

Regional Funder Collaboratives for Workforce Solutions



COUNCIL *on* FOUNDATIONS

September 14, 2011,

A New Partnership

Workforce Development

And

**Public-Private-Philanthropic
Partnerships**

Natural Partners For Community Prosperity

Why? What is happening in the American Workplace?

- Boomer Retirements**
- Demographic Shifts**
- Education Attainment: Driver of Economy**
- Global Competition**
- Immigration**
- Technology: Changing and Outsourcing**
- Of course, now the Great Recession....**

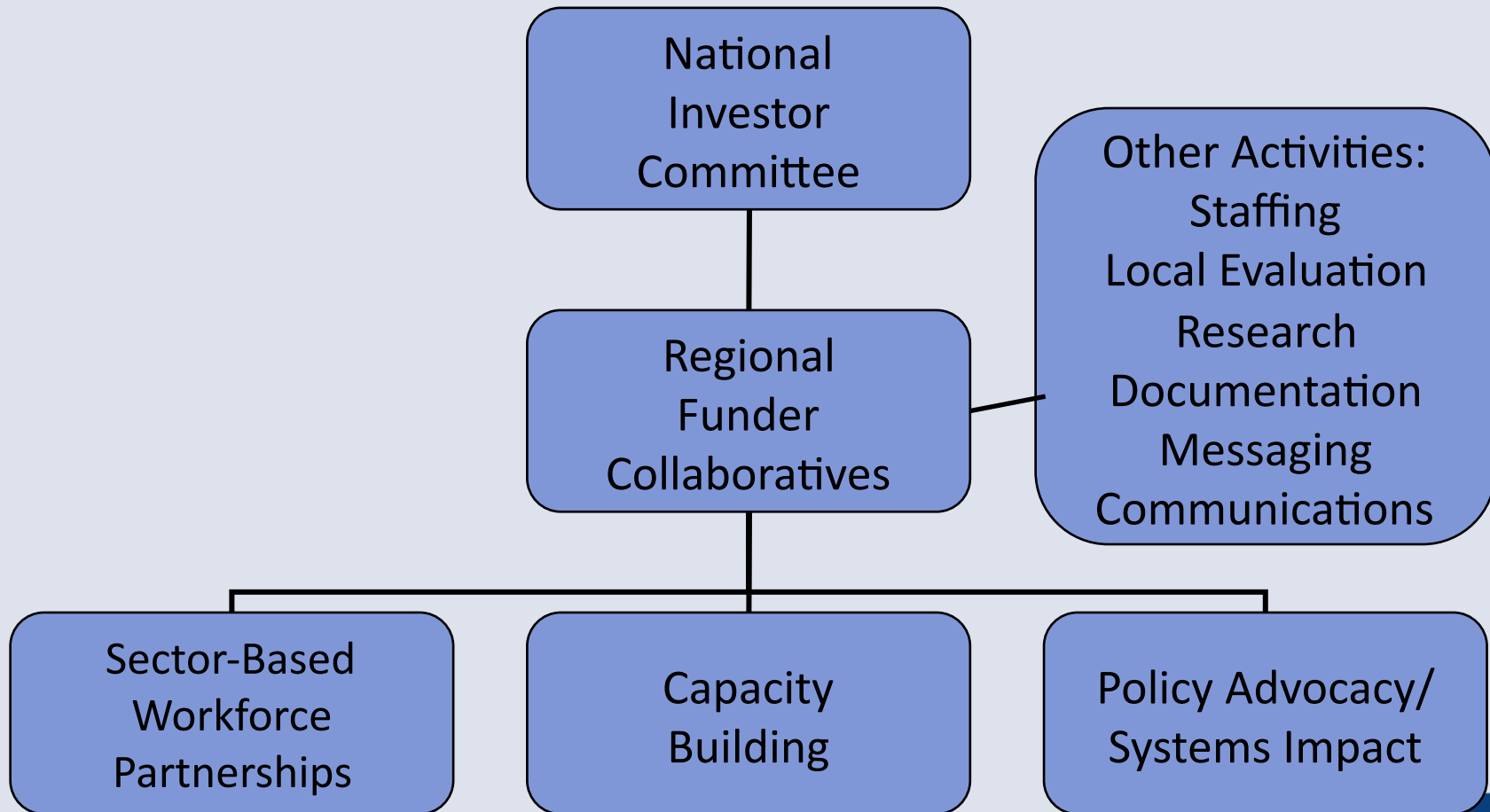
NFWS Solution

Ten Years of Outcomes – Philanthropy-Led

31 Collaboratives – over 250 Public, Private, Philanthropic Funders

- **Address the skilled labor shortage:** Helping employers to be more economically competitive
