediaries that are “business-facing” are positioned to serve as talent orchestrators through a unique combination of services that allow employers to address their human capital needs while creating opportunity for aspiring youth. They engage employers as primary customers and

focus on building employer capacity and improving return on investment. These services can vary in scope, with some targeting specific sectors while others target employers within a geographic region or employers connected through a supply chain partnership. In addition, they can source talent from a broad population or specialize in a target population, such as out-of-school youth.

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This paper highlights nine important design principles—organized by three themes—that demonstrate how business-facing intermediaries

can obtain employer buy-in, make a good match, and ensure youth can add value on day one (**see Figure 1**). Exemplars of each of these design principles are profiled throughout this paper. While many of today’s intermediaries are stronger in some elements than others, this paper hopes to provide a framework to help intermediaries find the right combination of design principles to support their employer partners and become more demand-driven.

**FIGURE 1: DESIGN PRINCIPLES OF BUSINESS-FACING INTERMEDIARIES**



### **Create Shared Value**

1. Communicate the Business Value Proposition
2. Implement a Sustainable Business Model
3. Advocate for Youth Employment Policies



### **Manage Talent Sourcing**

4. Manage Employer Demand
5. Organize Talent Sourcing Networks
6. Ensure Talent Quality



### **Provide Training and Credentialing Support**

7. Build Foundational Professional Skills
8. Provide Job-Specific Technical Training and Credentialing
9. Facilitate Onboarding





Talent orchestrators focus uniquely on serving employers as the end-customer. This stands in contrast to education, workforce, and training systems that focus their services on youth as the primary customer. Business-facing intermediaries can identify employers as the primary customer without sacrificing their mission to support youth and young adults. In fact, by focusing on meeting the needs of employer partners, students stand to greatly benefit by having a more meaningful work-based learning experience or employment outcome—a win-win for all stakeholders.

This *shared value* is principally achieved by effectively communicating the value proposition to employers, implementing a

sustainable business model that reflects that value, and advocating for a policy environment that incentivizes employers to engage with youth.

### DESIGN PRINCIPLE 1: COMMUNICATE THE BUSINESS VALUE PROPOSITION

Just as a company's competitive position can be improved by linking its talent strategy to its business strategy, business-facing intermediaries can improve competitiveness by linking their youth employment efforts to the company's underlying business strategy.<sup>5</sup> Even if employers initially engage with youth to be socially responsible, they continue to engage

#### Genesys Works

Genesys Works is an internship provider with operations across the country. It focuses primarily on information technology (IT) positions and provides a ready source of young talent for its client companies in cities like Chicago, Houston, and Minneapolis. While many of its employer customers initially engage to give back to the community, Genesys Works is able to secure long-term engagement by demonstrating value such as increased productivity and reduced costs for employers. This is achieved by providing job-ready interns capable of executing entry-level work tasks. Interns are Genesys Works employees, which makes the engagement process simple and straightforward. Through this combination of services, companies experience high rates of satisfaction by addressing their need for talent while Genesys Works is able to simultaneously fulfill the needs of their target youth population.

because of the intrinsic business value that they derive from the intermediary's services.

Effectively linking a youth employment effort to a business strategy encourages intermediaries to think differently about how value is communicated to employers and how performance is measured with respect to the employer as the end-customer. Communicating this value goes beyond marketing; it requires a nuanced understanding of what matters most to a business or industry, such as meeting critical diversity or productivity objectives, and then implementing measures of success around those objectives.

For example, it is not necessarily the number of students placed that is of utmost value to employers, but instead those measures that track increased productivity, an ability to innovate, and a return on investment to employers, such as reducing time-to-full productivity or time-to-career-advancement.<sup>6</sup> As we refine how we communicate value to employer customers, we can continue to move employer engagement from a purely philanthropic endeavor to addressing core business functions that create shared value.

