

February 2019

## **Implementing Evidence-Based Career Pathways: A Case Study of the Saint Alphonsus Health System and the Treasure Valley Health Careers Council**

Authors: James Guest, Ph.D.

Technical Guidance and Editing: Bill Guest

This case study discusses key stages in Saint Alphonsus Health Systems' development of three career pathways projects with community partners in Boise, Idaho. The case study unfolds historically, beginning with establishing the vision, organizing stakeholders and project teams, and thinking through a model of career navigation. It also discusses the lead employer's adoption of an evidence-based selection process, the use of job analysis to define job-relevant competencies, and the use of evidence-based career coaching. The conclusion offers an ideal model of the stages of regional progress toward these career pathways that is supported by the experiences reported in the rest of the study.

This case study documents a regional sector initiative and is a companion document to our research briefs. Each research brief is one in a series to support regional implementations of **Talent Supply Chain Management (TSCM)** published by Metrics Reporting, Inc. (MRI). The first page of each brief includes a summary of the topic along with publication date, title, authors, and suggested citation. The last page of each brief is an appendix that provides a one-page overview of the essential elements of TSCM. Pages two through eleven are the body of the brief. Each brief provides a pragmatic summary of one important element of TSCM. In addition to the research briefs we also publish three guidebooks that are available at Amazon.com.

- The **Stakeholder Guidebook** provides step-by-step guidance for creating local and regional initiatives around demand-driven, evidence-based career pathways.
- The **Career Navigation System Guidebook** provides step-by-step guidance for practitioners that defines and specifies components of demand-driven, evidence-based career pathways including the 7-step career pathway model, coaching, and profiles.
- The **Talent Excellence System Guidebook** provides an introduction to Talxcellenz® processes and tools for job analysis and validation studies to support robust demand-driven, evidence-based career pathways.

Suggested Citation: Guest, James (January 2019). Implementing Evidence-Based Career Pathways: A Case Study of the Saint Alphonsus Health System and the Treasure Valley Health Careers Council. Talxcellenz® Case Study. Metrics Reporting, Inc. Published at [www.metricsreporting.com](http://www.metricsreporting.com).

## Implementing Evidence-Based Career Pathways: A Case Study of the Saint Alphonus Health System and the Treasure Valley Health Careers Council

Saint Alphonus Health System (SAHS) is a four-hospital health system within Trinity Health. Saint Alphonus is a faith-based, Catholic ministry and not-for-profit health system serving the people of southwestern Idaho, eastern Oregon and northern Nevada. Anchored by the only Level II Trauma Center in the region, the health system aims to deliver high quality care to the critically ill and injured patients with compassion and respect.

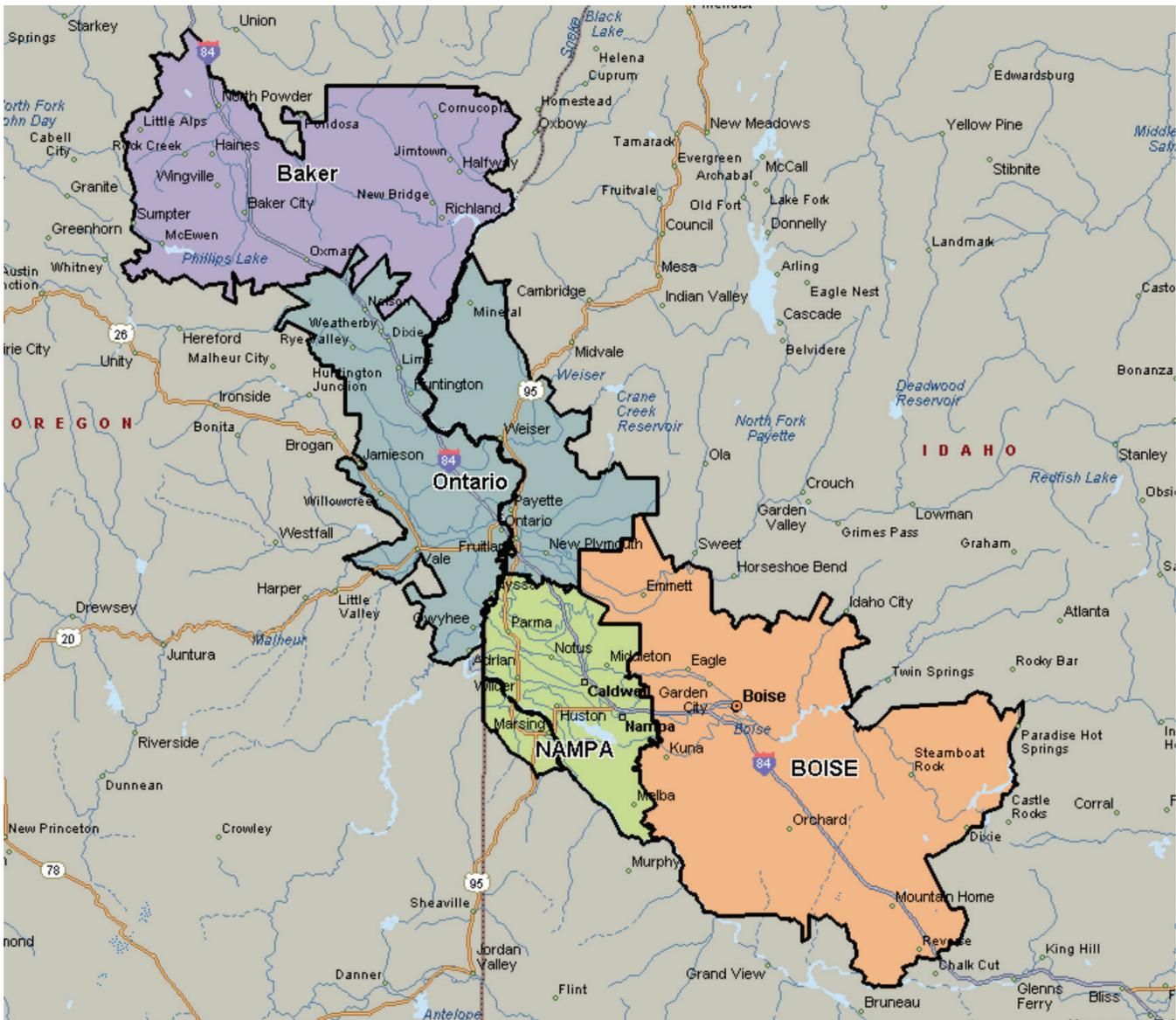


Figure 1: Saint Alphonus Medical Group (SAMG) Service Area.