- **Increase family sustainability:** Providing better skill development and career advancement opportunities for low-income job-seekers/workers
- **Improve the workforce development system:** Helping fragmented and inefficient public and private investments to meet needs of adults needing new skills and their employers.

The Model



Today's Focus

- **What is it?**
- **What are the goals?**
- **What do funder collaboratives do?**
- **In what do funder collaboratives invest?**
- **How do you form a funder collaborative?**

Collaborative Goals

- Enhance regional competitiveness
- Improve public workforce systems
- Innovative Career advancement strategies for entry level workers and others in need of new skills
- Increase business efficiency and productivity

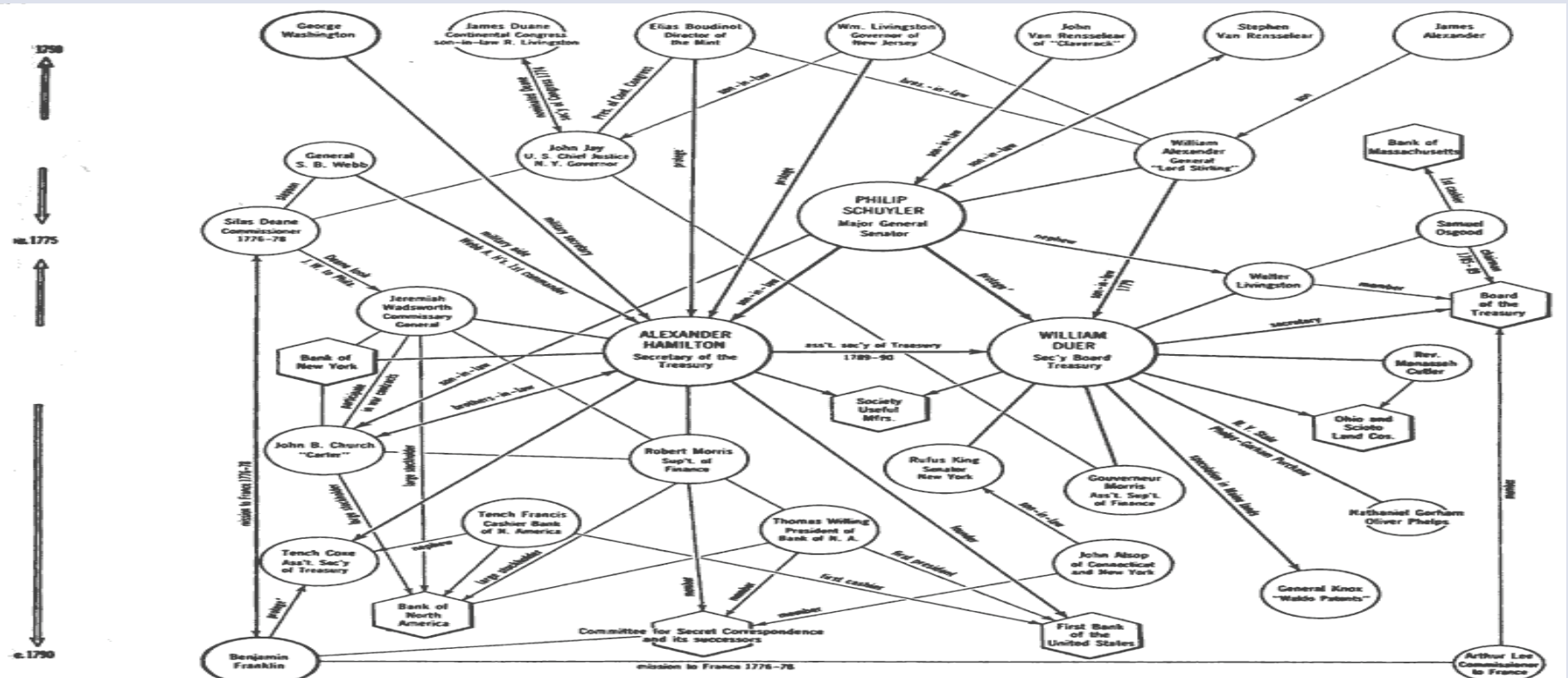
Who Participates is Important!

