



Welcome!

Building Awareness and Utilization of Registered Apprenticeships in Illinois: A Showcase of SHRM Foundation, IL SHRM, and Apprenti Progress

Tuesday, October 13, 2026, 1:15 – 2:15 pm (CT)

Moderator

- **Bob Lemke**, *IL SHRM Director for Workforce Readiness; Managing Principal, NextView Advisors*

Case study & your engagement

Share your feedback and experiences with this collaboration to crowd-source future paths and improve outcomes!

1. How clear is IL SHRM's go-to-market strategy for expanding registered apprenticeships across Illinois?
2. Based on what you've heard, how effective do you believe IL SHRM's early results have been (readiness assessments, employer outreach, marketing, registrations)?
3. How ready do you feel to engage employers or partners using IL SHRM's RAP model?
4. Which area should IL SHRM prioritize next to engage employers/partners to strengthen statewide apprenticeship adoption?

Our case study

1. Background & context
2. Playbook
3. Progress
4. Crowdsourced future paths

Illinois employer opportunity



- ✓ \$350,000 grant awarded by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to the SHRM Foundation (IL SHRM & Affiliate Chapters).
- ✓ Provides funding for a turnkey solution to launch or further develop U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) across Illinois for IT and HR occupations.
- ✓ End-to-end implementation and administrative support provided by Apprenti (SHRM's RAP contractor).
- ✓ Guidance on accessing available Illinois apprenticeship tax credits.
- ✓ Ongoing resources to support successful program implementation and workforce development efforts.

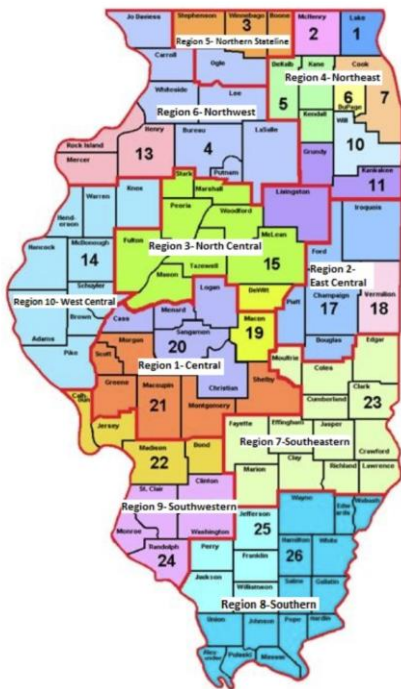
Learn More



Schedule an Appointment



Our premise: Build partnerships & engage employers



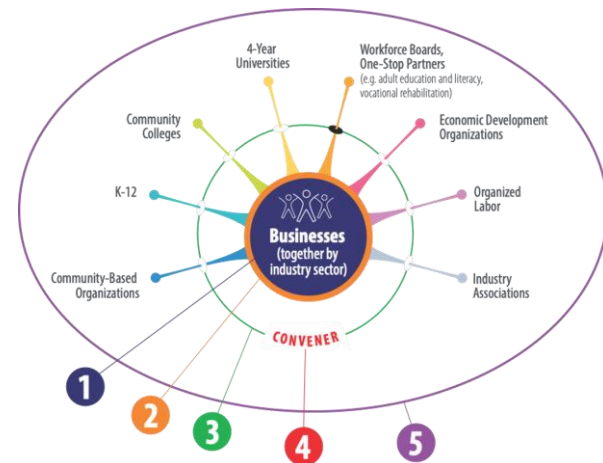
“.....if regional programs and organizations in each of these systems build partnerships with industry independently of each other, duplication of effort and inefficiencies will increase dramatically”

https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/network/Documents/ILSect orBasedEmpEngVision_Final_20150513.pdf

WHAT WORKS WELL (AND NOT SO WELL)

Clusters of companies	Individual firms
Employers as partners	Employers as customers
Industry-driven	System- or institution-driven
Regionally-based	Statewide top-down or too local
Existing industry strength or emerging specialty	Wishful thinking
Industry competitiveness/growth	Workforce only
Opportunity-focused	Problem-driven
Employer priorities first	Target populations first
Champion-driven	Representation-oriented
Coalitions of the willing	The futile search for consensus
People and relationships	Organizations and jurisdictions
A disciplined, replicable process	A mysterious, unique occurrence

COECON
COLLABORATIVE ECONOMICS



SHRM IL Workforce Readiness: IL State Attainment Goal



The Work is Not Yet Complete

70% of Illinois jobs will require some postsecondary training beyond high school by 2031. A gap between attainment and workforce needs will persist if Illinois stays on the same growth trajectory.



70% by 2031?

Executive Order 2020-03:

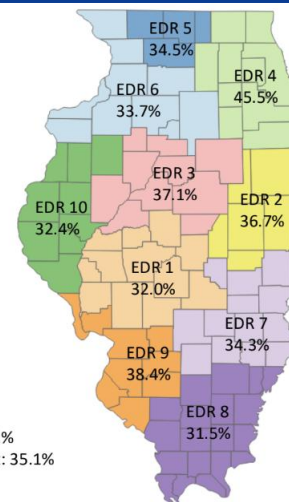
Define credentials of value in a manner that, at a minimum, considers alignment with current and projected labor market demand, the economic return of a credential, and its potential to support economic mobility for learners and workers;

Defining 'Value'

- Strong Labor Market Value
- Return on Investment
- Skills-Based and Industry-Aligned
- Portable and Interoperable
- Stackable and Flexible
- Accessible, Affordable, and Equitable
- Social and Community Needs

From Prior Literature: Characteristics of
Credentials of Value

Degree Attainment:
Percentage of residents (25
and over) with an
Associate degree or higher



