

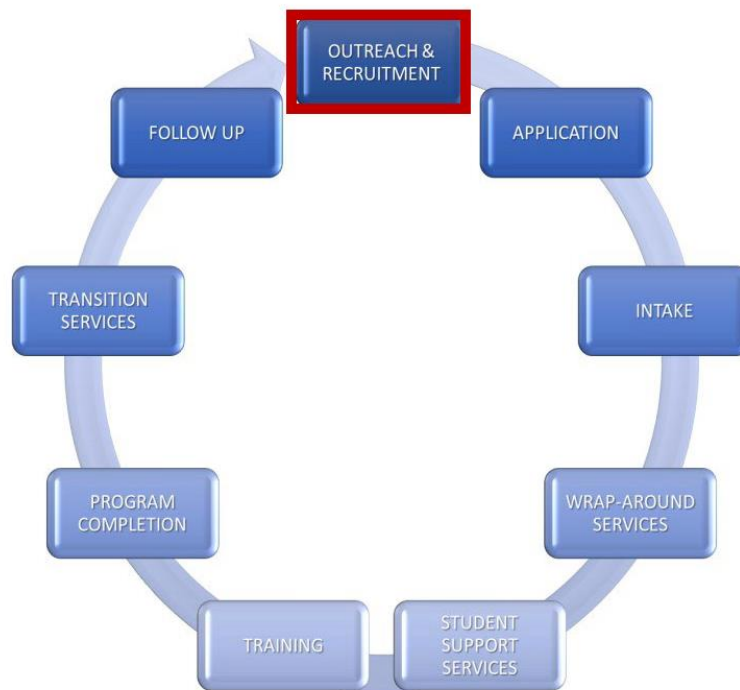
Chapter 3:
RECRUITMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

- Outreach and Recruitment
- Employer Engagement

OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT

Grantees must have a strategy for outreach and recruitment. Developing a plan for outreach is the key to growth and success. This can be the first contact that potential participants have with the Grantee's program. There are many reasons why a participant may not participate in programs, including lack of information on available programs, transportation issues, and uncertainty that participating in a program will lead to long-term personal benefits.

Successful outreach and recruitment can draw on various strategies designed to appeal to potential participants. Below we have provided several assessments that can aid grantees and participants in selecting the right program for their current and future needs.



Outreach and recruitment efforts are the first-time potential participants will encounter the JTED program and grantee. It is essential that during these efforts' grantees can articulate not only the program requirements and curriculum but also the opportunity the program offers. For many potential participants, this may be the first time they have heard about training, career pathway programs, or work-based learning. Through these materials and the communicated messages, grantees will also have an opportunity to highlight the goals, program components, and core values of the JTED program. These activities should emphasize diversifying the chosen trade and promoting an environment of collaboration, innovation, and resilience where participants' unique experiences and backgrounds will be valued. Additionally, outreach and recruitment materials should highlight the needs of potential participants and how the grantee's program will help them overcome barriers.

Effective Outreach and Recruitment

Outreach and recruitment are critical elements for a grantee's success. While these concepts overlap, grantees must be aware of distinct differences between outreach and recruitment. This section will provide information and guidance on outreach and recruiting program participants.

Outreach

Outreach activities and strategies are focused on a comprehensive communication strategy that raises general program awareness geared to widen participation. Outreach is synonymous with marketing and establishing a marketing plan allows grantees to set goals, dedicate resources, and track progress. All grantees should have a marketing plan and budget available for the Department review and analysis of efficiencies and best practices. Additionally, all marketing materials should include diversity, equity, and inclusion for underrepresented groups.

Recruitment

Recruitment activities and strategies focus on attracting specific participants that grantees are seeking to enroll in their program or groups that can partner with the grantee. For the JTED program, participant recruitment efforts should focus on the grantee's target population(s) outlined in their grant proposal. Keep in mind that recruitment efforts are crucial to attracting qualified participants.

Recruitment messages for participants should emphasize the positive aspects of the program. Materials should contain specific information on the program and should not be misleading. Additionally, recruitment materials and activities should emphasize that the program offers training and that participants are expected to complete the program and transition into sector-based employment. Recruitment information should also highlight creating career pathways for livable wages and economic self-sufficiency.

Outreach and recruitment efforts may also be geared toward partner agencies. Grantees should identify the particular needs of participants or gaps in services and then seek out and build relationships with agency partners that may address those needs. To grow a grantee's partner network, grantees should reach out to other organizations that can complement JTED program services.