- A Coalition of Community, Private, and Public Funders who have ***financial resources***
- Pool and align funds
- In pursuit of strategic workforce development goals and investment priorities
- Bring the visibility, clout, and resources necessary to realign the workforce system to meet the needs of employers and workers who need new skills

We are in this together.



Look familiar?



Clusters of interest and influence; the growth of a national elite in the United States, 1750–1795, according to Robert K. Lamb. Note the personal, family, and business ties between individuals from different colonies such as Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts.

Investment Strategies

- **Support Workforce Partnerships**
 - *Direct grants for management and services*
 - *Seed development of new workforce partnerships*
 - *Expand services of current workforce partnerships*
- **Build Capacity**
 - *Professional development*
 - *New or expanded programs and services*
- **Policy Advocacy**
 - *Address legislative or regulatory barriers*
 - *Sustain improvements to employer and system practices*

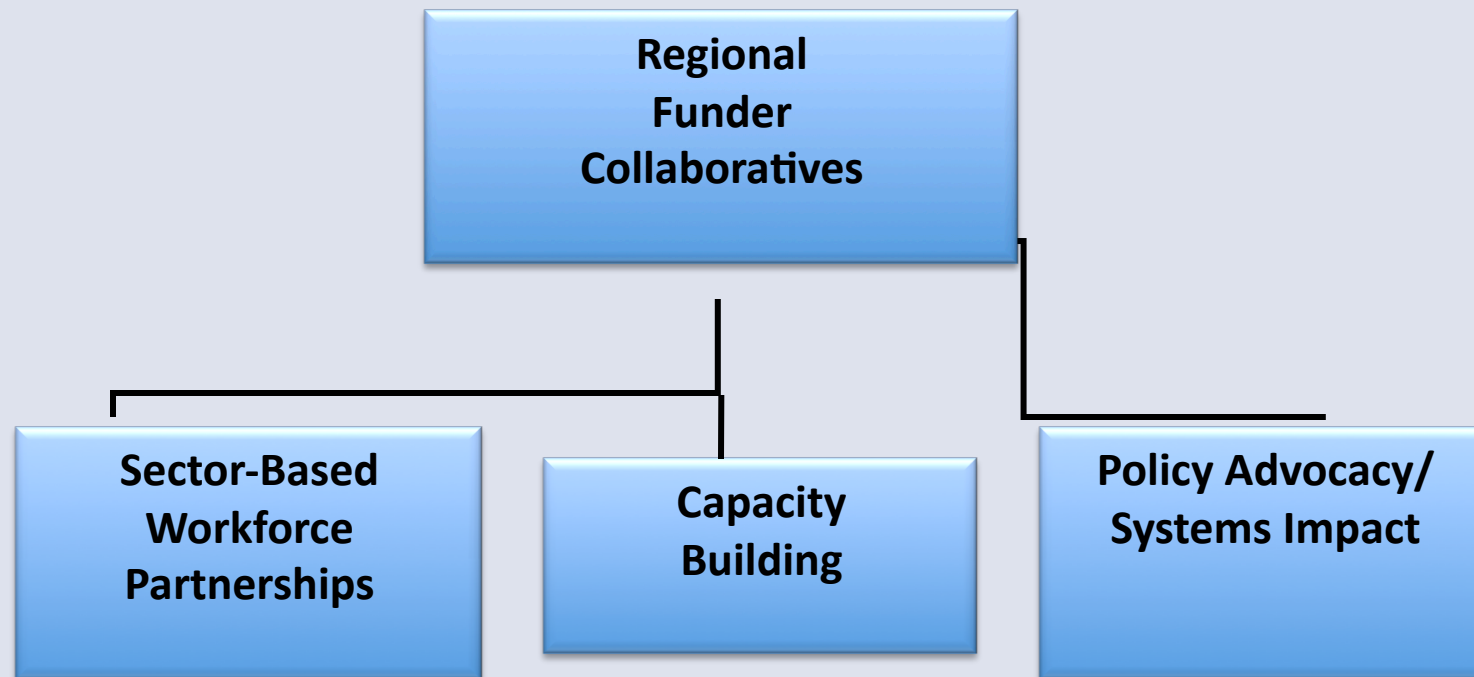
Investment Strategies (con't)

