

# From Traction to Action

## Engaging with Businesses



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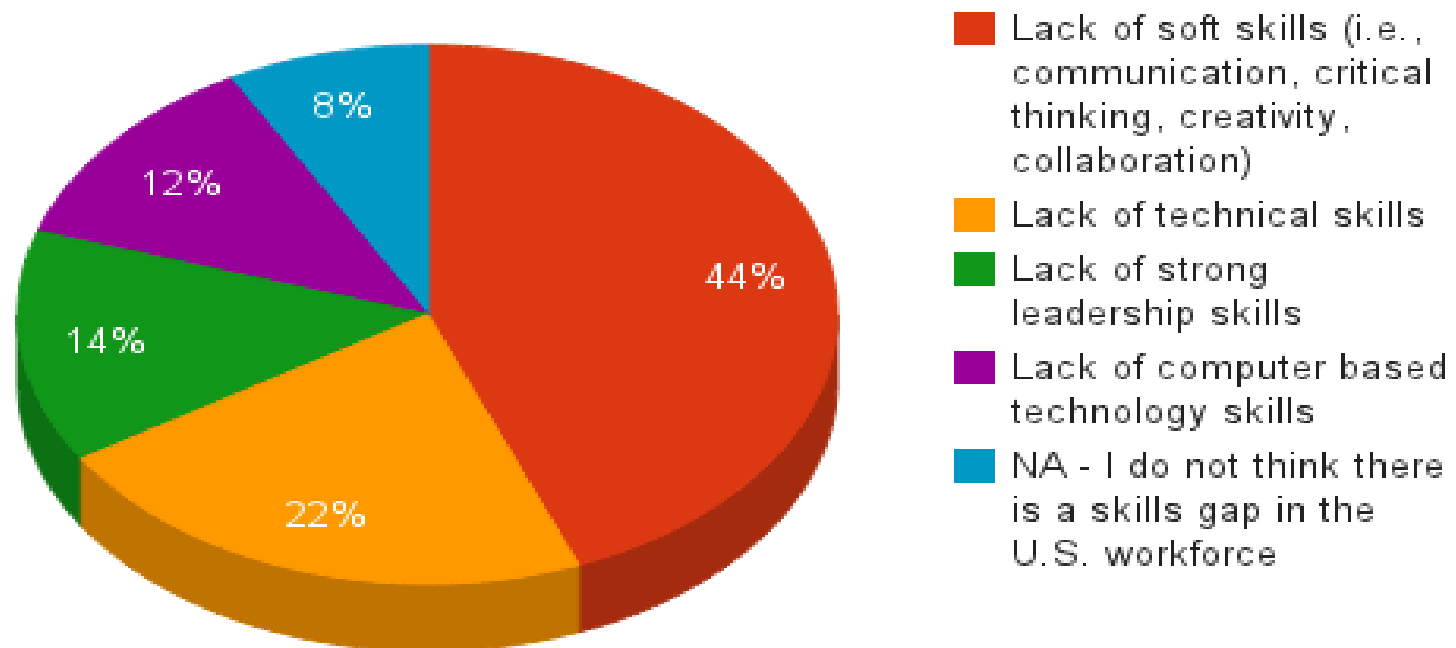


# Outline

- Why Focus on Business Engagement?
- Business Engagement & Workforce Programs
- Models
- Goals and Outcomes
- SJI's Approach
- Questions

# Why Business Engagement?

Which of the following do you feel BEST defines the "gap" in the U.S. workforce skills gap?



SOURCE: ADECCO



# Why Business Engagement?

- Employer relationships are beneficial at every stage of the educational process
- Labor market: Employers and educators cannot accomplish their goals alone
- Economic climate:
  - Rapid growth in technology
  - High-skill requirements
  - Mismatch between employer needs and worker skills

# Business Engagement & Partnerships with Workforce Programs

## Engaged Businesses

- Find qualified job applicants
- Reduce costs
- Address training/service needs
- Diversity goals
- Social responsibility objectives

## Workforce Programs

- Help participants find jobs
- Help participants gain skills and experience
- Build knowledge of industries and occupations
- Establish credibility and access networks

Source: <http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/2000552-The-Goals-and-Dimensions-of-Employer-Engagement-in-Workforce-Development-Programs.pdf>

# Business Engagement Approach

- *Active* business engagement vs. advisory participation
- High-impact
- Understand employers' needs specific to their business/industry
- Partnerships:
  - assure programs/trainings meet the needs of industry
  - provide work-based experiences for job seekers

**Sources:**

<http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/publications/materials/A-Resource-Guide-to-Employer-Engagement-011315.pdf>  
[https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/acp/Engaging\\_Employers\\_IssueBrief.pdf](https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/acp/Engaging_Employers_IssueBrief.pdf)

# Moving the Partnership Forward

- Frame partnership to prioritize business need
- Develop menu of options for engagement
- Encourage employers to appoint a specific contact
- Develop measurable criteria for successful engagement