**Saint Alphonus Health System (SAHS) Key Facts**

- 4 hospitals
- 27,235 inpatient admits
- 4,903 colleagues
- 72 SAMG clinics
- 726,015 outpatient visits
- 469 employed providers
- 628 licensed beds
- 653,174 physician clinic visits
- 1,514 medical staff
- 103,442 emergency visits
- \$937M operating revenue
- \$55.1M community contributions

*Breakout Box: SAHS Key Facts*

This case study presents a summary of how Saint Alphonus and their community partners developed three evidence-based career pathway projects so that the hospital has a pipeline of reliable talent and individuals have a clear path to a good job. The summary is presented historically, presenting major milestones in sequence, in order to show how projects can fruitfully develop and expand as partners in the region build trust and leverage previously unrecognized assets.

The critical discussions that guided our work over eighteen months covered the following the topics and milestones:

1. Establishing the Vision
2. The Stakeholder Workshop
3. The Career Navigation Workshop
4. Using Evidence-Based Selection
5. Confirmatory Job Analysis
6. Using Evidence-Based Career Coaching

## **1. Establishing the Vision**

The Treasure Valley region around Boise is the economic center of Idaho and Saint Alphonus Health System is one of its leading anchor employers. Saint Alphonus has the region’s only Level II Trauma Center, which recognizes a dedication to providing the highest quality, most optimal care for all critically ill and injured patients.

In July 2017, Saint Alphonus began to consider some compelling reasons to rethink how they source and hire the talented individuals that serve the Treasure Valley region in roles throughout the hospital.

It is well understood that healthcare is among the fastest growing sectors in the American economy. Idaho DOL projects that from 2014–2024 Healthcare Support roles will increase by 2.1% annually, and Healthcare Practitioners and technical jobs will increase at 1.8% annually. When we factor in replacements as well, that translates to a need for more than 14,700 individuals to fill practitioner and support roles and more than 8,300 healthcare support roles through 2024.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This data was presented by IDOL to community partners.

Saint Alphonsus therefore saw a need to create a comprehensive approach to sourcing and hiring talent. Currently, too much of the work is done in silos and there is no traction for the community to meet these needs in a regionally coordinated way. Saint Alphonsus wanted to find a way to invite community partners to be a part of something greater – to work on a regional approach to advancing competency-based sourcing and hiring methods.

## **Sector Strategies**

Saint Alphonsus decided to take a sector-strategic approach. Workforce sector strategies organize a group of employers and stakeholders in a specific industry sector in a specific region or “labor shed” to develop the supply of talent for their industry in their region. The US public workforce system operates through the 50 states, which each have a department of labor and a public workforce system consisting of independent workforce agencies as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Effective sector strategies in a demand-driven workforce system are employer-led, include a broad group of stakeholders, and are facilitated by a “backbone organization” that provides at least one staff member to facilitate the work. This is the framework Saint Alphonsus wanted to adopt.

As Heather Sprague, who kickstarted the effort as CHRO, explained, “taking a regional approach to developing talent provides a strong foundation for the medical excellence, innovation, and collaboration that makes the overall care patients receive that much better.” After internal deliberations, Saint Alphonsus brought together regional stakeholders and presented a vision statement.

## **Health Career Pathways Vision**

*Our goal is to create an innovative and transformative career pathways program designed to connect education and training strategies and support services that enable individuals to secure industry-relevant certifications and to obtain employment within an occupational area that enables advancement to higher levels of employment.*

*Our program will offer an efficient and customer centric approach to training and education by successfully articulating the necessary adult basic education, occupational training, post-secondary education, career/academic advising, and supportive services to enter and progress in a career.*

*We will collaborate with the leading organizations within our community and work together to create a comprehensive career pathing model for the people we serve. We will leverage Hope Street Group’s Health Career Pathways Network to assist us on this journey. Our collaboration and partnership will help us to build a regional talent supply chain that benefits St. Alphonsus and the community we serve.*

*This vision was accepted by the attendees, and we set to making arrangements for regular monthly meetings, beginning with a stakeholder workshop. We made a decision to refer to this body of community partners as the Treasure Valley Health Careers Council (TVHCC).*

## **2. Stakeholder Workshop**

The Stakeholder Workshop was an all-day affair. From 8 am to 5 pm, representatives from Saint Alphonsus, Boise State University, College of Western Idaho, Idaho Department of Labor and other state agencies, as well as many other community partners engaged in general conversations about the set of decisions we need to make together in order for our career pathways to function efficiently for the individuals we hope to place with Saint Alphonsus.

We covered topics such as:

- The primary and secondary stakeholders
- Collective impact strategy
- The importance of reliable supply-demand calculations and labor market data
- An evidence-based approach to defining job-related competencies
- A 7-step career pathway model
- The role of evidence-based career coaching
- Career portfolios and the evidence that identifies a high-quality candidate
- Sustainable funding strategies for the sector initiative

On the basis of these discussions, we began to organize some project teams, very broad work plans, and how to facilitate continuous communication. The major outcomes from the meeting and follow-up discussions included:

- Identifying priority jobs and projects (and the two or three most compelling)
- Identifying lead employer contacts for each project team
- A draft project team charters and executive summaries of each project

### **Initial Project Teams**

Over the course of a few additional monthly meetings, department managers and talent acquisition staff from Saint Alphonsus worked with community partners to sort into teams focusing on specific projects. Project team charters that outlined the purposes, goals, and necessary key leadership roles were drafted and then reviewed by the teams. We quickly settled on three projects centering on needs identified by Saint Alphonsus.

