NOTES: Aligning Health Employers & Workforce Organizations

A workshop designed to strengthen frontline employee referral partnerships, co-hosted by the Chicagoland Healthcare Workforce Collaborative and Hire Chicago

Thursday 7/9, 2-4pm

Civic Committee, 190 S LaSalle St

Organizations in Attendance:

- Employers:
    - Northwestern Medicine
    - Lurie Children's
    - UChicago Medicine
    - Endeavor
    - Rush
    - Shirley Ryan Ability Lab
- Educators:
    - City Colleges of Chicago
    - Rivet School
    - Accelerate U at National Louis
    - Chicago Public Schools
- Workforce Orgs:
    - Cara
    - Skills for Chicago
    - Safer Foundation
    - National Able
    - North Lawndale Employment Network
    - One on One
    - JumpHire
    - Proactive Community Services
    - Corporate Coalition
    - IDHS/DRS/Workforce Development Unit
    - Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

Part 1: Celebrate Success

1. Success Stories: see slides
2. Discussion: What makes a referral partnership successful?
    - Specific interview feedback
    - Opportunity to submit again post-rejection
    - Identification of specific roles & trainings
    - Opportunities for certification programs provided (eg CNA)
    - Consistent communication
    - Candidates are open to coaching

- Holistic supports for candidates
- Hiring manager buy-in (looking for potential)
- Employer commitment to partnership (even if candidate is not successful)
- Trust & good faith
- Employer is open to learn/ train departments
- Mutual investment - shared ROI

Part 2: Peer Perspectives: Understanding the Disconnect

Focused on #1 challenge from registration survey (see slides): Aligning candidate experience & job requirements.

Attendees sat in peer groups: hospitals, workforce orgs, or educators. They discussed questions below and captured responses on easel pads:

- *Defining challenges:*
  - *What gaps do you most commonly see between candidates and the requirements for open positions? (Top half of easel pad)*
- *Solutioning*
  - *What could we change that would help close that gap? (bottom left of easel pad)*
  - *What could our partners change that would help close that gap? (bottom right of easel pad)*

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">WORKFORCE ORG PEER GROUP #1</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">What gaps do you most commonly see between candidates and the requirements for open positions?
diploma/degree/credential
Specific experience required → disconnect of “entry-level”
Inflexibility of job tasks
Drivers license/ lifting requirements
Required vs. preferred requirements</td></tr>
<tr><td>What could WE change that would help close that gap?
Start conversations/ ask questions
Sharing examples/ tools
Organizations modeling expectations
Sharing data
Advocate w/ creativity, offer training & exposures
Provide trust & grace
Collaborating better together (both)</td><td>What could PARTNERS change that would help close that gap?
Open to changing job descriptions
Processes & feedback
Willingness to advocate internally
Willingness to train/ meet people where they are
Provide trust & grace
Collaborating better together (both)</td></tr>
</table>

WORKFORCE ORG PEER GROUP #2	
What gaps do you most commonly see between candidates and the requirements for open positions? ● Credentials ● Backgrounds ● Direct experience ● Geography + shifts & childcare ● THC ● Job gaps/ tenure- “hopping” ● Digital literacy ● Professionalism	
What could WE change that would help close that gap? ● More soft skills training ● More hard skills training (Epic, BLS, CNA) ○ Fiscally support ○ Act as training provider ● Improve resumes ● Referrals for support services ● Peer learning	**What could PARTNERS change that would help close that gap?** ● Lobby federal drug policy ● Community education re: pathways ● Pay for training before hire/ apprenticeships ● Job shadows ● Manager training ● Peer learning

WORKFORCE ORG PEER GROUP #3	
What gaps do you most commonly see between candidates and the requirements for open positions? ● Level of education ● Experience (expectation vs. realistic) ● Soft skills gaps (ie communication, lack of empathy, availability) ● Technology ● Geographical challenges; Re: schedules	
What could WE change that would help close that gap? ● Incorporating industry/ org specific training & information ● Funding or connecting resources for career pathway ● Bringing in stakeholders, mentors, etc to share knowledge & experience	**What could PARTNERS change that would help close that gap?** ● EMPATHIZE → cultural competencies, re-entry training, etc ● More intentional resources re: career pathways & requirements (ie informationals, fliers, workshops) ● Transportation options to/from key locations

EDUCATOR PEER GROUP #1	
What gaps do you most commonly see between candidates and the requirements for open positions? ● Years of experience/ mismatch in credential and work experience ● Leadership skills and soft skills (reliability, promptness, digital literacy, emotional intelligence, conflict resolution) ● Roles require cross-training and multiple skills or "wearing multiple hats" for entry-level pay ● TIMING! Mismatched expectations around the timing/urgency of being hired into a new role ● Not being able to describe a candidate's own relevant experience/ transferrable skills ● Unclear upskilling pathways after initial roles/ upward mobility	
What could WE change that would help close that gap? ● Recognizing these gaps and being an advocate with partners to make systemic changes ● Ensuring that learners are able to exit the program with work products or tangible results (eg # of 'sticks' for phlebotomy) to bring to interviews ● Creating Career Day/ visibility for what upward mobility and job pathways could look like	**What could PARTNERS change that would help close that gap?** ● Increase pay! Especially entry-level and paid internships; signing or retention bonuses; LIVABLE WAGE ● Tuition assistance and reimbursement ● Intentional collaboration to meet workforce needs (eg advisory boards) ● Clear promotional pathways and career training, upward mobility ● Job flexibility; make it easy for people to succeed