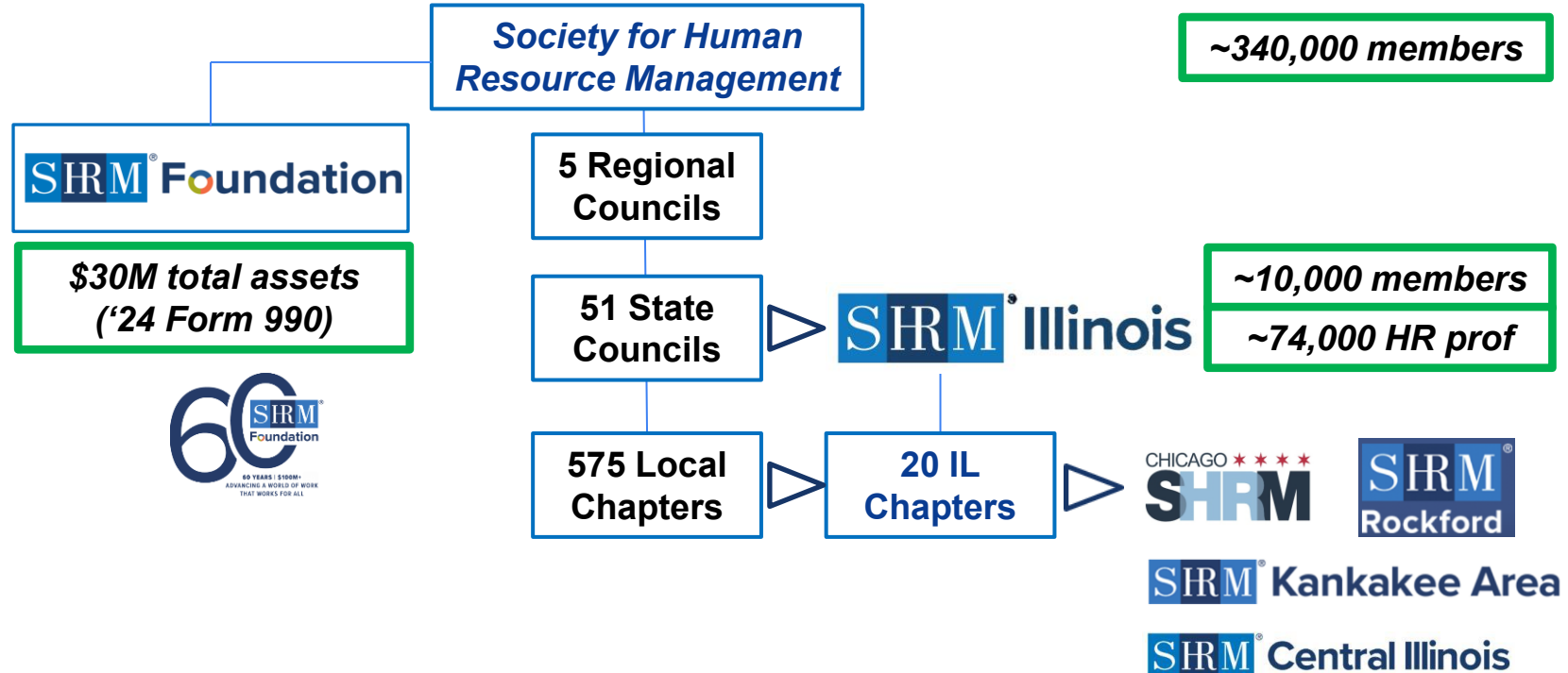
State Degree Attainment Rate: 46.2%
Average County Degree Attainment: 35.1%

Audience Poll 1

Which part of the registered apprenticeship ecosystem do you represent?

1. Education (K-12, Postsecondary)
2. Workforce Agency
3. Employer
4. Intermediary / nonprofit
5. Apprenticeship agency
6. Other







About SHRM Foundation

Building a World of Work that Works for All



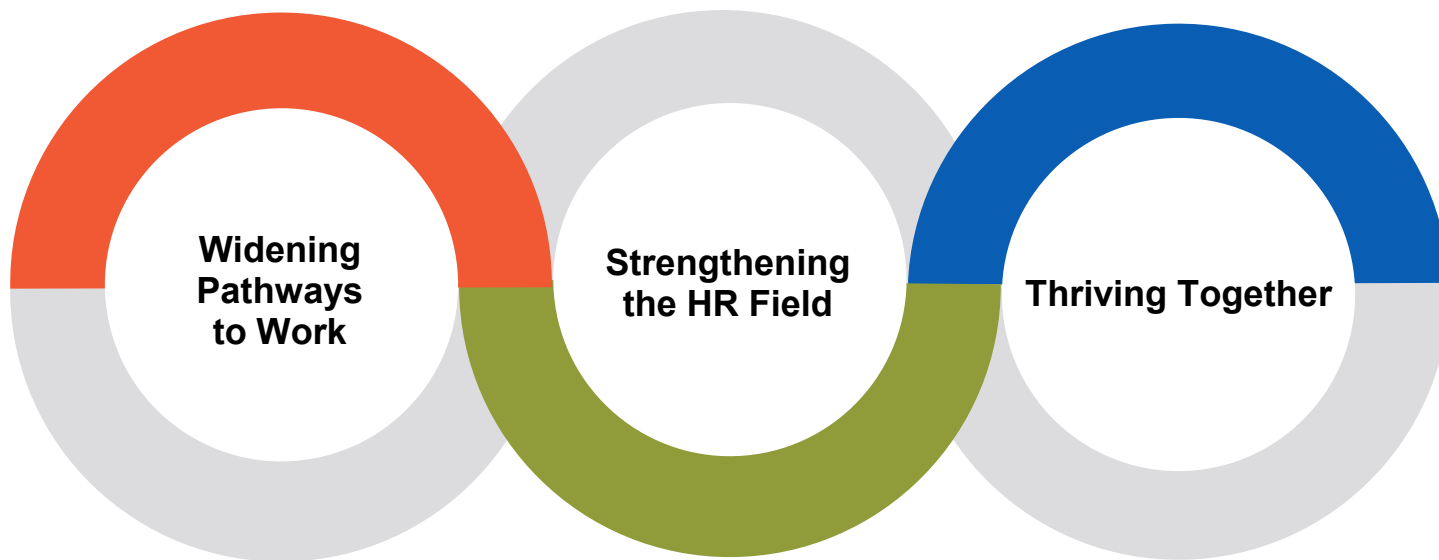
SHRM Foundation is the 501(c)(3) nonprofit arm of the world's largest HR professional society, SHRM. SHRM represents nearly **340,000 HR professionals across the globe**, impacting **362 million workers and their families**. The SHRM Foundation elevates and empowers HR professionals as a force for social good so that all workers and workplaces can prosper and thrive.