**Project 1: Environmental Services Job Family (EVS):** This team set out to create a robust pipeline of high-quality talent for EVS positions and opportunities for advancement via the Certified Health Environmental Service Technicians (CHEST) program. CHEST is a national development program that offers incumbent environmental service employees the chance to advance their knowledge and skills so that they can better serve patients as well as earn higher wages. Employees who earn the CHEST credential meet predetermined criteria for safety, public health, and patient protection. Saint Alphonsus decided to work with IDOL to implement the program as a Registered Apprenticeship – the first of its kind in the country. Sub-steps included:

- Assess supply-demand for business case
- Define occupational competencies and technical skills
- Define foundational competencies
- Identify ideal cohort size and timeline for training

**Project 2: Customer Service Job Family (CS):** This team set out to create a robust pipeline of high-quality talent for our CS positions and opportunities for advancement, including call center, patient registration, centralized scheduling, access center and patient service representatives. The project involved working with schools to put together a curriculum that covered a broad set of skills that would make entry into any one of these jobs possible. Sub-steps included:

- Assess supply-demand for business case
- Define occupational competencies and technical skills
- Define foundational competencies
- Define quality credentials
- Identify schools to deliver the program

**Project 3: Internship and Externships:** This team sought to implement highly effective internship and externship opportunities so that the hospital builds relationships, provides an adequate number of clinical placements, and attracts top graduates from community partners. Beyond their own interest, Saint Alphonsus wanted to connect with at least one other major hospital system and work together to assess opportunities within the community for student placement. Sub-steps included:

- Identify programs today that have a waiting list for jobs in area
- Identify best tools and practices – national trends
- Identify how to get an earlier offer for top candidates
- Work with schools on software program for scheduling that is multidisciplinary and bi-directional

## **Collective Impact**

Treasure Valley Health Careers Council (TVHCC) stakeholders used the Collective Impact model to structure our work. After discussion, community partners agreed to the following items under the model's five major criteria:

### **Common Agenda**

- We will build a collaborative partnership which will help us create a regional talent supply chain benefiting the community we serve.

### **Shared Measures**

- Start in education program
- Complete education program
- Attract and hire top candidates
- Track and report diversity
- Track and report first-year retention
- Advancement at 2-year point

### **Mutually Reinforcing Activities**

- Identify and engage appropriate stakeholders
- Calculate supply-demand and establish a resource team
- Identify creative solutions for hard to fill jobs
- Identify funding sources and establish braided funding opportunities

### **Continuous Communication**

- Monthly meetings and appropriate supporting communications (e.g. regular leadership calls)

### **Backbone Organization**

- The Learning Resource Center at Boise State University

### 3. Career Navigation Workshop

In regions across the country, career pathways are emerging as a leading workforce strategy. A career pathway is an integrated collection of programs and services intended to develop individuals’ core academic, technical, and employability skills and to provide them with continuous education, training, and placement in high-demand, high-opportunity jobs. Three departments of the federal government signed a joint letter on career pathways in 2012 and over a dozen departments signed and reissued the joint letter in 2016. This letter is aligned with the major Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) legislation. Metrics Reporting and Hope Street Group brought their experience developing career pathways with them to the Treasure Valley.<sup>2</sup>

Through previous work with Trinity Health in West Michigan and with the Manufacturing and Health Career Pathways Networks funded by Hope Street Group, Metrics Reporting has framed processes, tools, technology, and data frameworks into a participant-focused, 7–step model.



Figure 2: Diagram of the 7-Step Career Pathway Process

With some preparation and follow-up activities built around it, this 7-Step model tracks the participants’ progress through an evidence-based career pathway and helps community partners locate their own work and services in relation to it.

We held another all-day workshop to discuss the model step-by-step. The 7-Step model helped facilitate conversations and agreements among regional stakeholders as they developed and revised their project plans in light of it.

#### Addressing the need for a Pre-Apprenticeship Program for Environmental Services

While discussing the model, it quickly came to light that immigrant populations are an important talent pool for entry-level jobs, especially in Environmental Services. One of the barriers in a

<sup>2</sup> [CareerSTAT](#) and [RFUMS](#) case studies links.

hospital setting, however, is the importance of English language skills. Aside from language skills needed to perform specialized job duties, Environmental Services professionals are often patient-facing and find themselves serving as guides for visiting family members as well.

Our partners at College of Western Idaho (CWI) saw an opportunity to draw on their English as a Second Language program and Basic Skills Education program to design a pre-apprenticeship program that prepares individuals in need of language training to enter the Saint Alphonsus CHEST Apprenticeship program. And our partners at the International Rescue Commission (IRC) serve a large population of refugees and immigrants eager for the opportunity. “The partnership between IRC, CWI, and Saint Alphonsus has worked really well because each organization brings different resources to the table, and all are invested in helping members of the Treasure Valley gain the skills needed to enter into and advance in a healthcare career,” says Molly Valceschini (Career Pathways Senior Specialist, International Rescue Commission).

We decided to split the Environmental Services project into two distinct pieces – a Pre-Apprenticeship program and the CHEST Apprenticeship program:

(1) Pre-Apprenticeship Specific Activities

- Identify basic skills assessments
- Design pre-apprenticeship curriculum
- Identify career coaches that will be trained by Easterseals-Goodwill
- Align with employer defined requirements for placement in EVS

(2) CHEST Apprenticeship Program Specific Activities

- Saint Alphonsus aligns internal training and development for EVS to the Certified Health Environmental Services Technician (CHEST) certification program from the American Hospital Association (AHA).
- Train CHEST certified instructors
- The CHEST certification is not a hiring requirement, but the outcome of the program for incumbent employees

The resulting Environmental Services pre-apprenticeship class, held twice a week at Saint Alphonsus, focuses on language and career development. Students in the class receive 80 hours of instruction and training including English language acquisition and literacy, job task and soft-skill training, and career navigation skills. As Trevi Hardy (supervisor for College of Western Idaho’s English as a Second Language (ESL) and Career Pathways Program) explains, “the class we’ve developed is more than ESL because students are health-career motivated and the curriculum is targeted to achieve their goals. It has a direct impact on their lives.”

