

Sector Development Liaison

Job Description

Workforce Opportunity Council, Inc.

The Workforce Opportunity Council, Inc. is a non-profit organization charged by its oversight body, the New Hampshire Workforce Opportunity Council, with evaluating, planning and setting policy direction for NH's workforce development system. The Council is committed to fostering a highly skilled and flexible workforce that ensures a competitive advantage for NH businesses and creates opportunities for the underemployed to get on career paths that lead to self-sufficiency.

Position Summary

The Sector Development Liaison position will facilitate the development, coordination, and implementation of industry (sector)-specific strategies designed to address the workforce concerns expressed by industry leaders.

This position will also be responsible for coordinating and implementing the appropriate strategies to create career-ladder opportunities within the healthcare industry. See *"Related Information"* for a better understanding of both sector and career-ladder initiatives.

This position requires a high level of interpersonal skills, strong communication, negotiation and group facilitation skills, and a keen understanding of business operations, as well as the workings of interagency relationships in a workforce development environment.

This position is a full-time, 2-year position. Ongoing funding is contingent upon several factors, and is not projected as a possibility at the time of this posting.

Work Examples – Sector Strategies

(This list is not all inclusive)

1. Works closely with the Economic and Labor Market Information (ELMI) Bureau to develop an in-depth understanding of the various industry sectors in the state.
2. Uses ELMI data to recommend an industry (or industries) on which to concentrate efforts of workforce and economic development.
3. Researches approaches taken by other states with sector initiatives. Recommends positive practices, and notes challenges encountered in an effort to reduce delays and increase effectiveness of NH's approach.

4. Coordinates and facilitates discussions around workforce/economic development issues with business leaders within the chosen sector.
5. Allows and encourages industry to take the lead on strategy development, and supports the business-driven efforts to expand the number or quality of jobs in a particular economic sector.
6. Effectively presents information to the public (business groups, incumbent workers, state agencies, local governments, etc.) on rapid response process and services.
7. Maintains a direct and ongoing relationship with the N.H. Department of Economic Development, Division of Business Services to ensure that all activities are carried out hand-in-hand with economic development staff.
8. Maintains a direct and ongoing relationship with the various Regional Economic Development Agencies, to coordinate activities that might be conducted in those regions.
9. Maintains positive working relationships with business organizations, state and local NH Works partner agency staff, and workforce board/committee members.
10. Serves as a point of expertise on sector development strategies.
11. Provides or facilitates training to NH Works Center personnel on issues and programs related to the development and implementation of sector strategies.
12. Provides quarterly written updates to the Executive Committee and/or Board.
13. Serves on committees, boards or other teams as assigned by the Council.
14. Carries out administrative tasks as assigned.
15. Coordinates with partners to facilitate project strategies and to access resources, as needed.
16. Attends workforce related meetings and conferences as assigned.
17. Works with the President of the Council to ensure that all activities are coordinated with the Governors Jobs Cabinet and other initiatives as appropriate.

Work Examples – Career-Ladder Strategies

(This list is not all inclusive)

1. Researches approaches taken by other states with healthcare career-ladder initiatives, **with focus primarily on Massachusetts** as this state has a history of a strong career-ladder initiative.
2. Recommends positive practices, and notes challenges encountered in an effort to reduce delays and increase effectiveness of NH's approach.

3. Coordinates and facilitates discussions around career-ladder development issues with healthcare industry leaders, with a focus towards choosing one or two primary areas of worker shortage on which to concentrate.
4. Allows and encourages the healthcare industry to take the lead on strategy development, and supports their efforts to create and implement career-ladder strategies.
5. Incorporates similar activities as is listed above into work activities.

Essential Functions

- 1) Working with others to complete projects and reports.
- 2) Functioning as an effective team member, yet able to work independently with minimal daily supervision.
- 3) Applying a positive customer service attitude in all aspects of work.
- 4) Producing work that requires accuracy with few errors.
- 5) Applying personal ethics, honesty, initiative, flexibility, and responsibility in the performance of work assignments.
- 6) Maintaining regular attendance as required for producing a normal, timely flow of work.
- 7) Multi-tasking, ability to change from one task to another of a different nature without loss of efficiency or composure.