-  **PURPOSE:** Elevate and empower HR as a force for social good.
-  **MISSION:** Mobilize and equip HR to lead positive social change so that all talent and workplaces can prosper and thrive.
-  **VISION:** A world of work that works for all.



SHRM Foundation's Portfolio

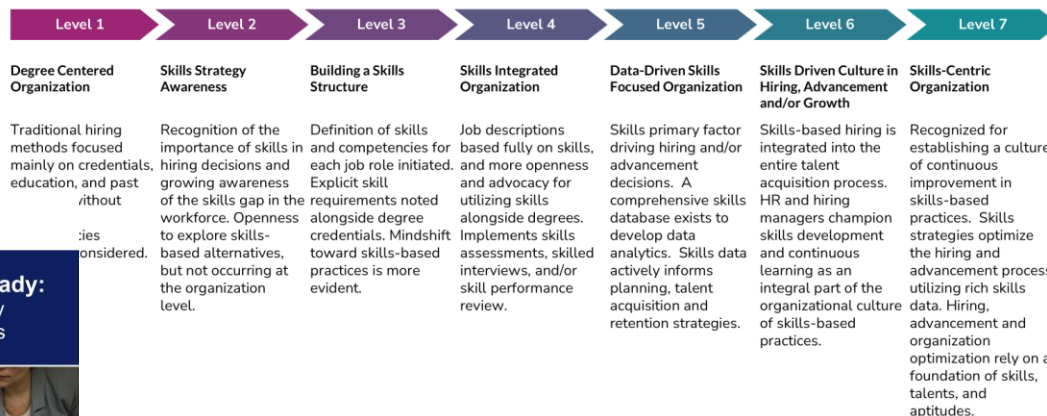
To expand access to work and help workers and workplaces thrive, SHRM Foundation focuses on three interconnected pools of work.



SHRM Foundation - Skills First



Skills First Growth Model



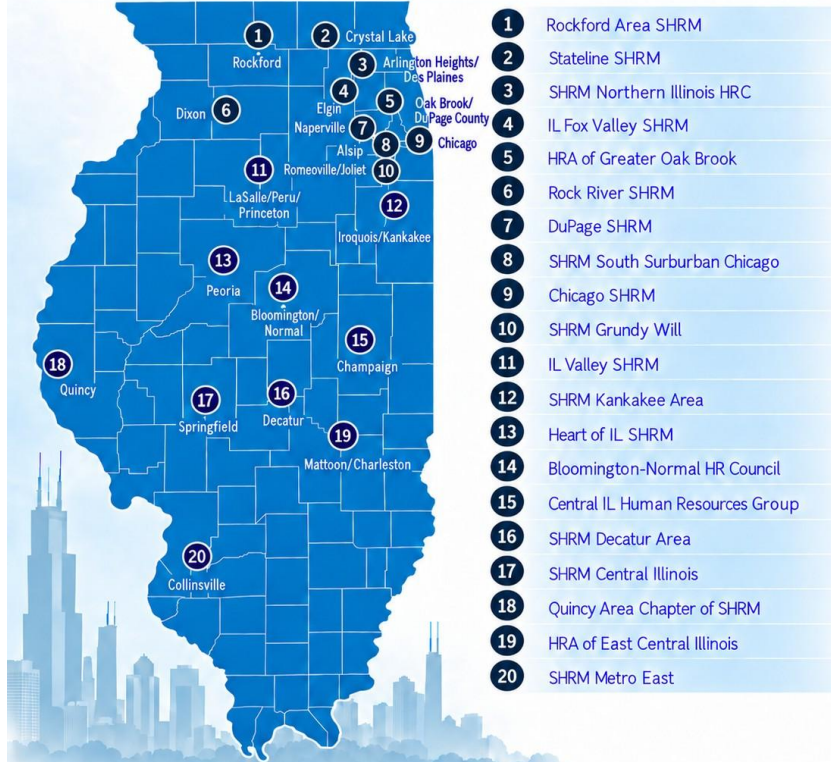
© SHRM. All Rights Reserved

Education Design Lab

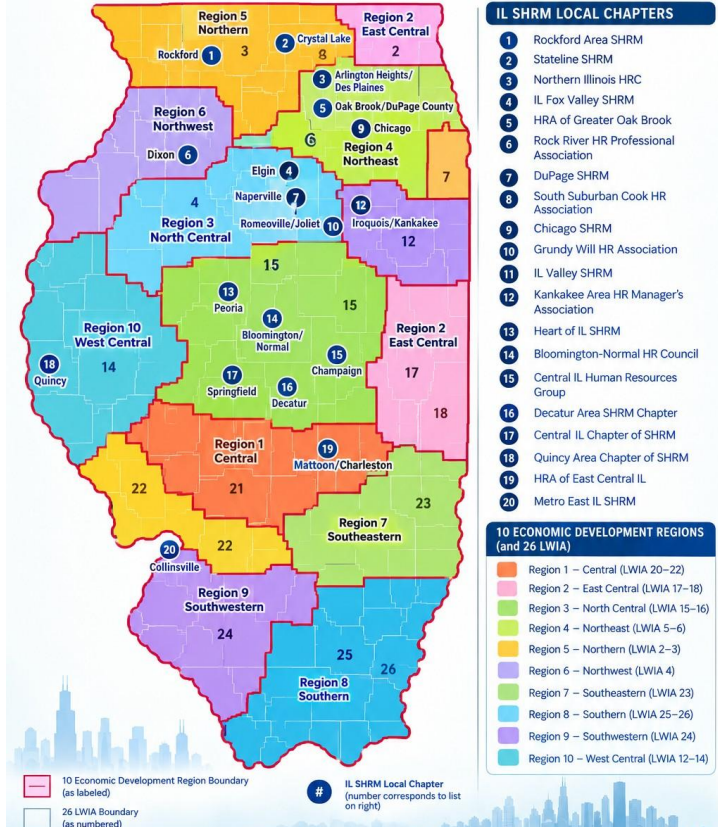
This roadmap was developed with generous support from the Arthur W. Page Foundation.