## **4. Evidence-Based Selection**

We have focused so far on establishing connections between Saint Alphonse and their regional partners. But within the organization, selecting the right candidate is one of the most important decisions they make as an employer. Saint Alphonse wanted to adopt internal procedures that promote consistency in hiring by ensuring that employees in the same role use similar methods to seek information, integrate it into a view of the candidate, and translate that view into a hiring decision.

The evidence-based selection process (EBSP) leverages quantitative data in order to reduce bias (conscious or unconscious prejudice) and noise (factors unrelated to job performance) in the process. This involves several considerations:

- Everyone involved in the selection process should have the same understanding of the job groups
- There should be valid selection criteria for each job group
- There should be a rigorous process with valid and reliable selection tools
- Everyone involved in a hiring decision should be looking at the candidate holistically and scoring using a compensatory model
- The organization should be collecting outcome data to improve the valid selection criteria, scoring model, and selection tools over time
- The organization should provide training, support, and tools to reduce bias

A process like this has been developed and implemented at Mercy Health in west Michigan. Mercy Health, like Saint Alphonse, is a ministry of Trinity Health, and Boise's CHRO Heather Sprague was a part of the design team in west Michigan at the beginning. EBSP uses job grouping, job analysis and validation, and established practices from Industrial Psychology to develop valid selection criteria. Results in west Michigan over several years include:

- 23% reduction in turnover
- 16% reduction in time to fill
- Diversity of the workforce doubled

Jeff Greene (Director of Talent Acquisition, Saint Alphonse) was impressed by the process and its results. "I've seen how Mercy Health's fair, objective, data-driven EBSP has improved the quality of hires, reduced first-year turnover, and increased workforce diversity. We are excited to replicate the process here at Saint Alphonse as it helps to further our mission and future business objectives."

## Evidence-Based Selection | Better Decision Making

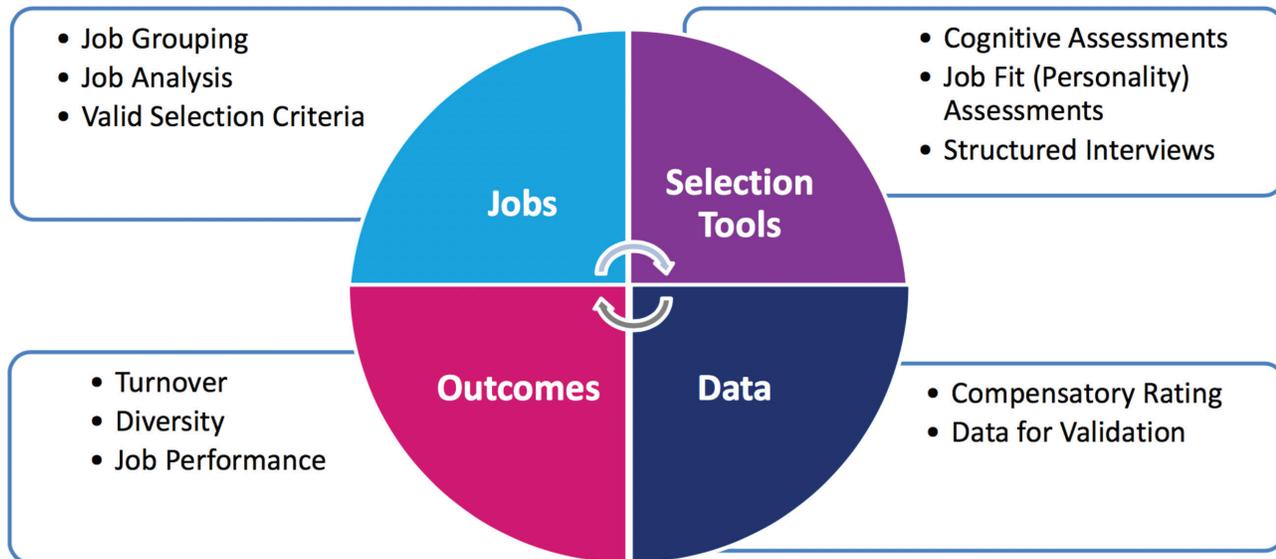


Figure 3: Matrix of mutually reinforcing elements of Evidence-Based Selection.

### 5. Confirmatory Job Analysis

Job analysis played an important role in defining competencies related to job performance for the purposes of evidence-based selection at Saint Alphonsus and for developing curriculum and training among education and community partners. At Saint Alphonsus, Metrics Reporting, Inc. (MRI) used a Confirmatory Job Analysis process to define job-related competencies for the Environmental Services and Customer Services job families.

Job analysis (sometimes also known as work analysis) is a family of procedures used to identify the content of a job in terms of the activities involved in the work, the competencies or attributes of the individuals that do the job, or the job requirements needed to perform the work activities. Job analysis provides detailed information to organizations that helps them determine which potential or incumbent employees are the best fit for specific jobs.

In Confirmatory Job Analysis, we use O\*NET data gathered and organized by MRI tools to clarify occupational and foundational competencies that define the things individuals need to know and be able to do at work. The O\*NET is a project of the U.S. Department of Labor and the nation's largest database for job-related information. While open and easy to access, the O\*NET model contains hundreds of competency elements of knowledge, skills, abilities, work styles, and more that are difficult to take in at a glance. MRI tools and processes organize and present the data in a way that is useful for job analysts.

The purpose of job analysis is to take a general view of a family of jobs. The Environmental Services job family simply combined two job codes, and the Customer Services job family combined seven codes. In each case, we sought to identify the essential core competencies of each job family.