- **Research and Evaluation**
- **Messaging, Marketing**
- **Initiative Management**

Key Functions of a Regional Collaborative

- **Engage Civic Leadership Group**
- **Identify Shared Strategic Vision**
- **Analyze Labor Market Challenges**
- **Plan Investment Strategy**
- **Raise Funds from Members**
- **Award Grants**
- **Identify Policy Advocacy Priorities**
- **Support Research, Evaluation, Messaging**
- **Develop Initiative Governance and Staffing Approach**

Structure for Action and Outcomes



WP's are Designed to be Different

Traditional Approach

- Focuses on increasing worker skills and job placement
- Transactional
- Works within existing funding systems and business practices
- Sharp boundaries around fixed organizational roles and practices
- Short-term focus

Workforce Partnership

- Focuses on solving problems faced by workers and businesses
- Relational
- Works to change funding systems and business practices for a full array of solutions
- Flexible partnerships to solve problems and enhance value
- Long-term orientation

Early Adopters: RI

Skill Up Rhode Island

▪ Aligned Grant-making

- United Way of Rhode Island: \$750,000/year, lead
- RI Dept of Education; Governor's Workforce Board; Dept of Labor & Training; Making Connections Providence; Rhode Island Foundation

▪ Funders Group

- Stakeholder steering committee
- Separate funder groups for each workforce partnership
- Staffed by UWRI Senior Program Officer

▪ Investment Plan

- Four sectoral workforce partnerships, co-invested by funders
- Professional Development Center
- Aligned resources for policy advocacy
- \$150,000/year for technical assistance and evaluation

Early Adopters: Boston

SkillWorks

▪ Mutual Fund

- 8 foundations, City of Boston, MA Dept of Labor
- \$15 M over five years

▪ Funders Group

- 1 funder/1 vote
- Committees for workforce partnership oversight, policy, evaluation
- 1 full time Director

▪ Investment Plan

- \$1.5 M each to 6 workforce partnerships over 5 years
- \$1.5 M policy advocacy
- \$2.5 M capacity building & technical assistance
- \$0.5 M evaluation

Early Adopter: NYC

New York City Workforce Innovation Fund

- **Pooled and Aligned Fund**
 - 8 foundations pool \$500,000/year
 - City allocates \$1,000,000/year
 - Workforce Development Corporation manages grant awards

- **Funders Group**
 - Co-led by NYC Small Business Services Dept & Foundations
 - Joint review and approval process
 - Ad hoc committees
 - Public/Private Ventures provides management support

- **Investment Plan**
 - \$150,000/year for sector academy policy advocacy
 - \$1M/year sectoral workforce partnerships
 - \$100,000/year evaluation
 - \$250,000 management and special projects

There is a Proven Roadmap!