Join a Chapter Near You!



Local Chapters. Regional Impact. A Stronger Illinois.



Our capabilities as an intermediary



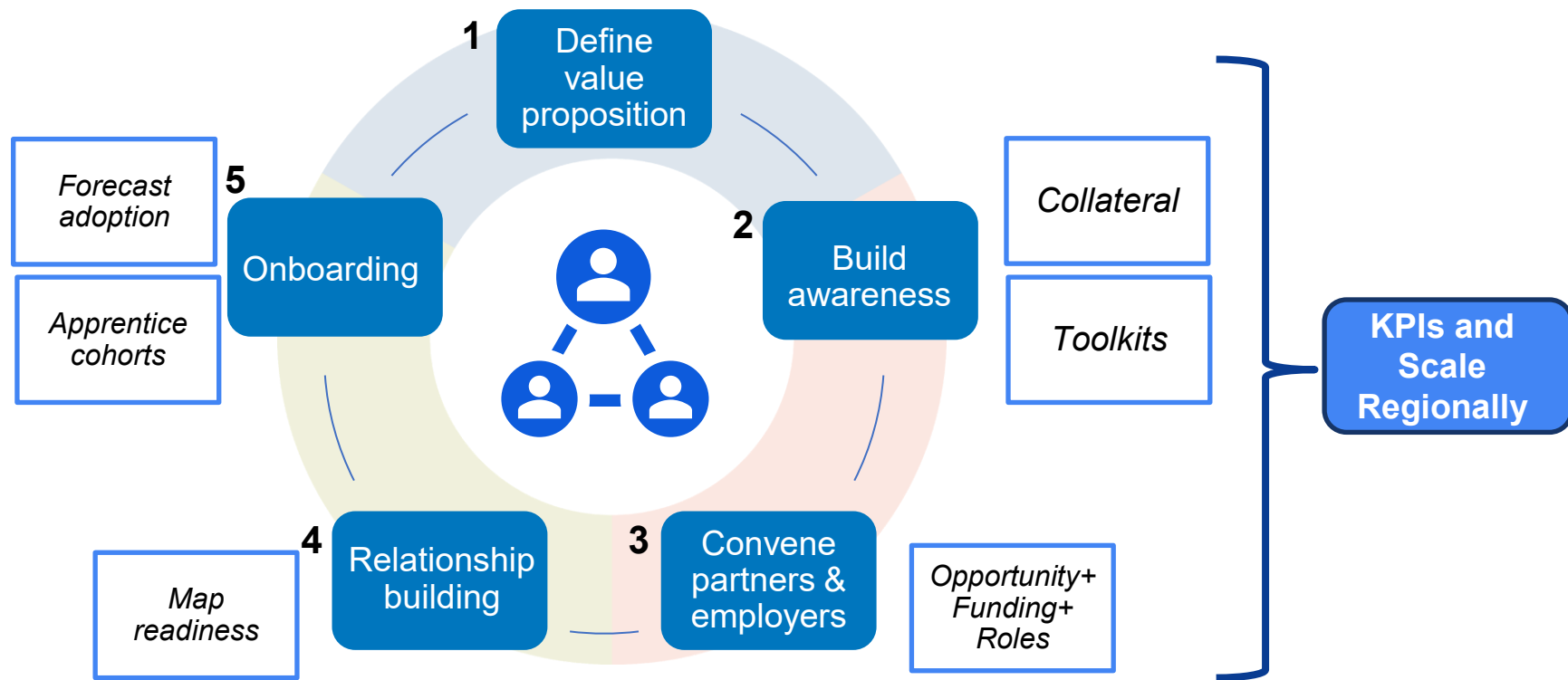
Intermediary Function	Performance Standard
Employer Engagement	Cultivating relationships with employers to understand their talent challenges and build buy-in for RAP as a viable talent solution.
Solutions Design	Involving and representing employers in designing and negotiating talent solutions with learning providers that address employer needs and expand opportunities for learners.
Solutions Brokering	Connecting employers with the right partners to grow talent pipelines.
Implementation Support	Helping employers adopt and sustain RAP programming that yields lasting impact.
Administrative Support	Simplifying processes for employers related to RAP administration and funding.

Taken from: Scaling Work-Based Learning - A Framework for Effective Employer Intermediaries, Strada Education Foundation, 2025.