### **SME Sessions**

Metrics Reporting began by doing the background prep-work using the O\*NET. We held separate Subject Matter Expert (SME) sessions for each job family at Saint Alphonsus. The SMEs were all incumbent employees with relevant experience in the jobs. In the session, we presented three key pieces of information that we wished for them to assess, to alter those documents as necessary, and to confirm that the competencies we have identified are an accurate description of the work they do. Various community partners were invited to observe the sessions, but we requested that that only the SMEs comment on the materials. The three documents we reviewed were:

- A detailed list of occupational competencies (a task list of about 50-70 items), which were confirmed or edited as necessary
- A list of foundational competencies, which were rated according to importance on a five-point scale
- A list of tools and technology used by incumbents in the ordinary course of their work, edited as necessary

Each SME session typically took about three hours from start to finish. We see the job analysis process as collective work that is inclusive of employers, education & training providers, and community partners. Each session results in a report that serves as documentation for the employer and that can be used by partners.

The results of the job analyses were then used in a couple of different ways:

**Employer:** Job analysis provides an accurate picture of job-relevant competencies, which can be helpful for revising under- or over-specified job descriptions. The job analysis also supports the development of an evidence-based selection process (EBSP) by defining job-related competencies that can be measured with assessments or structured interview techniques. Finally, job analysis provides the information that can help Human Resources draw new connections between job families and develop internal career pathways from entry-level to middle-skills jobs and beyond. Cathy Miller (Manager, Healthcare Resource Center at Saint Alphonsus) commented “Engaging subject matter experts from our customer service departments in job analysis has enabled us to clearly and accurately communicate our requirements to educators.”

**Education and Training:** There are two main ways that education and training providers benefitted from the job analysis: (1) by participating in the job analysis process, and (2) reviewing the contents of the job analysis reports and incorporating the confirmed competencies into

## CASE STUDY *Metrics Reporting, Inc.*

existing education and training. Documenting and clearly communicating the competencies that are job related enables education & training providers to improve programs by appropriately focusing competency development and occupational training on areas that are related to job performance. Our partners at College of Western Idaho, for example, used the occupational competency or task list generated by the Environmental Services job analysis to inform the skills-based learning exercises in their Pre-Apprenticeship program.

Boise - Customer Service - Occupational Competencies Based on O*NET Generalized Work Activities (GWAs)						
KEY:	Major Groups	Minor Groups	Generalized Work Activities (GWAs)	Intermediate Work Activities (IWAs)	Detailed Work Activities (DWAs)	O*NET Tasks (Supporting Details)
<b>Information input: Where and how are the information and data gained that are needed to perform this job?</b>						
<b>Looking for and Receiving Job related Information: How is information obtained to perform this job?</b>						
<b>Getting information</b>						
<b>Gather information from physical or electronic sources</b>						
<b>1. Search files, database or reference material to obtain needed information.</b>						
<i>Conduct searches to find needed information using sources as the internet.</i>						
<i>Consult sources such as rate books, manuals, or insurance company representatives to determine specific charges or information such as rules, regulations, or government tax and tariff information.</i>						
<i>Review files, records, and other documents to obtain information to respond to requests.</i>						
<b>2. Interview employees, customers, or others to collect information.</b>						
<i>Interview patients or their representatives to identify problems relating to care.</i>						
<i>Interview patients to complete documents, case histories, or forms such as intake or insurance forms.</i>						
<b>Monitor Processes, Materials, or Surroundings: Monitoring and reviewing information from materials, events, or the environment to detect or assess problems.</b>						
<b>3. Monitor medical facility activities to ensure adherence to standards or regulations.</b>						
<i>Review records for completeness, accuracy, and compliance with regulations.</i>						
<b>Identify and Evaluate Job-Relevant Information: How is information interpreted to perform this job?</b>						
<b>Identifying Objects, Actions, and Events: Identifying information by categorizing estimating, recognizing differences or similarities, and detecting changes in circumstances or events.</b>						
<b>Inspecting Equipment, Structures, or Material: Inspecting equipment, structure, or materials to identify the cause of errors or other problems and/or defects.</b>						
<b>Estimating the Quantifiable Characteristics of Products, Events, or information: Estimating sizes, distances, and qualities; or determine time, costs, resources, or materials needed to perform a work activity.</b>						
<b>Mental Processes: What processing, planning, problem-solving, decision-making, and innovating activities are performed with job-relevant information?</b>						
<b>Information and Data Processing: How is information processed to perform this job?</b>						
<b>Judging the Qualities of things, services, or people: Assessing the value, importance, or quality of things or people.</b>						
<b>Processing information: compiling, coding, categorizing, calculating, tabulating, auditing, or verifying information or data.</b>						
<b>Evaluate the quality or accuracy of data</b>						
<b>4. Check data for recording errors.</b>						
<i>Compute, record, and proofread data and other information such as records and reports.</i>						
<b>5. Verify accuracy of financial or transactional data.</b>						
<i>Verify accuracy of billing data and revise any errors.</i>						
<b>6. Sort mail.</b>						
<i>Collect, sort, distribute, or prepare mail, messages, or courier deliveries.</i>						
<i>Open, sort, and route incoming mail, answer correspondence, and prepare outgoing mail.</i>						
<b>7. Compile data or documentation.</b>						
<i>Compile and record medical charts, reports, or correspondence.</i>						
<i>Compile reports of cost factors; such as labor, production, storage, or equipment.</i>						
<i>Compile, copy, sort, and file records of office activities, business transactions, and other activities.</i>						
<b>8. Reconcile records of sales or other financial transactions.</b>						
<i>Resolve discrepancies in accounting records.</i>						
<b>9. Prepare cash for deposit or disbursement.</b>						
<i>Collect, count, and disburse money, do basic bookkeeping, and complete banking transactions.</i>						
<b>Evaluating information to determine compliance standards: Using relevant information and individual judgement to determine whether events or processes comply with laws, regulations, or standards.</b>						
<b>Examine materials or documentation for accuracy or compliance.</b>						
<b>10. Proofread documents, records, or other files to ensure accuracy.</b>						

Figure 4: Partial task list for the customer services job family developed for a healthcare employer. The list is organized according to the O\*NET taxonomy. Numbered items are Detailed Work Activities (DWAs), which are usually common to all job codes in our job family; and white items are example tasks that are often specific to one or another of the particular job codes in the job family. For that reason, MRI's process defines occupational competencies at the DWA level.