**Sources:**

<http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/Employer-Engagement-Toolkit-092315.pdf>

<http://www.jff.org/initiatives/greenways/employer-engagement-toolkit-placement-partners>

# JFF Employer Engagement Model

	New Relationship		Working Relationship		Strategic Partnership	
	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V	
Key employer role	Advising	Capacity-building	Co-designing	Convening	Leading	
Stage of relationship	Initial contact / new relationship	Establishing trust and credibility	Working relationship	Trusted provider and collaborator	Full strategic partner	
Activity examples	Discuss hiring needs, skills, competencies; advise on curricula; contract training; hire graduates	Job site tours; speakers; mock interviews; internships; needs assessment; loan/donate equipment; recruiting	Curriculum and pathway development; adjunct faculty and preceptors	College-employer sectoral partnerships	Multi-employer / multi-college partnerships	

**Source:** Wilson, R. (n.d.). 5 LEVELS OF EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT. Retrieved from [http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:GtqaolC3x4IJ:www.jff.org/sites/default/files/publications/materials/A-Resource-Guide-to-Employer-Engagement\\_1PAGE-062316.pdf&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us](http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:GtqaolC3x4IJ:www.jff.org/sites/default/files/publications/materials/A-Resource-Guide-to-Employer-Engagement_1PAGE-062316.pdf&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us)



# Jewish Vocational Service Employer Engagement Model

- Tracking continuum of activities
- Strategy used *throughout the organization*
- Clear messaging and processes
- Use a tracking tool and review on regular basis

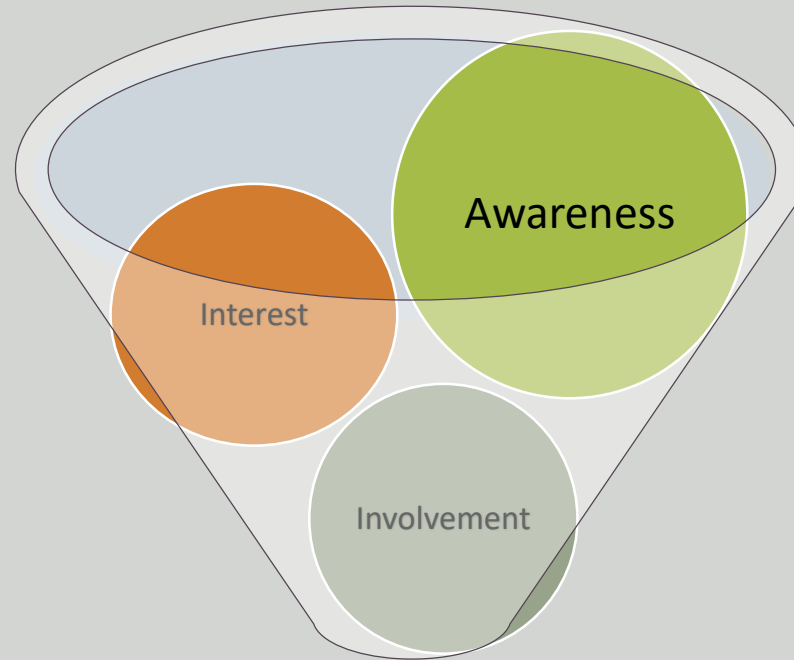
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<http://ww1.insightcced.org/uploads/nnsppresentations/Employer-Engagement-at-JVS.pdf>

# SJI Business Partnership Goals

- Establish a clear Business Partnership strategy
- Develop a process and organization message
- Utilize a database to track business engagement
- Appoint an in-house, Business Partnership Champion

# The Funnel Model



**Commitment**

*Source:* <http://commcorp.org/resources/strategic-employer-engagement-building-dynamic-relationships-with-employers-in-teen-young-adult-employment-programs/>

# Where to Start

- Identify contact and begin with an email
- In person meeting is best
- Respect their time and schedules
- Consistent person in Business Engagement role

# Structure for Meeting

- Identify business agenda
- Business needs pitch vs. community needs pitch
- Be prepared, know your employer — their industry, competitors, current job openings

# The Initial Meeting

- Listen more than talk
- Keep to time schedule
- Provide meeting follow-up with how you will proceed
- Promote your organization as a community resource
- Be an advisor
- Ask for participation

# Business Engagement Summary

- Research your employers to select the right partners
- Cast a wide net within the company
- Be solutions-focused instead of program-focused
- Bring value to the table
- Cultivate and *maintain* relationships
- Build on business networks

# Sources Cited

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Slide 6 <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/2000552-The-Goals-and-Dimensions-of-Employer-Engagement-in-Workforce-Development-Programs.pdf>

Slide 7 Spaulding, S., & Martin-Caughey, A. (2015, December 14).

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*Slide 15* <http://www.aspenwsi.org/resource/employer-engagement-views-from-sector-skills-academy-alumni>

*Slide 16* <http://www.aspenwsi.org/resource/employer-engagement-views-from-sector-skills-academy-alumni>



**Questions?**