- **Conduct Marketing/Feasibility Assessment**

- Develop a planning group of private and public funders

- **Engage in Design Phase**

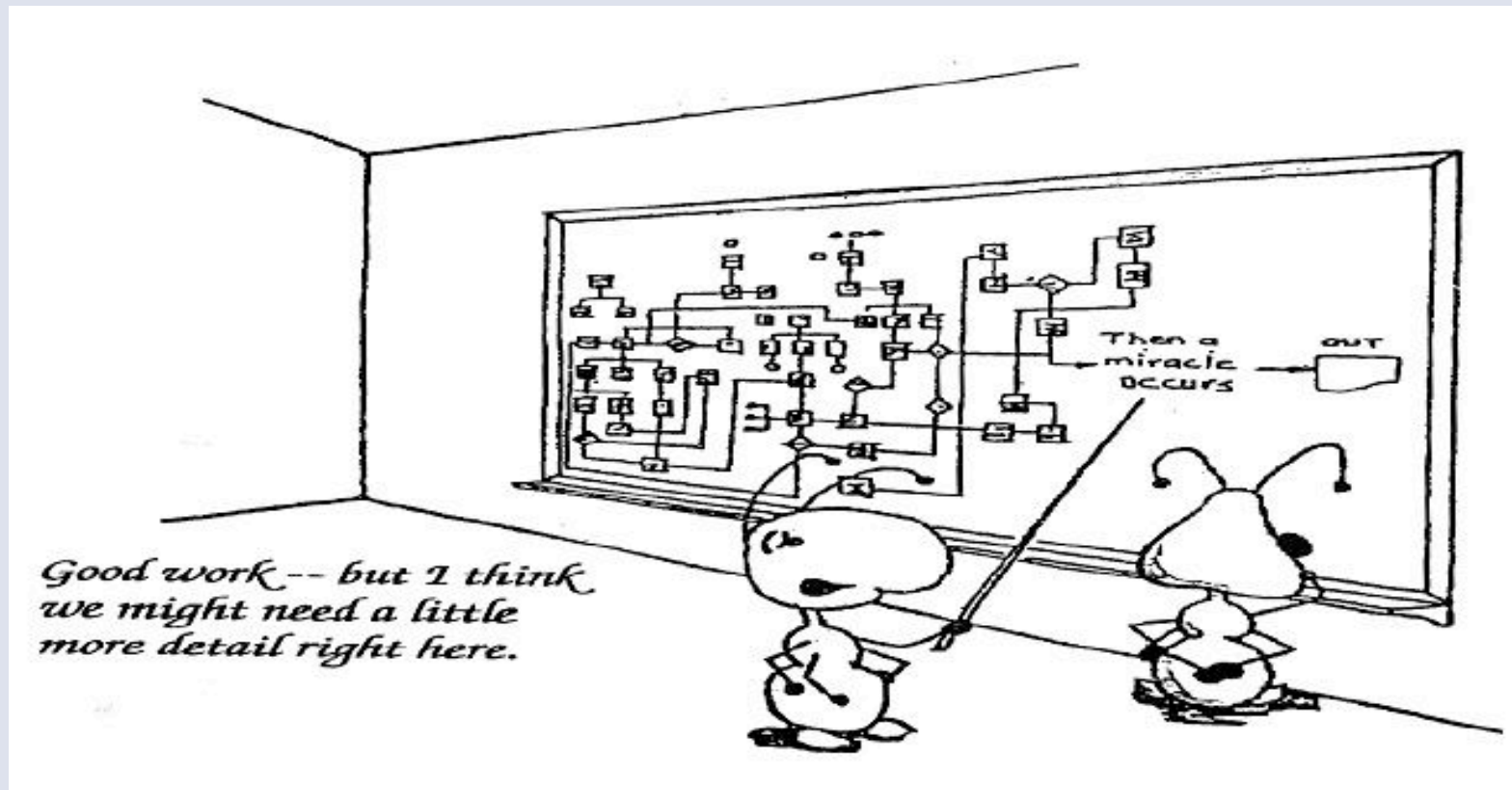
- Develop collective understanding of problem to be solved
- Develop shared strategic vision
- Identify key industry sectors

- **Develop Investment Strategy**

- **Identify Governance and Administration**

- Decision-making process on investment priorities
- Consulting key stakeholders
- Management and staffing of initiative

A lot of hard work but great results



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Workforce Partnerships

Sectoral Career Advancement approach focused in industries with:

- High economic significance to a region
- High demand and opportunities for advancement for low-skilled job-seekers and incumbent workers
- High employer interest in engaging with workforce partnerships to address their workforce challenges

Structure of a Partnership

- COALITIONS of employers, service providers, educational institutions and other partners/vendors
- Coalition may be led by a variety of organizations – including community colleges, public workforce agencies, unions, business groups, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations
- Structures are dynamic, but often include a governance body, a management team (including the lead organization), and a number of partners/vendors