Qualification Requirements

Five years professional experience in organizations which include a combination from the following: public administration, community or industrial development, workforce development and public outreach, plus

Three years of supervisory experience in any occupational area. The three years will count as part of the five years total experience.

Bachelor's degree from a recognized college or university with major study in business administration, industrial community development, business management, marketing or economics or resource development preferred.

Position reports to the President, or designee.

The position will be based in the Workforce Opportunity Council office, and requires sitting for long periods at a desk and potentially extensive computer work. Minimal lifting required. Significant in-state travel required; must have own reliable transportation. Occasional out-of-state and over-night travel required. Work-week is 40 hours per week with extra hours required when necessary.

RELATED INFORMATION

What is meant by "sector"

Sector initiatives are industry-specific workforce development approaches. They are designed to develop strategies to expand the number or quality of jobs in a particular economic sector. A sector is commonly defined as a group of firms that share some common characteristics. The characteristics might be a product (socks & hosiery), a market (hardware stores), a technology (metal-working equipment), a resource (wood), or even a workforce need (electronic technicians). The most common usage of the term is to describe a group of firms with a common product.

Sector initiatives share four common elements that distinguish them from conventional programs.

- They are targeted to a specific industry, crafting solutions tailored to that industry in that region.
- They offer the presence of a strategic partner with deep knowledge of the targeted industry and its companies linking them with organizations that may include community-based nonprofits, employer organizations, organized labor, community colleges, and others.
- They provide training strategies that benefit low-income individuals, including the unemployed, non-traditional labor pools, and low-wage incumbent workers.
- They promote systemic change that cultivates a win-win environment by restructuring internal and external employment practices to achieve changes beneficial to employers, low-wage workers and low-income job seekers.

A variety of strategies are tailored to the regional economy, industry sectors and worker populations. Basic strategies include training and skills development for specific industries and occupations; business development; organizing residents, workers, employers and other key constituents; researching and restructuring the work environment; and integrating two or more of these strategies in a multi-faceted approach.

These initiatives result in companies that are better able to fulfill workforce objectives, while employees obtain improved income, benefits and employment opportunities.

What is meant by "Career Ladder"

Career ladders group together employers whose skill requirements for a range of occupations can be met with skills that potential workers acquire in previous jobs and training. Career ladders can even operate within a single firm, linking occupations based on similarities in skill requirements across different job levels. In either case, career ladders focus on the jobs that employers have the most trouble filling as they seek to stay competitive: jobs with high turnover, those in which the demand for new workers is great, and those that are rapidly growing in demand. The career ladder provides a road map for efficient, effective hiring by identifying the skills those jobs require, arranging the jobs in steps up which workers advance, and sourcing workers to employers based on the skills they have learned, at least in part, in their previous jobs.

Benefits of Establishing a Career Ladder:

- Career ladders benefit employers by helping to solve recruitment problems, reduce turnover, and increase productivity.
- Career ladders benefit workers by offering multiple options for career advancement and by integrating "dead-end" occupations into a sequence that leads to high-wage occupations.
- Career ladders benefit workforce development efforts by providing an efficient service delivery model for addressing workforce development needs in response to both priority customers – serve business looking for qualified workers in high demand occupations, and serve job seekers looking for a clear path for advancing their careers.

Types of Career Ladders:

- *Single-firm* – establish internal career ladders in which the employer develops the skills of entry-level occupations, then creates opportunities for training that are tied to higher level skills to encourage promotions. Entry level positions can then be "backfilled".
- *Single industry* – many career ladders bring together a group of participating firms in a single industry, training workers to fill similar occupations in any of the firms, not just for jobs with the current employer.
- *Career ladders based on sectoral initiatives* – targets the creation or preservation of jobs in an industry sector with a high demand for skilled labor such as nursing or manufacturing.
- *Cross-industry career ladders* – can cross various industries by focusing on the basic work readiness skills that are valued across all industries. Often focus on advancing workers from the entry level in one industry to higher levels of employment in another.