## **DESIGN PRINCIPLE 2:** IMPLEMENT A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODEL

Having a sustainable source of revenue is imperative to the success of any

youth employment initiative, as there can be significant costs associated with delivering programs and services. This challenge not only threatens existing operations, but could also impede any attempt at future growth. This is especially true for those providers working with disadvantaged populations that often need additional wrap-around services to better ensure success.

Many providers rely on either raising public dollars or philanthropic giving to carry out their missions. However, these funding streams are not always a reliable source of revenue and are at risk of being reduced or discontinued. In addition, public and philanthropic funding to date has been primarily concerned with making sure youth have access to work-based learning and employment opportunities, not necessarily addressing employer needs.

Successful business-facing intermediaries have overcome the limitations of traditional funding streams by creating business models that support long-term sustainability, chiefly through fee-for-service partnerships with employers. This model is most attractive to employers when the value derived can be benchmarked with comparable costs in training and working with recruitment agencies. And, most important, this model—centered on addressing employer value—also ensures that intermediaries

## Main Line Chamber of Commerce Talent and Education Network (TEN) Initiative

The Main Line Chamber of Commerce established an employer-led collaborative to address the urgent talent needs of the Greater Philadelphia area. TEN offers employers a suite of talent management services that include advising and developing programs, facilitating the entry-level recruitment process, and building employer capacity through onboarding assistance. As a result of offering the competitive results of a staffing agency, the Main Line Chamber is able to scale and sustain their program through employer contributions for services that are designed to directly meet employer needs.

are accountable for designing programs that address core business needs. As a result, students are prepared with the skills and competencies they need to succeed in the workforce.

### DESIGN PRINCIPLE 3: ADVOCATE FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Businesses providing work-based learning or employment opportunities for young adults often face a series of federal, state, and local policy challenges, particularly for youth below the age of 18. Yet shared value cannot exist without an enabling policy environment that allows business-facing intermediaries to access a wide network of talent providers.

At the state and local levels, intermediaries can bridge the needs of employers and public accountability systems to ensure better alignment and

improve outcomes for students. For example, schools and colleges need to ensure that time spent with employers as part of a structured training program can count as time toward meeting graduation requirements, all while maintaining the school's eligibility for funding. Intermediaries can also use data within public accountability systems to help identify potential partners based on performance, such as those programs that are effective at helping students obtain industry-recognized credentials.

At the federal level, intermediaries can make use of new funding opportunities and resources to help address the totality of supports needed when serving youth populations facing barriers to employment—particularly youth that are disconnected from both school and work. This type of support helps reduce burden on employers while ensuring youth are in a position to add value.<sup>7</sup>

## **MANAGE TALENT SOURCING**

Some of the most critical services provided by talent orchestrators involve managing the sourcing of talent on behalf of their employer customers. Business-facing intermediaries not only identify talent, but also manage a wide network of proven providers for in-school and out-of-school youth. When executed well, these services resemble a staffing agency, but with a focus on youth and young adults who are in the process of being, or are, newly credentialed. These intermediaries effectively source talent by managing employer demands, organizing talent sourcing networks, and ensuring the quality of talent for employers.

### **DESIGN PRINCIPLE 4:** **MANAGE EMPLOYER DEMAND**

Business-facing intermediaries locate the right talent, with the right skills, at the right time through high-quality employer account management. This requires organizing a network of providers that are well positioned to respond to changing demand for talent. Managing demand begins with a deep understanding of employer needs and includes identifying the critical skills that need to be addressed at a given time.

