



EAB

# Recapturing Adult Learner Enrollments: Strategies to Recruit Students through Employer Partnerships 2015 Community College Executive Forum

## Top Lessons from the Study:

- Adult Learners Account for Majority of Community College Enrollment Decline
- Competition from For-Profit and Four-Year Universities Crowds Adult Learner Market
- Employer Partnerships Remain Colleges' Greatest Asset for Adult Learner Recruitment
- Three Key Challenges Prevent Colleges from Maximizing Value of Employer Partnerships
  1. Working Adults Deterred from Enrollment
  2. Program Options Misaligned with Career Goals
  3. Job Seekers Question Value of Retraining
- Remove Barriers to Enrollment to Encourage Use of Tuition Reimbursement
- Partner with Employers to Market Programs Relevant to Workers' Career Goals
- Promote Hiring Outcomes to Demonstrate Value of Retraining to Job Seekers

This study examines three approaches to recruit adult learners through employer partnerships.



### Profiled Practices:

- Deferred Tuition Reimbursement Billing
- Noncredit-to-credit Course Discount
- Employer-Based Enrollment Advisor
- Stackable Certificate Career Road Map
- Centralized Prior Learning Portal
- Corporate Training Credit Crosswalk
- Community-based Career Boot Camps
- Class-wide Speed Interviewing
- Training-based Job Screen
- Guaranteed Employment Offer
- Employer-Sponsored Degree Completion

**Chapter 1:** Explores how college leaders can remove the financial and administrative barriers that prevent working adults from enrolling. Topics include tuition reimbursement and noncredit-to-credit bridges.

**Chapter 2:** Explores program options that allow adult learners to attain their career goals without excess time and effort. Topics include stackable certificates and prior learning assessment.

**Chapter 3:** Explores how college leaders can facilitate hiring for job seekers to demonstrate the career value of retraining. Topics include speed interviewing events and guaranteed job offers.

**Adult Learner Recruitment Toolkit** includes resources for: Promoting Use of Tuition Reimbursement | Facilitating Prior Learning Assessment | Identifying Career Paths for Prospective Students | Matching Job Seekers to Employers

## Understanding Your Current Practice

The following questions are designed to support local evaluation of their current activities

Removing Barriers to Enrollment	Yes	No
1. Do you partner with employers to promote tuition reimbursement among their workers?		
2. Can students who receive tuition reimbursement defer payment on courses until their employer compensates them?		
3. Do you offer free course trials so that prospective students can gain confidence in their college readiness?		
4. Do you offer incentives to encourage noncredit training completers to pursue a certificate or degree?		
5. Do college advisors host regular office hours for prospective students at the sites of key employer partners?		
6. Can prospective students complete applications and course registration through on-site advisors at their place of employment?		
<i>If you answered "No" to any of the above questions, please turn to "Removing Barriers to Enrollment" (page 23).</i>		
Aligning Program Options with Career Goals	Yes	No
1. Do you communicate the labor market value of additional credentials to students who complete a short-term certificate?		
2. Do you partner with employers to identify which of your credentials align with career advancement opportunities at their organization?		
3. Have you centralized all prior learning assessment policies and procedures in one online location for simplified access?		
4. Do prior learning assessment policies appear in language that prospective and current students can easily understand?		
5. Do you advertise prior learning assessment to prospective adult learners through local media, employer visits, and information sessions?		
6. Have you crosswalked any standardized corporate training programs to college courses to allow incoming students to earn credit for them?		
<i>If you answered "No" to any of the above questions, please turn to "Aligning Program Options with Career Goals" (page 33).</i>		
Facilitating the Hiring Process	Yes	No
1. Do you partner with local workforce investment boards to enroll unemployed workers in training?		
2. Do you offer college and/or career counseling at community locations, such as one-stop career centers?		
3. Do you require students to adhere to professional standards (e.g., attendance, dress code) throughout pre-employment training programs?		
4. Do you allow employers to observe classes and view student performance reports to facilitate hiring upon graduation?		
5. Do you host on-campus interviewing events to connect graduating students with hiring employers?		
6. Do you guarantee interviews or job placements to students who complete certain high-demand training programs?		
7. Do you advertise employment outcomes to prospective students through program websites, brochures, and information sessions?		
8. Do you help employers recruit current students as part-time workers in exchange for tuition assistance upon hire?		
<i>If you answered "No" to any of the above questions, please turn to "Facilitating the Hiring Process" (page 45).</i>		