## **6. Evidence-Based Career Coaching**

The same competency information provided by job analysis that is used to inform selection processes can also be used for development and career coaching decisions. Evidence-based career coaching leverages similar kinds of quantitative applicant data used in evidence-based selection in order to inform and plan individuals' career choices and development decisions. Instead of using this data to select the best candidate, we use it to train and coach individuals, building the supply of talent in the region. Skills addressed in coaching sessions include: interpersonal skills, team work, motivation, communication, problem solving, professionalism, planning & organization, human resources, observation & coaching, performance management & professional development, and business communication.

TVHCC partners are already using evidence-based career coaching in other projects. Easterseals-Goodwill was one of three Goodwill sites selected to participate in the GoodPaths pilot (2017-present). Hope Street Group and Metrics Reporting contributed to the design with Goodwill Industries International in Rockville, MD, and the selection of Easterseals-Goodwill Northern Rocky Mountain as a test site was a stroke of good fortune it made sense to take advantage of. GoodPaths is a career navigation initiative aimed at the broader retail industry where workers are more likely to leave a job if they are unclear about expectations, if training and advancement opportunities are lacking, and if they don't get positive recognition for their work. GoodPaths is addressing these issues by providing ongoing training and coaching opportunities and additional resources to support advancement and workplace growth. "Retail is an under-appreciated training ground for the kinds of foundational skills individuals need to provide excellent patient care. Our career coaches are excited to help employers use evidence-based career coaching in the healthcare sector and develop cross-sector career pathways," says Tina Johnson (AVP Workforce Development & Behavioral Health, Easterseals-Goodwill Northern Rocky Mountain, Inc.).

The career coaching process has four steps:

- 1. Self-Awareness** – Participants complete psychometric assessments, resumes, career histories, and investigate interests
- 2. Career Exploration** – Participants utilize career interests assessments and explore O\*NET online
- 3. Decision Making** – Participants, using evidence, make informed decisions to select a target job
- 4. Action Planning** – Participants develop an action plan focused on education, training, and work readiness

Laura Tompkins, Program Operations Manager reports "the evidence-based career coaching provided in the GoodPaths program transforms careers and more importantly transforms lives."

## **Implementation and Next Steps**

**Project 1: Environmental Services.** The CHEST Apprenticeship has been formally registered and there are currently 12 incumbent employees undertaking the training. Clark Pope, the manager of the Environment Services department, aims to have his whole department CHEST certified. “For us it all comes back to patient safety,” Clark says. “Sooner or later this kind of training will be mandatory. We want to lead and start providing the highest quality services to protect our patients right now.” Additionally, CWI’s Pre-Apprenticeship has graduated its first cohort – 12 of 15 students completed, with 8 graduates (so far) moving into employment with Saint Alphonsus.

**Project 2: Customer Services.** The Customer Services team, based on their job analysis results, has worked with Boise State University to define a series of four core courses that prepare “preferred candidates” for employment in a variety of jobs in the department. Additional courses can be added based on specialized interests or future career development plans, but the basic core gets individuals in the door with the knowledge that Saint Al’s needs in a short period of time.

BSU has also developed a pilot that incorporates TVHCC strategies, including the use of job analysis in curriculum development and implementation of evidence-based career coaching with coaches trained by partners at Easterseals-Goodwill. In Collective Impact terminology, BSU is taking on the role of the backbone agency for the initiative and is supplying the framework, business model, and data collection capabilities to sustain and grow our initial efforts.

Lillian Smith, Associate Professor and Department Head for the Department of Community and Environmental Health at Boise State University states “We are eager to provide career navigation support so students can identify the optimal job to start their health care career and develop the capability to navigate job changes throughout their careers.”

**Project 3: Internships / Externships.** The partners have planned to implement a two-sided clinical scheduling tool for the start of the Fall semester, 2019. “With the ever-changing Health Care system, we need to look at a multidisciplinary option that is two sided,” says Amy Yun. “Getting students in the right place for their level of learning – the double-sided approach works for us as employers and our education partners.”

Representatives from Saint Alphonsus and Saint Luke’s (the two largest health care providers in the Treasure Valley) have met with school partners to secure their buy-in. Most schools are on board, with a couple that are working through some internal barriers. In October, a kickoff event was held for hospitals and community, sponsored by Saint Alphonsus and Southwest Area Health Education Center (AHEC). This event brought over 60 people to discuss student placement. Decisions concerning software tools are in their final stages.

## Conclusions

**Four Stages of Regional Progress** – System change takes time, but there is a step-by-step path to regional transformation. Our work in Boise has shown how quickly a region can progress. TVHCC progressed from Stage 1 to Stage 3 in under 18 months.

### **Stage One: Organizing the Sector.**

In this stage, regions align stakeholders in the sector around a specific set of job families, agree to a Collective Impact plan, and designate a backbone organization to guide the work. The primary outcomes of Stage One for regions are participation in a Stakeholder Workshop and a written plan for the region based on that workshop.

### **Stage Two: Developing Career Pathways.**

Regions design and work to implement demand-driven career pathways in their target job families. Early in this stage, regions hold a Career Navigation System Workshop and agree to a regional approach to some or all of the following elements: intake processes, career coaching, support services, learning, credentials, or career portfolios. At the end of this stage, regions have implemented functioning career pathway pilots that incorporate career coaching and portfolios.