EDUCATOR PEER GROUP #2	
What gaps do you most commonly see between candidates and the requirements for open positions? ● Soft skills: communication- what's work appropriate; when you disagree, what do you do? How to take feedback ○ timeliness ● Communicating about prior relevant experiences ● How to start building these skills in 6-12th grade?	
What could WE change that would help close that gap? ● Training/ toolkit on how to advocate for yourself ● Externship readiness lab ● Mock interviews, how to de-escalate ● Opportunities to practice the soft skills -	**What could PARTNERS change that would help close that gap?** ● Giving feedback throughout the process- no surprises ○ And how to give feedback ● Making expectations really clear about what is needed (both ways)

being prepared, timeliness, email communication ● Make sure we're providing appropriate wrap-around support & feedback	● Near/peer mentor / other people to help navigate politics/ dynamics

EMPLOYER PEER GROUP #1	
What gaps do you most commonly see between candidates and the requirements for open positions? ● Years of experience working in a similar field/position ● Degree requirements (irrelevant for many roles) ● Outdated job descriptions & long process that requires JD revisions ● Preferred ≠ required ○ Competing with other candidates with top preferred ● Lapse in credentials - cost of re-certification ● Transportation ○ Ability to get to main campus/ worksite ○ Pay to park/ cost to work ● Cost of/access to training/ ed programs, degree requirements	
What could WE change that would help close that gap? ● changed/ updated JDs - policy (long-term overhaul) ● Work with partners on ~ top 10 qualifications & skills that are "must have" ● Alignment with fellow healthcare employers on JDs (eg title!) ● Differences in postings & JDs ● Keep human eye & view on screening (avoid AI bias or overlook) - interpersonal connection ● Hiring manager education ● Balance in language choice to reduce bias that comes with "community partner referral"	**What could PARTNERS change that would help close that gap?** ● Partner status update on sourcing status ● Collaborative funding support (barrier education, training)

EMPLOYER PEER GROUP #2
What gaps do you most commonly see between candidates and the requirements for open positions?

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">

- Open/flexible to considering all open roles (especially with volumes)
- Not understanding relevant years of experience
- Quantity vs quality of application
- Understanding the multitude of types of roles across a hospital system

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

What could WE change that would help close that gap?

- Clarity on what is actively open
- Ensure role clarity with partners
- Align on screening depth/ questions

</td><td>

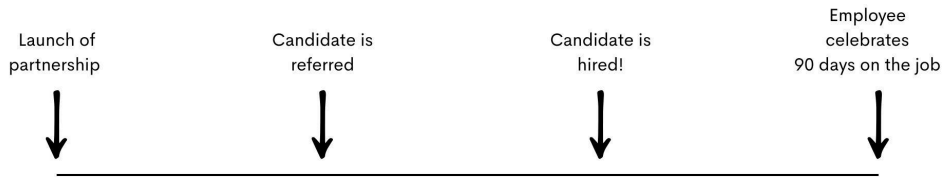
What could PARTNERS change that would help close that gap?

- Don't oversell volume of active candidates
- Ensure candidates are informed, expectations are set
- Screening quality

</td></tr>
</table>

Part 3: Partnership Alignment Lab

Each employer (1-3 reps) will sat with 3-4 workforce reps, with the partnership journey map drawn on an easel pad:



Identifying Challenges & Sharing Perspectives

1. *Employer Challenge Brief: identify 2-3 points on the partnership journey map where you experience the biggest gaps in alignment with workforce partners. Mark them on the map and share those challenges with your group.*
2. *Workforce expert reflection: Choose one of the pain points identified by the employer. Share your perspective about that stage in the partnership journey. What challenges do you face? What has worked well for you?*

Co-Designing Solutions

1. *What might need to shift to address these pain points, ensure a smooth candidate experience, and support successful placements?*
2. *How can we operationalize these shifts in our partnership? Add specific communication, procedure, and workflow touchpoints to the map.*
3. *Where might you hit roadblocks in this operationalization? What would be necessary to put in place to overcome those obstacles?*
4. *At each stage, what would both partners measure to know it's working? Add to map.*

Report-out by employers: Share one new strategy to improve communication, procedure, and

workflow with partners.

Employer report-out highlights

Northwestern Medicine - Retention and communication remain a core issue

- How can we find a solution to get data on candidates and make it more accessible so that we can give the feedback to our current partners
- How do we navigate getting to hiring managers to streamline communication
- Launch of partnership, "as an employer it's overwhelming to know who and how many partners to have"

Rush - better communication with partners

- Clearer clarity on which position they are applying for (acknowledgement that looking at 500 open roles can be overwhelming for candidate)
- Less competition for candidates from the same partner
- Open and honest communication
- Application support and better support of candidates to articulate their transferrable skills (which they support internal candidates)

Lurie Children's - no dedicated WFD team so figuring out how to thoughtfully partner with CBOs, especially when there are other applicants, and we can get hundreds of applicants overnight for some roles

- Thinking about manager ambassadors

Shirley Ryan Ability Lab- supporting interview readiness and being more transparent about what's being assessed

- Communicating what candidates can expect in the process and the timeline
- Really want to ensure there's a positive candidate experience

UChicago Medicine

- Identifying the right solutions for the right problem
- How can we engage Hiring managers up front?
- Gap between talent acquisition and hiring managers (also echoed with NWM)
- How to create a hiring manager feedback loop
- Seen success training for HM to interview in a standardized way

Endeavor

- Navigating institutional partnerships
- Leadership buy in and creating a continuum of communication