

We know the Technical College System is important to workforce development in our state. Think about how to market technical careers...How do we increase the number of students considering technical careers? How can education/business help parents and students understand the opportunities available in technical careers?

1. Present success stories to parents/students/educators and allow them to meet with manufacturing employees and tour local businesses to show case the work environment. Counselors play a vital role. They must be trained to show students the potential of a technical career.

Possible Solution: The Regional Education Center (REC) hosts various opportunities for company tours, including a summer professional development course for teachers interested in learning more about technical careers. The REC created a business handbook, providing all the paperwork needed by both the employer and school.

2. Companies could offer scholarships for students at York Tech.

Possible Solution: York Technical College hosts “TechScholars”. Students in this program receive both employment and paid tuition. The York Tech Foundation offers numerous scholarship opportunities. Apprenticeship Carolina is an option for companies wishing to build their employee pipeline through providing additional training and national certification for employees.

3. Reach students in elementary grades to showcase careers options.

Possible Solution: Junior Achievement is a proven model to inspire young people as entrepreneurs and discover career options. All school districts in our region offer JA programming in elementary grades. Many schools offer career days to expose students to various options.

In Tom and Ron’s presentation, you heard how businesses became directly involved in curriculum and training in a local high school. What can education do to make business feel more integrated and connected to the lesson planning process? What can business do to make themselves more available to the education community?

1. Remove barriers to dual credit partnership between high school and York Tech.

Possible Solution: York Tech is committed to developing sustainable dual enrollment partnerships with the local school districts. They are currently working with several districts to achieve these goals and are very interested in working with all districts in the region.

2. Businesses need to be a part of high school and college curriculum committees.

Possible Solution: Both high schools and technical colleges have separate career cluster advisory committees. These advisory committees are led by business and industry to garner their ideas/support.

3. All 11th grade students will take the Work Keys assessment. Employers need to know what this assessment is and how to use it.

Possible Solution: The REC will play a vital role in communicating information about Work Keys within the local region. The Work Ready Communities initiative is connecting education and business through this national assessment and job profiling.

Academic remediation, for example: reading levels, math skills, comprehension and retention of relevant information, writing and communication, are problem areas for many youth and adults seeking postsecondary education opportunities. How does the need for postsecondary remediation impact higher skill attainment? How do you suggest we improve these levels? How can high schools partner with post-secondary to increase these skills?

1. York Tech uses the COMPASS assessment to place students. This test should be administered to high school students in order to expose areas of weakness early on.

Possible Solution: COMPASS can be administered at any high school upon request to assist students in identifying potential areas of improvement. Schools can contact York Tech to arrange.

2. Students should be taught to “think” to get the answer (how to rationalize).

Possible Solution: Common Core curriculum is intended to help students achieve the answer through discovery/rationalization/research. Teachers are continuously receiving common core training in their schools.

3. Companies should create mentoring partnerships with schools to work with small groups of students.

Possible Solution: Schools welcome the idea of business mentors. The REC can assist in making that connection so employees can work directly with students in need.

Given that there is a significant need for an increased number of employees in the manufacturing sector (shown in Clemson presentation), how do we locally create a plan for increasing the employee pipeline? Discuss the steps that we can take to showcase both STEM and manufacturing careers to our students/under employed.

1. Schools could offer specific “manufacturing career cluster” for students and provide company internships.

Possible Solution: The partnership between York School District and the western York County human resource managers is a terrific example that can be replicated by any industry in any career cluster. The REC is designed to create that type of collaboration between interested parties.

2. Create industry partnerships for students to reach certain certifications early on.

Possible Solution: Students should consider attending their high school career centers. These centers offer industry certifications and connections to postsecondary education. All 11th grade students will take the Work Keys certification assessment starting in 2015, providing them a national credential.

3. Work-based Learning has a direct impact on the number of students who consider that career.

Possible Solution: Each school district has a Work-based Learning Coordinator responsible for facilitating job shadowing and internships for students. The REC can assist companies in making the connection with school personnel.

Please contact the Catawba Regional Education Center for additional information.
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