Leading intermediaries engage directly with business partners to conduct

#### **Boston Private Industry Council (PIC)**

Boston PIC is a well-known intermediary that connects business to talent through innovative workforce and education strategies. PIC employer account managers work with over 150 employers to organize job shadows, site visits, and internships that align with projected skill demands and career paths within each company or institution. For example, at PIC, not all jobs are standardized at 40 hours a week. PIC maintains flexibility so that if an employer needs someone for 30 or 28 hours a week, talent is sourced to meet that level of demand. Boston employers value PIC for its ability to help them connect with the community in the short run and meet workforce and diversity objectives over time.

needs assessments that document not only the level of need for a position or capability within the company, but also the competency, skill, and credential requirements for those positions. This is not a one-time activity, but one that is revisited time and again and across companies seeking seemingly similar, though different, position requirements. Customized consulting support provides the flexibility and responsiveness needed to better meet the talent needs of employers.<sup>8</sup>

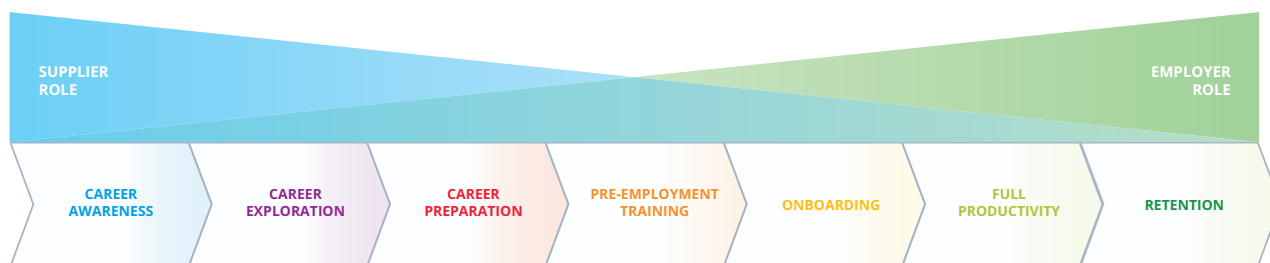
## DESIGN PRINCIPLE 5: ORGANIZE TALENT SOURCING NETWORKS

When engaging with youth populations, employer customers may interact with youth at various stages of their education and training trajectory before they are fully onboarded and employed. Talent orchestrators can connect

multiple providers to form youth talent supply chain networks that manage the flow of talent across partners. Similarly, the most effective business-facing intermediaries operate across the full career pathway continuum—or in supply chain terms, the *value stream*—to ensure there is constant engagement to capture promising talent. Some achieve this through strategic collaborations with other nonprofit organizations that are operating either before or after them in the value stream to ensure workforce preparedness.

For example, a high school internship program may have an agreement with pre-employment training programs that feed directly into the workforce to manage the handoff among multiple providers along the employer value stream (**see Figure 2**). This can go as far back as career awareness and exploration

FIGURE 2: VALUE STREAM MAP



Jason A. Tyszko and Robert G. Sheets, *Building the Talent Pipeline: An Implementation Guide*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2015.

### **STEP-UP Achieve (Minneapolis, Minnesota) Chamber Certification**

The Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce and AchieveMpls—an intermediary working on career and college readiness—have worked together for over a decade to create, build, and strengthen STEP-UP Achieve, a career-track youth employment program. They have collaborated on work readiness training, a work readiness credential, mock interviews, supervisor training, and recruitment for more than 800 jobs with over 160 businesses annually. After surveying local employers to identify critical skills they found lacking in local candidates, Step-Up Achieve, in partnership with the Minneapolis Regional Chamber, developed a curriculum and established a certification endorsed by the chamber for participants who successfully complete the comprehensive work readiness training programs prior to employment. The certification is trusted validation for businesses that the interns have received the skills needed to provide value to the company.

all the way through career preparation and onboarding. Through managing the full range of talent providers and servicers, business-facing intermediaries can reduce talent leakage and capture value.

In addition to managing the flow of talent through the employer value stream, business-facing intermediaries can also help employers themselves better manage their talent pipelines. For intermediaries primarily providing internships and other forms of short-term employment, the ability to manage alumni networks can facilitate re-engagement with talent long after program completion. These pathways along the employer value stream can increase the flow of students reaching full productivity in the workforce.