### **Stage Three: Improving the Pathway with Evidence-Based Competencies**

Regions with operational pilots advance individuals through demand-driven, evidence-based career pathways with elements of evidence-based career coaching and/or career portfolios. They may be exploring job analysis and competency validation.

### **Stage Four: Expanding Evidence-Based Career Pathways.**

Regions at this stage have implemented multiple demand-driven, evidence-based career pathways that deliver substantial quantities of high quality, diverse talent to employers using evidence-based career coaching and evidence-based career portfolios. Job analysis and data collection for validation studies are used to identify and validate competencies across the sector or multiple sectors.

# Demand-Driven Evidence-Based Career Pathways

## The Stages of Regional Progress

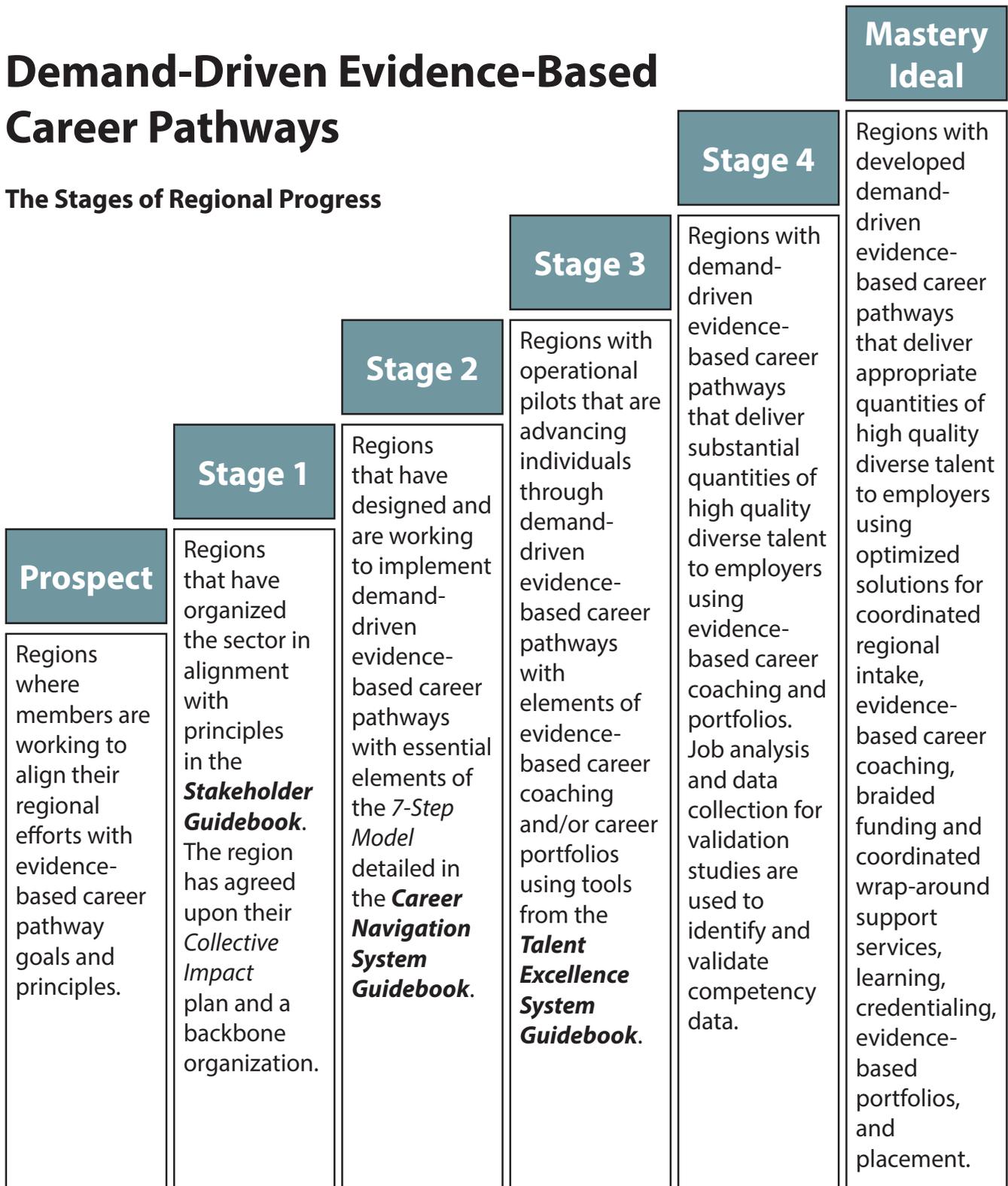


Figure 5: Four Stages of Regional Progress.

The Mastery Ideal in Figure 5 is aspirational, not prescriptive. It sets an ideal standard for continuous improvement. In our vision, a region that has fully transformed its talent supply systems will exhibit nine characteristics.

1. **Key Stakeholders Engaged** – The right organizations and the right people with the right skills and resources are actively engaged in the work.
2. **Collective Impact Plan** – A documented Collective Impact Plan guides the work. For each career pathway project, an executive summary and team charters provide supporting communication and guidance.
3. **Seven Step Model** – The 7-Step career pathway model has been applied to career pathways that lead to jobs known to be in demand on the basis of labor market analysis and employer input.
4. **Evidence-Based Career Coaching** – The evidence-based career coaching model is used to help individuals identify the optimal path forward for them. Multiple organizations (K-12, community colleges, workforce agencies, employers) have trained career coaches and are using the same coaching process.
5. **Job Analysis** – Job analysis and validation studies are used to identify competencies that are measurably related to job performance.
6. **Evidence-Based Career Portfolios** – Evidence-based career portfolios have been defined by employers and are commonly used by individuals to illustrate their job qualifications.
7. **Integrated Technology Platform** – The region uses a common technology platform that brings together common intake systems, rigorous job analysis, career coaching, job seeker skills portfolios and employer talent acquisition in one seamless, integrated technology platform that can be deployed at a regional level.
8. **Funding** – The region has the ability to plan, pursue and secure the funding required for the administration and improvement of the sector initiative.
9. **Benchmarking and Networking** – The region actively participates in national networks to benchmark regional programs against other high-performing sector initiatives in the nation.