Core Functions of Workforce Partnership

- Develop deep understanding of needs of low-skilled adults and employers in particular sectors
- Convene relevant partners in coalition to identify and respond to needs
- Broker or deliver services to address needs in a more seamless manner
- Align resources to meet the needs of employers and job-seekers/workers
- Engage employers as planners and implementers in this work

Qualities of the Lead Organization

- Knowledge of the sector
- Relationships with employers
- Entrepreneurial leadership (organization and WP)
- Program management capacity
- Service delivery capacity (if offers services)
- Research and strategic development capacity
- Fiscal management capacity
- Grants and performance management capacity
- Communications and marketing skills
- Data collection, management and analysis capacity
- Capacity for fundraising and leveraging resources
- Overall organization (beyond WP project)

Services for Employers

- Aggregate demand across employers
- Career mapping to identify pathways and advancement opportunities
- Assessment of supportive work environment for low-skilled adults
- Cultural competency assessments and training
- Link employer workforce development services with external services and supports
- Align employer workforce development resources with the needs of low-skilled workers (e.g. expanding tuition reimbursement to non-credit training)
- Manage and supervise training and support
- Consult on effective means to communicate employment and advancement opportunities

Services for Low-Skilled Workers

- Recruitment
- Assessment
- Career exploration
- Career counseling
- Basic skills remediation (ABE/ESL; bridge programs, intensive refreshers, etc., often contextualized to particular sector)
- Occupational training
- Case management/supportive services/barrier removal
- Post-placement retention services
- Career counseling
- Continuous connection over several years to promote ongoing skills development and career advancement

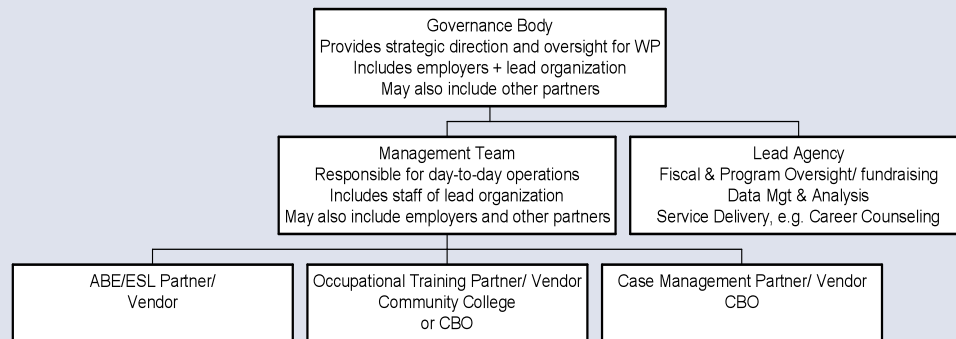
Good jobs and Careers Casey Foundation, 2004

- Economic development
- Industry and job opportunities
- Neighborhood connections
- Career management services
- Attention to specific populations
- Cultural competence
- Civic will and community capacity
- Social investment
- Data-driven strategies
- Attention to specific populations
- Workforce intermediaries
- Educational attainment
- Economic recovery blueprint: a place to start
- Taking a philanthropic-led initiative to scale
- Asset building for family success

Capacity-building Services for the Local Workforce Delivery System

- Knowledge of employer needs and understanding of how service provider practices must change to address these needs
- Awareness of best and promising practices in service delivery
- Plan for system–building of service providers to better meet the needs of employers and job-seekers
- Results-driven focus that promotes flexibility and accountability among partners
- Improving data collection and analysis capacity to drive practice and decision-making
- Identification of and access to additional resources to implement work

Structure of WP's



Issues to Consider

- If you have already identified sectors of focus, which organizations have strong expertise in these sectors and good relationships with employers?
- Which organizations have the capacity to lead a complex workforce partnership?
- Which organizations provide the services that workforce partnerships offer?
 - How effective are these services, especially for low-skilled adults?
- What do your answers to the questions above suggest about areas in which you will need to build capacity in order to develop effective workforce partnerships?