Another way to gauge a participant's interest in the offered programs would be to use the following assessments for skills and interests. These evaluations/assessments help ensure that the training program and participants' needs are aligned.

Illinois WorkNet Screening Assessments

| Assessment Name | Summary of Assessment | Link |
|--|---|---|
| Quick Start Guide | Use the Quick Start guide to learn how to use assessments for your customers to achieve employment & training goals. | https://www.illinoisworknet.com/partners/Pages/AssessGetStarted.aspx |
| Skills & Interest Survey | These surveys help a user determine career paths based upon existing skills and personal interests. | https://www.illinoisworknet.com/pages/article.aspx?articleID=394 |
| Employment 101 | This tool helps the user learn about career plans, job search plans, and achieving success in the workplace. | https://www.illinoisworknet.com/pages/article.aspx?articleID=395 |
| Self-Evaluation of Essential Skills | This self-assessment helps the user rank their strengths and weaknesses on 10 essential employability skills. | https://www.illinoisworknet.com/pages/article.aspx?articleID=397 |
| Observational Evaluation | Use this assessment with participants who are in your workshops to observe rate their essential employability skills. | https://www.illinoisworknet.com/pages/article.aspx?articleID=398 |
| Worksite Evaluation | This evaluation assesses the essential employability skills of participants in a guided worksite placement. | https://www.illinoisworknet.com/pages/article.aspx?articleID=399 |
| Other Evaluation | These evaluations list several assessments that can be tracked in a participant's career plan. | https://www.illinoisworknet.com/pages/article.aspx?articleID=400 |



For more information on Recruitment and target populations, please see the resources below.

- **Supporting Individuals Experiencing Homelessness:** [Homeless Recruitment-min.pdf \(illinoisstate.edu\)](#)
- **Super Strategies for Supporting Out of Work Individuals:** [Out of Workforce-min-min.pdf \(illinoisstate.edu\)](#)
- **Super Strategies for Supporting Foster Care Involved Youth:** [Foster Care Recruitment-min.pdf \(illinoisstate.edu\)](#)

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Employers play a leadership role in developing and managing career pathway programs to ensure the careers are high demand/higher skill at the local and/or state level, content is current, and work-based learning opportunities are integrated throughout the program experience. Some of the ways that employers can add value to your program include their involvement in:

- Attending regular meetings/discussions about the programs and their current employment needs.
- Share views on local, regional, and state labor market needs related to expected job openings and changing skill requirements.
- Offer work-based learning experiences or mentorship to program participants.

The U.S. Department of Labor identified three phases of business engagement for “selling” apprenticeships as a workforce solution. Apprenticeships are just one form of work-based learning as a strategy to a career pathway. While DOL highlights apprenticeships, these phases can apply to all career pathway programs.

THREE KEY PHASES OF BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Just as apprenticeship uses a formalized approach to create replicable results, there are steps you can take when approaching businesses about apprenticeship that will ensure replicable successes. These steps fall into three key phases:

- 
RESEARCH & PREPARATION. Recognize the top challenges apprenticeship can help address, use research to identify businesses that could benefit from apprenticeship, keep track of what you learn, know the value of apprenticeship, and prepare for your initial business meeting.
- 
BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS. Validate pain points and learn the business’s culture, introduce apprenticeship in the context of existing business practices, and build trust.
- 
GETTING TO COMMITMENT. Address concerns, build organizational buy-in for the apprenticeship model, and bring the right partners to the table.





For more information on different types of Business Engagement, please see the resources outlined below.

- **Guide to Employer Engagement:** [Employer Engagement – New Ways to Work](#)
- **U.S. Department of Labor’s Business Engagement Tools Resource Page:** [A Targeted Approach to Apprenticeship](#)
- **Apprenticeship:** [Business Engagement in Apprenticeship](#)
- **Rehabilitation Services:** [Business Engagement for Vocational Rehabilitation Services](#)
- **Employer Engagement Tracker:** [Employer Engagement Toolkit | Heartland Alliance](#)
- **Recovery Resources:** [Business Service Delivery Recovery Resources](#)
- **Economic Recovery:** [Tips for Engaging Business During Economic Recovery](#)
- **JTED Business Employment Training PowerPoint:** [Workforce and Education Partners JTED Program Resources \(illinoisworknet.com\)](#)