The Treasure Valley Health Careers Council looks forward to continuing this work with new career pathway projects in 2019.

Key stakeholders from the TVHCC attended and presented at the Health Connect Conference in New Orleans in October 2018 to begin benchmarking their career pathways initiative with other highly successful sector initiatives. The Health Connect Conference was jointly sponsored by the Hope Street Group's Health Career Pathways Network and the National Fund for Workforce Solutions' CareerSTAT network.

## **Lead Partners**

**Saint Alphonsus Health System** has the region's only Level II Trauma Center, which recognizes a dedication to providing the highest quality, most optimal care for all critically ill and injured patients. Saint Alphonsus is the lead employer in the Treasure Valley Health Careers Council, and CHRO Heather Sprague holds the chair for healthcare sector in the Governor's Workforce Development Commission.

**Hope Street Group** (HSG) is a non-profit whose mission is to increase economic opportunity for all Americans. In March 2016, Hope Street Group convened healthcare systems and leaders from the learning and workforce community at the White House to identify solutions to critical workforce issues in the healthcare industry. In April 2016, HSG launched the Health Careers Pathways Network (HCPN), a nationwide initiative designed to support individuals by advancing demand-driven, competency-based career pathways, with seven founding regions. HCPN promotes tools and practices to reduce job vacancies, increase diversity, decrease first-year turnover, and increase advancement of entry level employees for health care providers by adopting a competency-based approach.

**Metrics Reporting, Inc.** (MRI) develops processes and tools for evidence-based career pathways and employer-driven talent supply chain management systems. MRI has been working for the last decade on the design of regional evidence-base talent supply chains. MRI has been actively involved in developing career pathways into healthcare jobs for a decade in west Michigan. For the last four years, MRI has partnered with the Hope Street Group on the development of their Sync Our Signals initiative.

**Boise State University** (BSU) is designated as a doctoral research institution by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education and offers about 200 programs of study. The Department of Community and Environmental Health (CEH) represents Boise State University's College of Health Sciences in the Customer Services group in the Treasure Valley Health Career Council (TVHCC). With 1600 students, CEH has the largest number of undergraduates at Boise State University. Majors within the Department earn degrees in health studies, health informatics and information management, public health, environmental and occupational health, and health education and promotion. CEH brings expertise in workforce development and Boise State's commitment to relevant educational programs and seamless transfer from community colleges.

**College of Western Idaho** (CWI) expands learning and life opportunities, encourages individual advancement, contributes to Idaho’s economic growth, strengthens community prosperity, and develops leaders. CWI is a comprehensive community college providing higher education programs to residents of Western Idaho. They offer a full range of academic and career-technical courses leading to an Associate of Arts or Science degree, Associate of Applied Science degrees, continuing education, and certificates. CWI also offers Basic Skills Education to help prepare for a GED, Dual Credit for high school students, and fast-track career training for working professionals.

BSU and the CWI represent nearly 60,000 students in the Treasure Valley. The two institutions are close collaborators and have established mechanisms to partner, including articulation agreements and Bronco Connect, a gateway for students transferring from CWI to BSU.

**International Rescue Committee** (IRC) helps people whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by conflict and disaster to survive, recover and gain control of their future. IRC puts in place high-impact, cost-effective solutions that help people affected by crisis. They also use their learning and experience to shape humanitarian policy and practice in ways that improve the lives of more people worldwide.

**Idaho Workforce Development Council** (IWDC) is an independent office under the Governor and was established in October 2017 by Executive Order 2017-13. IWDC is setting the direction for Idaho’s state departments and is a critical partner to organize WIOA funded support services and sustainable, braided funding. Via IWDC, we coordinate with Idaho Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, and other state workforce agencies.

## Appendix

**Talent Supply Chain Management (TSCM)** is a holistic set of solutions that enables employers and regions to build reliable pipelines of high-quality talent to meet their needs. The mission of Metrics Reporting, Inc. (MRI) is to design and implement the best TSCM systems in the world. MRI designs and implements demand-driven, evidence-based career pathways that meet the needs of regional employers and provide a clear path for individuals to prepare for and secure good jobs. There are three essential components of TSCM:

**1. Evidence-Based Selection Process (EBSP)** is a decision-making model that elevates reliable evidence of applicant characteristics that are measurably related to job performance and reduces the use of elements that are not valid predictors of performance.

- Cognitive measures that indicate critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- Personality measures that indicate workplace behavioral skills
- Measures of previous workplace behaviors via structured interviews and references
- Continuous improvement based on talent analytics

**2. Evidence-Based Career Pathways (EBCP)** meet the talent needs of employers and provide clear pathways for individuals to develop the skills to get and keep good jobs.

- Seven-step career pathway model to support career navigation
- Four-step evidence-based career coaching to define and document career plans
- Use career profiles including evidence of skills aligned with employer requirements indicating that an individual is a highly qualified applicant

**3. Support Activities: Sectors, Jobs, Job Families, Job Analysis, and Validation Studies**

Employers need to be organized into sector-based career councils, and job information needs to be gathered, analyzed, and published.

- Regional careers councils are organized for each industry sector to prioritize needs
- Regional competency models create a common language around skills
- Careers councils organize and confirm supply-demand data
- Jobs are aligned with SOC codes and O\*NET codes to leverage occupational information
- Jobs are grouped into job families with common competency requirements
- Consortia-style job analysis engages subject matter experts (SMEs) from employers
- Job information is published with foundational competencies, occupational competencies, tools and technologies lists, and credentials requirements
- Validation studies confirm that hiring requirements are related to job performance

**Bill Guest**

President and Chief Solutions Architect

616.430.0828

[bill.guest@metricsreporting.com](mailto:bill.guest@metricsreporting.com)