Job Quality Competency Guide for National Fund Collaboratives

Introduction

The National Fund believes that good jobs are essential for workers, employers, and their communities.

- For **workers**, good jobs provide: a safe respectful workplace, a livable wage and benefits, support to do their best work, and the opportunity to advance and develop their skills.
- For **employers**, good jobs are a competitive advantage—both to attract and retain the best workers, and to offer the highest-quality customer service and products.
- For the **communities**, good jobs are the foundation of a strong, equitable economy.

Our collaboratives have learned that a unique set of competencies are needed to work with employers to create good jobs through revising internal business practices and job designs. To assist with job quality, collaboratives must have the ability to build a different, closer, and more trusting relationship with employers.

Recognizing that there is a broad range of collaborative capacity across the National Fund network of communities, this document was created as a guide to help current and future collaboratives understand what competencies are needed to do the work, wherever they may be, or aspire to be, on the continuum of systems change.

How to Use this Document

The purpose of this guide is to highlight the competencies or skills that National Fund **Collaboratives** need to embark upon job quality work with employers. The key word here is collaboratives, not specifically the “site directors”. Ensuring that someone has (or is developing) the requisite skills and is deployed accordingly and at the right time for the phase of the work is key to developing high performing collaboratives.

Thus, collaboratives can use this document in the following ways:

- To compare existing collaborative structure/membership/ecosystem/landscape to identify gaps, assess “bench strength” i.e. number of people with similar skills who can backfill for each other, and succession planning for key leadership roles
As a consideration during the hiring process (or professional development planning) for key positions such as Collaborative/Site Leaders, etc. – for new National Fund sites or for existing sites that are undergoing a transition
- As a tool to drive partnership discussions with organizations not currently engaged in the work of your collaborative but are needed to drive outcomes
- As a thought provoker for collaboratives as they seek technical assistance from other National Fund sites or the National Fund national office
- As a marketing/communication tool to illustrate the value of collaboratives to employers and/or other stakeholders

At the end of this document is a table that shows where to find the competencies presented below.

Categories of Competencies
- Executive Influence Skills
- Business Skills
- Industry Operations Knowledge
- Organizational Design and Development
- Talent Acquisition and Management, HR Policies and Practices
- Equity Mindset
- Systems Change Design Skills
- Systems Change Implementation Skills

Detailed Descriptions of Each Category

Executive Influence Skills
- Understand motivations and readiness for change – customer requirements, business results, community impact, peer influence, corporate and/or personal reputation, etc.
- Understand current business plans/strategies – controlled or aggressive growth, business on solid footing or in crisis, etc.
- Tailor approach/message/framing and identify influencer(s) accordingly (know who the key players are and have access to them), how to work with people in power
- Understand how CEO/C-Suite direction translates throughout the organization and how that might impact adoption

Business Skills
- Work at the speed of business
- Understand P&L and balance sheet dynamics and how to add value/create value propositions
- Understand competitive environment and industry trends
- Strategic thinking
- Marketing and branding
Industry Operations Knowledge

- Understand organizational infrastructure and work flows
- Basic business operations for targeted departments in context of workforce needs/issues
- LEAN, Kaizen, and other operational designs/approaches
- Communication and Translation Skills – credibly speak, present and write in their language/translate workforce jargon into business-relatable terms, code switch.
- Understand how operational changes are considered, designed, and implemented
- Where and how to find sector-specific expertise

Organizational Design and Development

- Ownership and management models, including employee ownership, gainsharing, open book management, team or self-managed teams, etc.
- Career ladder options, inside and outside of specific industries
- Organized labor knowledge, relationships and labor/management committee experience where applicable
- Culture and organization design to foster frontline worker continuous learning, innovation, and problem solving, i.e. “Idea Driven Organizations”

Talent Acquisition and Management, HR Policies and Practices

- Employee engagement strategies and assessments (formal and informal) and how to frame results with management
- Job Design Framework and toolkits– how to use them to identify opportunities
- Compensation and benefits policies
- Culture change expertise

Equity Mindset and Actions

- Understand workforce demographics (current and future), disaggregated by race, gender, occupation, wage rate and reasons why current situation exists (history, systems, policies, social norms, etc.)
- Develop strategy and capacity for, and conduct courageous conversations regarding, opportunities to create a more diverse and equitable organization (framing, cultural competence, business case, etc.)
- Develop a plan and gain alignment to address identified issues, specifically in recruiting, retention, advancement, and compensation

Systems Change Design Skills

- 7 Design Elements – Define Success, Define Targeted Population, Design for Greatest Likelihood of Adoption (Diffusability), Specify Incentives, Incentivize Outcomes not Behavior, Secure Commitments Upfront, Listen to the System; then Adapt
- Create MOUs with substance, i.e., explicit responsibilities for all parties, especially employers and access to data
- Develop a sustainability plan
Systems Change Facilitation and Implementation Skills

- Communicate/frame the role and value of the collaborative and the value they provide to the employer
- Employee engagement skills to provide ongoing input, feedback, and co-design of interventions
- Manage project and implement per the design, providing technical assistance when and where needed
- Track and report on results, implement continuous quality improvement
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