### **DESIGN PRINCIPLE 6: ENSURE TALENT QUALITY**

A critical function of business-facing intermediaries is their ability to ensure the quality of talent and their preparedness for work. This includes ensuring that youth are matched with employers based on having the requisite competencies, credentials, and experience to fit the employer customer's need. Intermediaries can serve as a trusted validator of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of youth talent to help reduce the time and cost in finding and onboarding the right talent while also mitigating turnover risk and cost.

In addition, leading intermediaries offset key human resource functions

like screening and placement of applicants. Screening can involve required background checks as well as skill and aptitude assessments that are a prerequisite to placement. Research shows that students are twice as engaged in the workplace if they had an internship or job that allowed them to directly apply classroom learning.<sup>9</sup>

Better matches help keep employer costs down while ensuring that placement is a good fit for both the employer and the youth being served. Last, as

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talent orchestrators, business-facing intermediaries can serve as an auditor of talent providers, to ensure that the processes and performance requirements of their employer customers have been met. This type of quality assurance ensures not only that employers get talent that is the best fit, but also that providers of in-school

and out-of-school youth are appropriately recognized and rewarded for their flexibility and responsiveness in meeting employer customer needs.<sup>10</sup>





## PROVIDE TRAINING AND CREDENTIALING SUPPORT

Leading intermediaries recognize that finding, screening, and placing youth is not necessarily enough to meet the talent and business needs of today's employer customer. Instead, job-specific training has become an increasingly important feature to optimize onboarding and career advancement for youth populations. This is increasingly important given today's business environment where employers will pay a premium for job-ready candidates. Effective intermediaries provide both youth and employers with the necessary training *and* support for a successful youth employment experience.

As talent orchestrators, business-facing intermediaries equip youth with foundational professional skills, provide them with job-specific technical training

and credentialing, and provide onboarding support for youth and employers.

### DESIGN PRINCIPLE 7: BUILD FOUNDATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Employers have repeatedly indicated in national surveys that new employees lack the "soft" or "employability" skills to be successful in their companies. These include skills such as collaboration, the ability to work in a team, critical thinking, and communication, to name a few. Recently, organizations like the Business Roundtable and their National Network of Business and Industry Associations have documented these skills as a priority need among employers across all industry sectors.<sup>11</sup>

#### **i.c.stars**

As a technology training program for low-income young adults in Chicago, Illinois, i.c.stars leverages project-based learning to equip participants with not only the technical proficiencies, but also the behaviors, values, and attitudes to be leaders in the workforce and their communities. With about 1,000 hours of hands-on experience, the 16-week core curriculum creates small teams of young adults to solve real-world business problems, allowing them to develop the critical foundational professional skills employers need in the innovation economy.



## Revature Pre-Hire Training

Understanding the premium that employers are willing to pay for new employees demonstrating high levels of productivity on day one, new intermediaries entered the marketplace offering training as well as placement services for employers. Revature does just that. As an IT staffing firm that matches employers to job candidates, Revature also provides job-specific pre-hire training for coding and software development through 8- to 12-week boot camps on specific IT skills as well as foundational professional skills, all at no cost to students. As a talent sourcing engine, not only are they able to provide students with skills in line with the latest market demands, but students are also able to learn actual job skills that an experienced IT programmer would need to be successful in the industry.

To address this need for job-ready candidates, business-facing intermediaries incorporate foundational professional skills training as a significant component of their curriculum prior to placement. This is typically taught through both classroom instruction and activities such as mock workplace interactions and interviews. For example, during pre-employment training, intermediaries implement strictly enforced standards around timeliness, attire, and professionalism to simulate the expectations of the workplace. Intermediaries can assess these skills through real-world work applications. Youth who demonstrate their ability to meet basic workplace standards are eligible to be placed with an employer customer.

## DESIGN PRINCIPLE 8: PROVIDE JOB-SPECIFIC TECHNICAL TRAINING

With the decline in availability of low-skill jobs, technical training has become a critical component of any intermediary serving youth and young adults. In this scenario, talent orchestrators provide not only talent sourcing, but the required value-added training to ensure the talent needs of their employer customers are met.

