WIF Evaluations:
Defining the Evidence Base & Common Data
Provided by the US Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration

Career Pathways

11:30AM-12:30PM EST
Tuesday November 13, 2012
Overview

I. Workforce Evidence & Data

II. Career Pathways: Definition and Evidence

III. Common Data Elements in Career Pathways

IV. WIF Innovations and Career Pathways

V. Wrap Up and Questions
I. Workforce Evidence & Data

WIF goal is to “emphasize building knowledge...through rigorous evaluation and translating ‘lessons learned’.”

- Each grantee performs its own evaluation.
- The grantee must hire a third-party evaluator.
- The evaluation type must be appropriate.
- The evaluation design must be rigorous.
- The evaluation must contribute to the evidence base.

The WIF NEC (Abt Associates) will work with the evaluators to make the findings relevant.
I. Workforce Evidence & Data

- Each intervention has a different evidence base that describe the outcomes of past implementations.

- This evidence base also establishes outcomes of interest and the data that measure them—like employment, job earnings, or certifications.

- The evidence base introduces why you are doing the evaluation, and the data describe what you are using to evaluate. The evaluation type and rigor covered in earlier webinars provide the how.
I. Workforce Evidence & Data

- Evaluation designs should refer to the appropriate evidence base, and use similar data elements.

- Your WIF innovation may include different interventions.

- Evaluation design reports should
  - Specify the intervention or interventions being evaluated
  - Review the different literature for each intervention
  - Identify the evidence base and level of rigor of the studies in the literature
  - Suggest how the WIF evaluation findings will contribute
II. Career Pathways: Definition

- Numerous grantees are focusing on the inclusion of career pathways strategies into existing programs, or creating new programs based upon career pathways models.

- These all formalize connected steps and a sequencing (“pathways”) of assessments, supportive services, training, and certifications for participants with different entry and exit points relevant to industry needs.

- Career pathways interventions typically include:
  - Sector-specific and industry partnership strategies
  - Sequential training and, if applicable, educational opportunities with industry-recognized credentials
  - Appropriate supportive “wrap-around” services and worker readiness
  - Flexibility in entry and exit points, particularly for working trainees
II. Career Pathways: Evidence

Two groups of information:

- Frameworks, guides, case studies and outcomes studies that explore “career pathway” models
- Evidence from rigorous experimental or quasi-experimental evaluations of career pathways or similar programs
II. Career Pathways: Evidence

Selected Practical Guidance

- DOL ETA's “Career Pathways Toolkit: Six Key Elements for Success “(2011)
  Authors: Kozumplik, Nyborg, Garcia, Cantu, & Larsen
  Policy-level guidance on pathways and examples of implementation

- “Charting a Path: An Exploration of the Statewide Career Pathway Efforts” (2009)
  Author: Stephens
  State-level case studies of pathways, including partners development (especially industry),
  the integration of community colleges, and leadership and infrastructure needs

  from The Innovative Strategies for Increasing Self-Sufficiency (ISIS) Project” (2012)
  Author: Fein
  Programmatic framework for designing and evaluating individual career pathway programs,
  including skill assessment of skills and needs, occupational training, academic and non-
  academic supports, and job placement

- “Courses to Employment: Partnering to Create Paths to Education and Careers” (2012)
  Authors: Conway, Blair, & and Helmer
  Outcomes study that evaluated community college and CBO partnerships
II. Career Pathways: Evidence

Selected Evidence

  Authors: King, C., Smith, T. C., & Schroeder, D. G and Smith, T. C., & King, C. T.
  Quasi-experimental evaluation found that participation was associated with 10.9% increase in quarterly employment and $1,223 increase in average quarterly earnings

  Authors: Jenkins, Zeidenberg, & Kienzl
  Quasi-experimental evaluation using propensity score matching found students had better outcomes such as being more likely to continue into credit-bearing coursework, to earn credits that count towards a credential, earn occupational certificates and make gains on basic skills tests.

- “Tuning In to Local Labor Markets: Findings from the Sectoral Employment Impact Study” (2010)
  Authors: Maguire, Freely, Clymer, Conway, & Schwartz
  Experimental evaluation of a pathways-like model in which participants saw earnings gains of $4,500 (18%) over the control group, as well as higher rates of employment and a greater likelihood of working in a job that offered benefits

- “A Promising Start: Year Up’s Initial Impacts on Low-Income Young Adult's Career”(2011)
  Authors: Roder & Elliott
  Experimental evaluation of a career pathway program found that participants earned nearly $3,500 (30%) more than counterparts in a control group in their first year of work
III. Common Data Elements

Output Measures

- Enrollment/participation rate
- Completion rate
- Service usage measures (e.g., participation in reemployment services, % clients using counseling, % using placement assistance)
III. Common Data Elements

Outcome and Impact Measures

- Annual earnings
- Employment status
- Receipt of training-related credential
- Employment in job related to the training received
- Participants' post-training economic security & financial stability (eg: income, poverty, TANF, etc.)
### IV. WIF Innovations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WIF Grantees with Pathways as Primary Intervention Focus</th>
<th>WIF Grantees with Pathways as Additional Intervention Focus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore County (MD)</td>
<td>City of Los Angeles (CA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FMS (NY)</td>
<td>San Mateo (CA)</td>
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<td>Gila River (AZ)</td>
<td>Workforce Development Board (WI)</td>
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<td>Illinois CEO (IL)</td>
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<td>Rhode Island L&amp;T (RI)</td>
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<td>West Central (PA)</td>
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IV. WIF Innovations

- How are your interventions different from the interventions from previous studies?
- Is there other evidence you are using?
- Are you implementing similar measures for your evaluation’s data collection?
- Are there other output and outcome measures that you are using?
- How are you thinking about your evaluation’s contribution in relation to these studies?
IV. Wrap Up

Next Steps

- Incorporate your intervention’s evidence base(s) as you draft your evaluation design report
- Describe how your WIF grant’s intervention differs or is similar to pathways models in past studies
- Consider comparable data relevant to your intervention
- Contact WIF NEC with any questions (LinkedIn or WIF@abtassoc.com)
IV. Wrap Up

- November 13-16 Intervention & Data Webinars:

  Tues Nov 13
  11:30-12:30PM EST  Service Change: Career Pathways
  2:00-3:00PM EST  Service Change: Online Delivery

  Wed Nov 14
  11:30-12:30PM EST  Service Change: New Population
  2:00-3:00PM EST  Service Change: New Service

  Thurs Nov 15
  11:30-12:30PM EST  Partnerships: Industry
  2:00-3:00PM EST  Partnerships: Service Providers

  Fri Nov 16
  11:30-12:30PM EST  Administration: Systems Change
  2:00-3:00PM EST  Administration: MIY
Questions?