Our collaboration themes

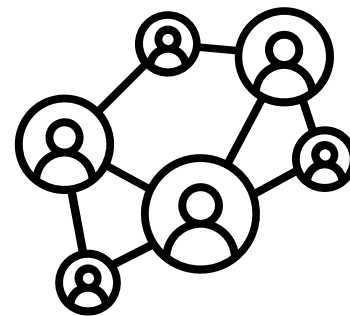
- Build partnerships and engage employers as a collaborator and connector
- Heighten employer awareness of RAP as a solution and increase volume of RAP opportunities
- Demonstrate a tangible return on investment for employers
- Strengthen workforce outcomes aligned to State Attainment Goal (e.g., educational attainment, credentials of value)

Our go to market playbook



Field Manager responsibilities

- Promote the program and support apprentice recruitment
- Engage employers and workforce partners
- Recruit and cultivate employer partners
- Support program outreach and representation
- Collaborate on program communications and resources
- Support broader apprenticeship adoption
- Support program implementation and reporting



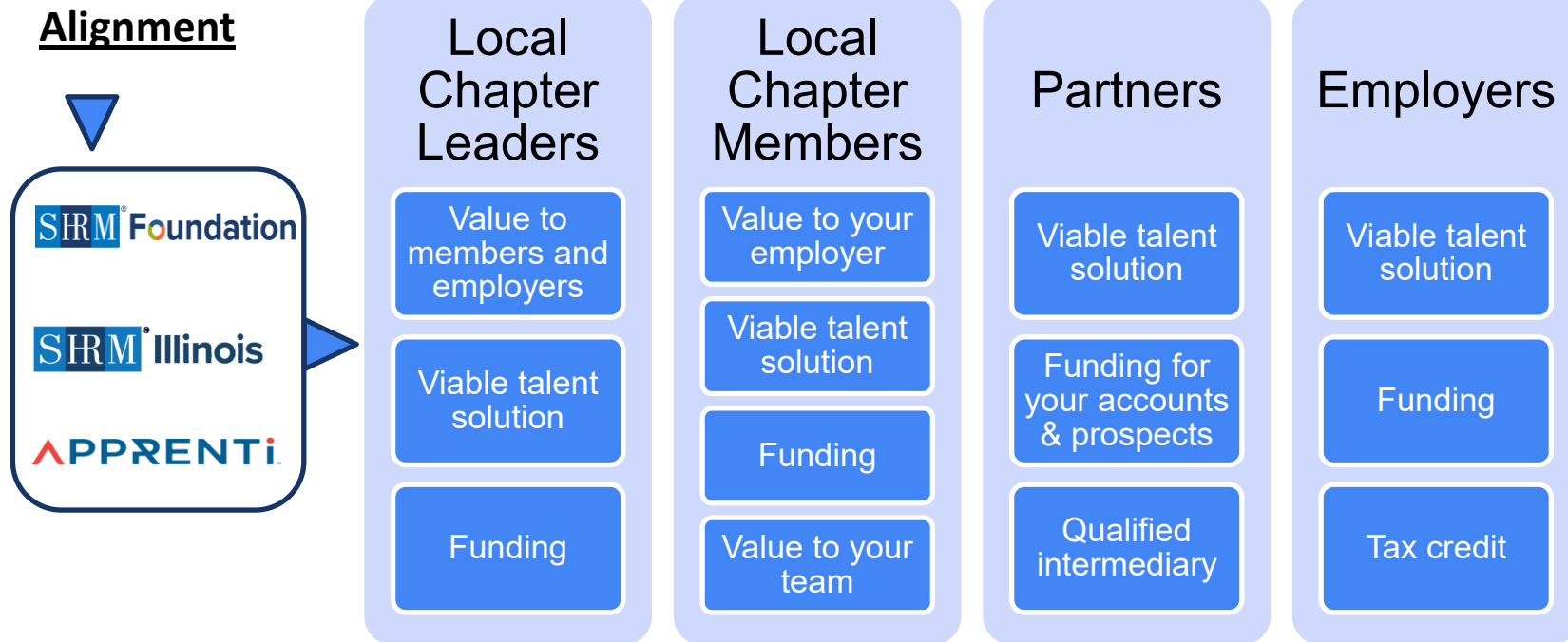
Audience Poll 2

What is the biggest challenge to aligning employers, workforce and apprenticeship systems in your context?

1. Different funding streams and incentives
2. Lack of shared data or outcomes
3. Limited employer engagement
4. Unclear roles across agencies
5. Capacity/time constraints
6. Policy or regulatory barriers



Phase 1: Define Value Proposition



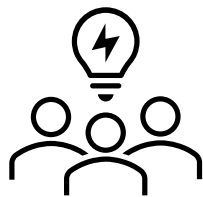
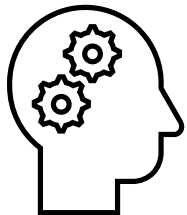
Phase 2: Building Awareness

Preparation

- Prepare marketing collateral supports and toolkits
- Schedule of planned IL SHRM & Chapter events
- IL SHRM / public landing page build out
- SHRM F-IL SHRM-Apprenti press release
- HR Rap implementation process – operationalize an employer's adoption
- Social media toolkit
- Organize member email database for IL SHRM
- Segment IL chapters to determine level of support/opportunity