Training that culminates in a portable, industry-recognized credential also lends credibility to the skills of the participants and ensures their skills are transferrable across employers. For example, some intermediaries focused on IT placements have participants work toward the CompTIA

suite of certifications as a means of developing a strong baseline of employer-validated skills. CompTIA certifications are widely recognized across the IT field as well as across a wide variety of employers in need of IT talent.<sup>12</sup>

Additionally, intermediaries that work with youth neither employed nor in school recognize that high-quality, accelerated training programs can equip young adults with the high-demand skills businesses need without them having to complete two- or four-year programs. There is a growing sector of boot camps and other short-term training that results in industry-recognized credentialing that can be integrated and leveraged by these intermediaries.

### **DESIGN PRINCIPLE 9: FACILITATE ONBOARDING**

Highly effective business-facing intermediaries also provide onboarding support. This ensures students transition successfully to employment and that employers have the capabilities in place to manage a successful onboarding process.

For youth, onboarding support provides mentorship or a network of adults and

peers to ensure they are receiving the feedback they need to manage the transition into a work environment. The support also provides opportunities to make course corrections and include

additional training as needed to address skill deficiencies.

In addition, leading intermediaries integrate key case management-related

services that are critical when serving disadvantaged and disconnected youth populations. These services include addressing health, housing, and nutrition needs for target youth populations and ensuring their needs are accommodated throughout their work experience.

For employers, business-facing intermediaries build their capacity to manage and supervise youth employees. This includes providing training and resources for front-line staff who will be directly involved in supervising youth employees or interns—from guidance on how to set expectations for youth and provide meaningful feedback to how to develop job descriptions geared toward students. Training and support for front-line staff and supervisors is an often overlooked need within the business community that requires additional investigation and support.<sup>13</sup>

## SCALING UP TALENT ORCHESTRATORS SERVING YOUTH POPULATIONS

Talent orchestrators can be critical players in scaling youth employment efforts based on their ability to effectively serve employers as end-customers seeking talent solutions. As previously mentioned, many business-facing intermediaries today exemplify one or more of the design principles. However, the goal of this paper is to lay out a framework for how intermediaries can become more demand-driven and employer-led by finding the right combination of design elements to meet the needs of employers, recognizing that these needs may change over time. As intermediaries organize more as talent orchestrators, the business community will have the partners they need in communities to scale youth employment.

But where do we go from here?

**Target investments.** First, we encourage members of the business community who are interested in connecting their youth employment strategy to their talent strategy to work in partnership with business-facing intermediaries. Businesses have their choice of what type of intermediary to work with and they should focus on those that drive the best value as talent orchestrators to their organization. To the extent that companies are leveraging their corporate social responsibility investments to support youth employment initiatives, they should prioritize investment in business-facing intermediaries.

**Develop strategic partnerships.** Second, chambers of commerce and other business associations should organize their members to work in partnership with a business-facing intermediary to achieve scalable results. This would effectively outsource a critical service to an organization well positioned to provide solutions for its members. By working together, employers can pool their resources and leverage intermediaries in a way that increases their brand recognition while enhancing their ability to engage effectively with education and training providers and other public partners. This paper presents several examples of potential partners that could serve as talent orchestrators.

**Build internal capacity.** Last, we encourage chambers of commerce and business associations to experiment with becoming talent orchestrators themselves as a member service. Rather than outsourcing this function, chambers can explore new business models where they orchestrate talent solutions with youth populations as a revenue generator. This is an extension of the “employer collaborative” concept that was first introduced in *Building the Talent Pipeline: An Implementation Guide*, which discusses how organizations that are *by business, for business* can more

effectively manage the talent pipeline on behalf of companies.