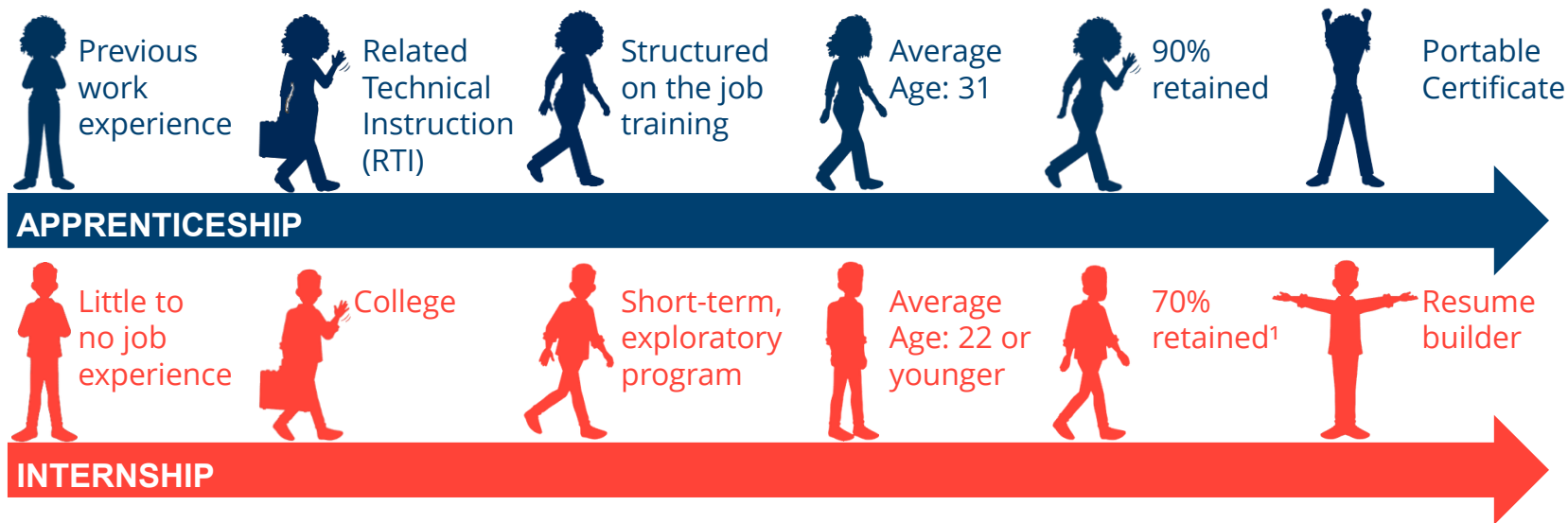
Phase 3: Convening

Engage prospective partners and employers



Month	Event	Location	~Size
April	IL SHRM Student Conference	Glen Ellyn	100
May	IL SHRM Board Meeting	Kankakee	30
May	SHRM Foundation Convening: Campus to Career Ready	Chicago	100
May	IL SHRM HR Conference	Kankakee	350
August	IL SHRM webinar	Virtual	200
August	IL State Attainment Goal - Regional Stakeholders Meeting	Springfield	50
August	IL State Attainment Goal - Regional Stakeholders Meeting	Oglesby	50
August	Chicago SHRM Education Series: Great Debate	Virtual	65
Sept	Illinois Chamber Annual Luncheon	Chicago	200

Internship vs. Apprenticeship



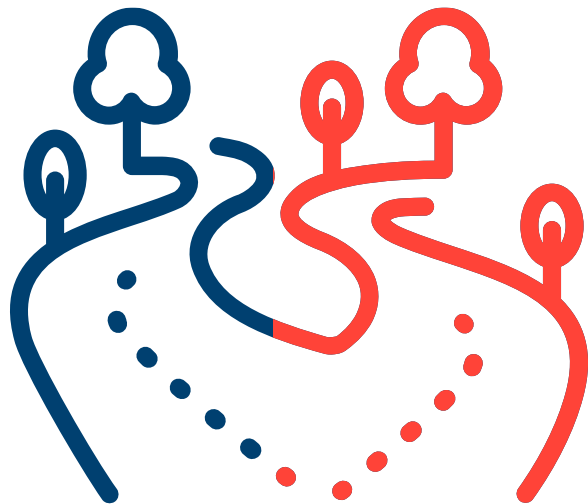
VALUE OF APPRENTICESHIP

Solves digital skills shortage Higher retention rate Apprentice life experience Unlimited talent pool

Two Pathways: Build Your Talent Pipeline

Upskilling & Reskilling Existing

- 1 Employer selects current staff for growth opportunities
- 2 Apprenti enrolls the employee into the Registered Apprenticeship Program
- 3 Structured online training begins (SHRM Essentials + Learning System)
- 4 On-the-job training and mentorship take place within the organization
- 5 Employee earns credentials and advances into a more skilled HR role



Apprentice receives a Portable Certificate recognized by the Department of Labor (DOL).

Hiring New Apprentices

- 1 Employer defines role and need
- 2 Apprenti sources, screens, and assesses qualified external candidates
- 3 Candidates presented 2:1 to the employer for interviews
- 4 Employer selects apprentice and extends an offer
- 5 Structured online training begins (SHRM Essentials + Learning System)
- 6 On-the-job training and mentorship take place within the organization

HR Specialist - The Specialties



The competencies include the standard Core Work Processes and Behavioral Competencies but also unique to this occupation are speciality competencies that can be assigned by the employer based on the employer needs.

- Benefits Specialist
- Employee Relation Specialist
- HRIS Administrator
- HR Recruiter
- Risk Management Specialist
- Training Development Specialist

Occupations: Information Technology



Why Tech Apprenticeships?

- Fill in-demand roles with talent trained to your specifications
- Reduce hiring costs by up to 30% compared to traditional sourcing
- Retain talent longer by investing in their professional growth
- Customize training to align with your business environment and technologies

Common Tech Roles Across Industries

- **Software Developer:** Custom internal tools or customer-facing applications
- **Cybersecurity Analyst:** Protect digital assets and ensure compliance
- **Cloud Operations Specialist:** Support scalable cloud infrastructure
- **Data Analyst:** Transform raw data into actionable insights
- **IT Support Professional:** Keep business systems running smoothly
- **CRM/CMS Administrator:** Manage customer and content platforms

Occupations & Training



Software Developer/Analyst



IT Support Professional



AI Associate



Cybersecurity Analyst



Data Analyst



CRM/CMS Developer



IT Business Analyst



Cloud Operations Specialist



Systems Administrator



DevOps Specialist



Technical Sales Specialist



UX Designer



CRM Administrator

Speak with us directly to see more information about your options within these roles:

- Customer Success Manager
- Web Developer
- Hardware Engineer
- Clinical Engineer
- Field Service Representative
- Human Resources
- Business Intelligence Engineer
- Marketing Manager
- Sourcing Recruiter
- Information Security Engineer
- Network Security Administrator

Illinois State Grant Funding

Subsidized RTI Pathways to Offset Your Apprenticeship Costs

Tech Track

IT Apprenticeship

-\$8,500

Grant Funding Offset per Apprentice

- **Your Cost:** \$1,500
(Typical full cost \$10,000)

HR Track

HR Apprenticeship

-\$1,500

Grant Funding Offset per Apprentice

- **Your Cost:** \$2,000
(Typical full cost \$5,000;
\$3,500 with SHRM partner discount)

Availability of State Tax Credits

Roles & Responsibilities



Apprenti

Collect & Monitor Stakeholder feedback to ensure program success

Confirm apprentice competency throughout duration of the program

Maintain compliance with DOL and registered apprenticeship body

Support the employer and apprentice in understanding their obligations and responsibilities

Employer

To supervise your apprentice as a standard employee.