What is most important is for the businesses to continue the conversation and organize around a strategy that makes the most sense for their

companies and their community. This conversation can then be broadened and shared with public sector partners to support an environment for talent orchestrators that scale youth employment solutions.

## ROADMAP FOR SCALING YOUR PREFERRED STRATEGY

### Target Investments

**Step 1:** Research and survey existing intermediaries and identify those that best reflect the principles that make them business-facing.

**Step 2:** Prioritize support for those intermediaries that can function as talent orchestrators on behalf of your company or industry as a part of your corporate social responsibility strategy.

**Step 3:** Continuously improve your preferred intermediaries to make them more employer-led and scale up those that have proved to be effective partners to the business community.

### Develop Strategic Partnerships

**Step 1:** Identify the talent needs of your member companies within a geographic region, by industry sector, or by supply chain.

**Step 2:** Determine the optimal combination of design principles to meet your member companies' talent needs.

**Step 3:** Broker partnerships with the appropriate business-facing intermediaries and manage performance on behalf of your member companies.

### Build Internal Capacity

**Step 1:** Assess your core capabilities in delivering youth employment solutions and determine your unique starting point to becoming a talent orchestrator.

**Step 2:** Identify the talent needs of your member companies and build internal capacity to meet those needs through effective talent orchestration.

**Step 3:** Pilot your new enterprise and, if successful, develop a sustainable business plan to scale.

## CONCLUSION

Today, while there are nearly 6 million disconnected youth,<sup>14</sup> even more students are unable to access employment or high-quality work-based learning experiences that can help them manage their transition into a career. This crisis facing our society cannot go unaddressed and employers must lead the way in driving solutions.

This paper explores one important strategy for how the business community can get involved. It provides a framework for how employers can be more effectively engaged in and supported by work-based learning and youth employment initiatives through business-facing intermediaries. It also serves as a guide for intermediaries to benchmark themselves against in order to become more demand-driven and employer-led.

By leveraging business-facing intermediaries, the employer community can address a major societal challenge while also meeting talent pipeline needs. When this approach is used in combination with other business-led strategies, we

believe that employers will have access to a skilled and competitive workforce.

This work has just begun, and the challenge facing us will continue to grow. What we need is bold change and leadership. To that end, we call upon the business community and its partners to engage with us on continuing this important work.

Next in the Youth Employment Series, we will be exploring how the business community can build and source talent in new and creative ways through scalable platforms that support real-world, authentic innovation challenges that can disrupt today's education and training systems. Stay tuned for this paper to be released later this year.

*To learn more about how you can engage in the Youth Employment Initiative, contact Erica Kashiri, director of programs and policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Center for Education and Workforce, at [ekashiri@uschamber.com](mailto:ekashiri@uschamber.com) or visit [www.uschamberfoundation.org](http://www.uschamberfoundation.org).*

## ABOUT USCCF'S YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SERIES

As employers continue to struggle to find the skilled workers they need to compete globally, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation (USCCF) commits to driving sustainable solutions that build capacity for employers to hire youth and young adults. USCCF's Youth Employment initiative engages chambers of commerce to explore how they are uniquely positioned to support the business community's effort to create a talent pool of skilled workers. This series aims to highlight demand-driven approaches for chambers and other business associations looking to address youth unemployment to help America's economy grow, businesses remain competitive, and students access opportunities for success.

## ABOUT THE CENTER FOR EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

The Center for Education and Workforce is a program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The center is dedicated to strengthening America's long-term competitiveness through informing and mobilizing the business community to be engaged partners, challenging the status quo, and connecting education and workforce reform to economic development.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### LEAD AUTHORS

#### **Erica Kashiri**

Kashiri, director at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Center for Education and Workforce, works on issues related to education and youth employment. Kashiri has an M.A. from the University of California, Berkeley, an M.B.A. from The George Washington University, and a B.A. from the University of Virginia.