To enable access to mentors to teach your apprentice the skills they need

To provide wages and benefits to apprentices

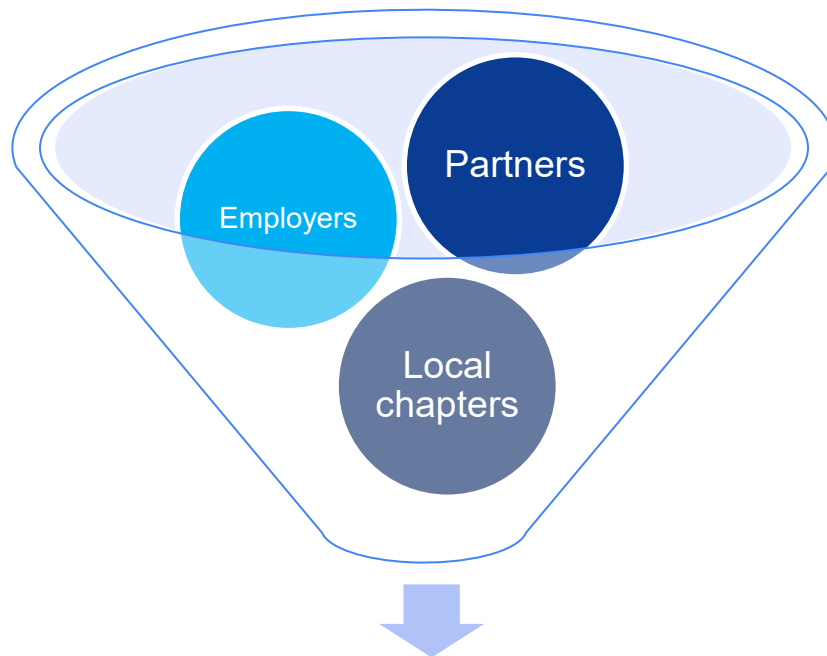
To track & share progress with Apprenti

Recognize Apprenticeship Milestones

Phase 4: Relationship building

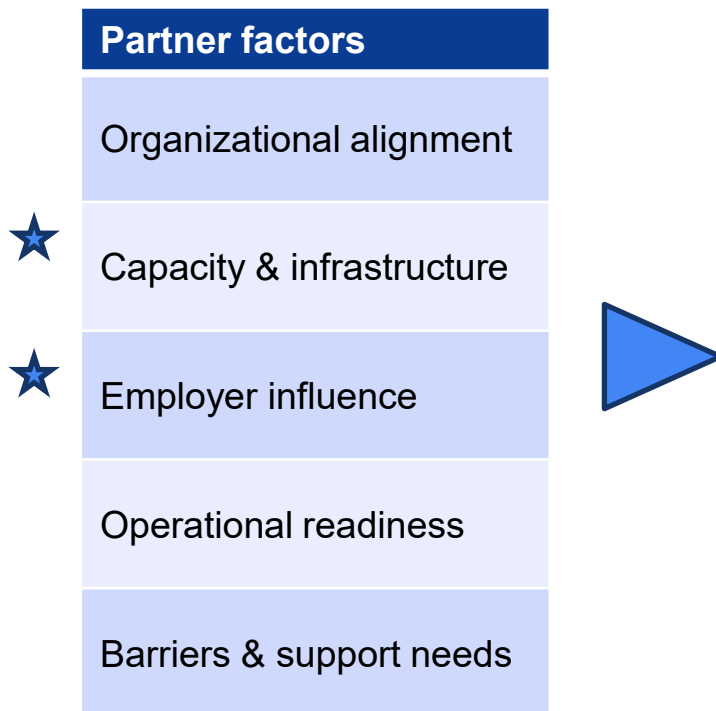
Evaluate leads:

Readiness assessments



Forecast onboarding

Evaluating partner readiness



Partner Readiness Assessment

Building Awareness and Utilization of Registered Apprenticeships in Illinois

Use this brief assessment to help determine whether a partner with existing employer relationships is prepared to move from **Interest (Stage 2)** to **Commitment (Stage 3)** in the apprenticeship engagement model. Important to assess whether a partner organization is prepared to collaborate on apprenticeship adoption and employer engagement. Responses should be added to the **Five-Stage Engagement Tracker** to monitor progress.

1. Organizational Alignment

Mission fit with apprenticeships

☐ Strong fit ☐ Moderate fit ☐ Unclear ☐ Not aligned

Existing employer network strength

☐ Large network ☐ Moderate network ☐ Small network ☐ Limited network

2. Capacity & Infrastructure

Staff capacity to support collaboration

☐ Dedicated staff ☐ Partial capacity ☐ Limited ☐ None

Existing Employer engagement channels

☐ Regular events ☐ Email campaigns ☐ Advisory councils ☐ Outreach

3. Employer influence

Level of trust with employers

☐ High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐ Unknown

Ability to convene employers quickly

☐ Yes ☐ With support ☐ No ☐ Not sure

4. Operational readiness

Experience with workforce or talent programs

☐ Extensive ☐ Some ☐ Limited ☐ None

Use of apprenticeship models

☐ Strong ☐ Somewhat ☐ Minimal ☐ Minimal

5. Barriers & Support Needs

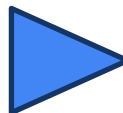
Primary Concerns

☐ Cost ☐ Staff time ☐ Employer bandwidth ☐ Understanding requirements ☐ Messaging
☐ Other: _____

Support Needed to Advance to Next Stage

☐ Cost model ☐ Employer briefing kits ☐ Training for staff ☐ Joint outreach plan ☐ Case studies ☐ Other: _____

Evaluating employer readiness



Employer Readiness Assessment

Building Awareness and Utilization of Registered Apprenticeships in Illinois

Use this brief assessment to help determine whether an employer is prepared to move from **Interest (Stage 2)** to **Commitment (Stage 3)** in the apprenticeship engagement model. Important to identify potential roles, organizational capacity, leadership support, and barriers that may require additional guidance. Responses should be added to the **Five-Stage Employer Engagement Tracker** to monitor progress.

1. Organizational Fit

Potential Roles for Apprenticeships

☐ IT Support / Help Desk ☐ Cybersecurity ☐ Network Technician ☐ HR Assistant / HR Coordinator ☐ Other: _____

Openness to Skills-Based Hiring

☐ Very open ☐ Somewhat open ☐ Unsure ☐ Not open

2. Capacity & Support

Manager Capacity to Coach Early-Career Talent

☐ Ready now ☐ Ready with support ☐ Not sure ☐ Not ready

Existing Mentorship or Onboarding Structure

☐ Formal ☐ Informal ☐ None

3. Operational Readiness

Estimated Hiring Timeline for Apprentices

☐ 0-3 months ☐ 3-6 months ☐ 6+ months ☐ Unknown

Awareness of Apprenticeship Cost Models & Tax Credits

☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No

4. Commitment Indicators

Identified internal Champion

☐ Yes ☐ In progress ☐ No

Leadership Support for Apprenticeship Participation

☐ Yes ☐ Pending ☐ No

5. Barriers & Support Needs

Primary Concerns

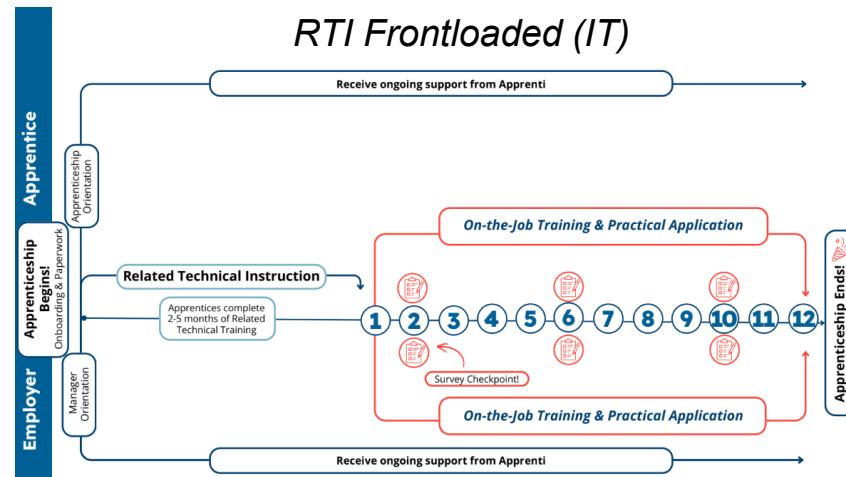
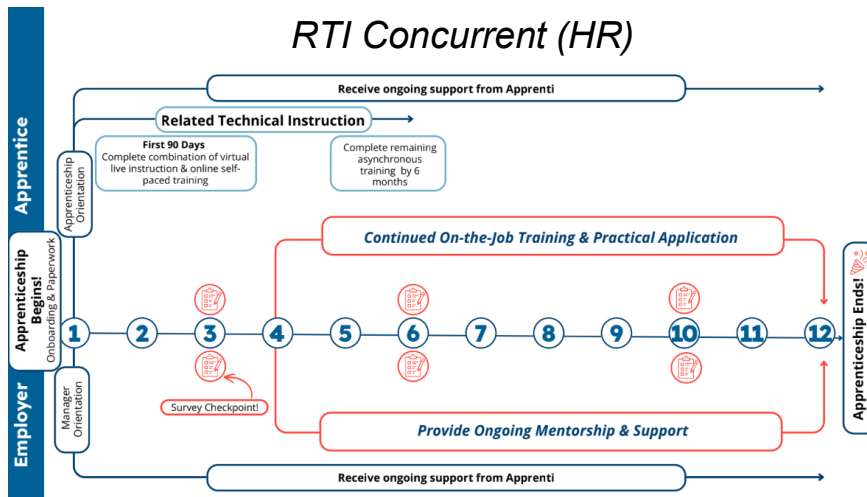
☐ Cost ☐ Manager capacity ☐ Role fit ☐ Registration process ☐ Candidate quality ☐ Other: _____

Support Needed to Advance to Next Stage

☐ Cost model / budget example ☐ Competency alignment ☐ Mentor toolkit ☐ Registration support ☐ Case studies ☐ Other: _____

Phase 5: Onboarding

Apprenticeship Journey



Progress & Results

- Establish partnerships and engage employers
- Heightened employer awareness of RAP
- Heightened local chapter engagement on RAP, State Attainment Goal (e.g., educational attainment, credentials of value)
- Enrolled IT apprenticeships
- Forecasted adoption
- Identify key issues and technical assistance needs

Crowdsourcing: Future Paths

1. How clear is IL SHRM's go-to-market strategy for expanding registered apprenticeships across Illinois?
2. Based on what you've heard, how effective do you believe IL SHRM's early results have been (readiness assessments, employer outreach, marketing, registrations)?
3. How ready do you feel to engage employers or partners using IL SHRM's RAP model?
4. Which area should IL SHRM prioritize next to engage employers/partners to strengthen statewide apprenticeship adoption?



- ✓ Group discussion
- ✓ "Idea cards" collected for post-session synthesis
- ✓ Participate in continued partner conversations

Additional SHRM Resources



*Campus to Career
Ready Research Report*



*SHRM Skills First
Resource Page*



Bob Lemke, IL SHRM Director, Workforce Readiness
rlemke@nextviewadvisors.com

Illinois employer
info page



Schedule an
Appointment



THANK YOU!