#### **Jason A. Tyszko**

Tyszko, executive director at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Center for Education and Workforce, works on issues related to innovation and reform in education and workforce development. Tyszko has an M.A. from the University of Chicago and a B.A. from DePaul University.

### THE U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION TEAM

**Cheryl Oldham**, Senior Vice President

**Jaimie Francis**, Senior Manager

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**Steve Voytek**, Advance CTE



## END NOTES

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3. U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, *Making Youth Employment Work: Essential Elements for a Successful Strategy*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2015.
4. Jason A. Tyszko, Robert G. Sheets, and Joseph B. Fuller, *Managing the Talent Pipeline: A New Approach to Closing the Skills Gap*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2014.
5. Jason A. Tyszko, Robert G. Sheets, and Joseph B. Fuller, *Managing the Talent Pipeline: A New Approach to Closing the Skills Gap*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2014.
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# MAKING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT WORK

HOW TALENT ORCHESTRATORS INCREASE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



## THE CHALLENGE:

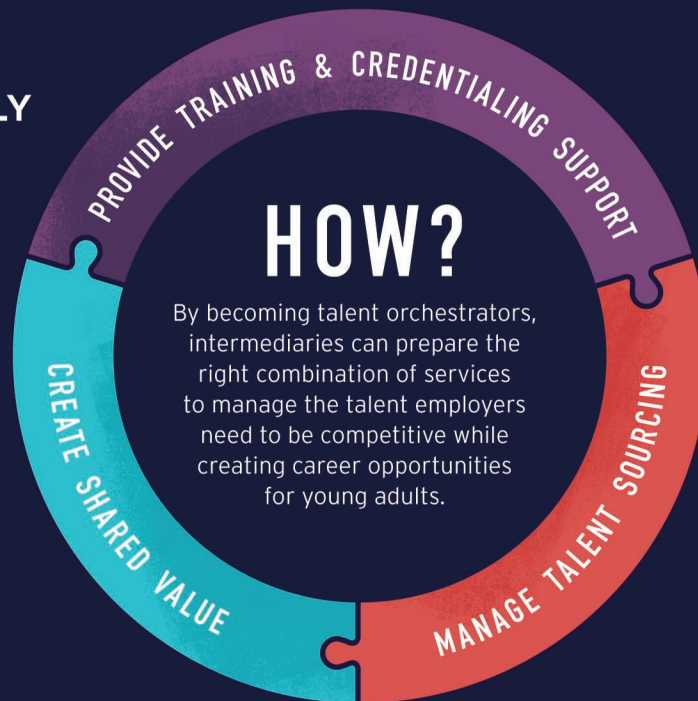
Young adults are increasingly disconnected from employment opportunities at a time when the business community is in dire need of talent.

Yet, organizations that connect businesses to young talent, known as intermediaries, face three main roadblocks:



## INTERMEDIARIES CAN SUCCESSFULLY OVERCOME THESE ROADBLOCKS

- Communicate the business value proposition
- Implement a sustainable business model
- Advocate for youth employment policies



- Provide job-specific technical training
- Build foundational professional skills
- Facilitate onboarding
- Manage employer demand
- Organize talent-sourcing networks
- Ensure talent quality

## OPPORTUNITIES TO SCALE TALENT ORCHESTRATORS

- Employers can target their investments toward intermediaries that can serve as talent orchestrators.
- Chambers of commerce and business associations can leverage talent orchestrators for their member companies.
- Business-led organizations can build the internal capacity to serve as a talent orchestrator on behalf of their members.



## MAKE THE CONNECTION

Talent orchestrators combine the right set of services to help businesses access the talent they need to compete and grow in today's economy while creating opportunity for aspiring youth looking to connect to employers.

LEARN MORE AT: [www.YouthEmploymentWorks.org](http://www.YouthEmploymentWorks.org)



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**U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation**  
1615 H Street NW | Washington, DC 20062  
Phone: 202-463-5525 | [www.uschamberfoundation.org](http://www.uschamberfoundation.org)