



THE ASPEN INSTITUTE  

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COLLEGE EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

# The Workforce Playbook: Work-Based Learning

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# Strategy 2: Deliver High-Quality Programs

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**Deliver high-quality programs**  
aligned to regional needs



- When building and restructuring programs, work with employers to define skills then credentials
- **Include work-based learning and other high-impact practices in all program designs**
- Hire and empower excellent workforce leaders
- Create conditions for honest and actionable feedback

# Different Types of Work-Based Learning Serve Different Purposes

LESS INTENSIVE

MORE INTENSIVE



## HANDS-ON, PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

**Description** At the college, equipment, projects, and classroom structures and expectations reflect what students will encounter in the workplace.

- Resource Needs**
- College instructor with technical expertise
  - Up-to-date equipment and facilities
  - Project-based curriculum

## CO-OPS, INTERNSHIPS, AND CLINICALS

Students split their time between classroom learning and workplace-based training. Depending on the arrangement with employers, these may be paid or unpaid.

- College instructor with technical expertise
- Employer mentor for on-site management
- Dedicated time slots or specified projects for student training at the worksite

## LEARN AND EARN AND REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS

Students are simultaneously enrolled in college and employed at a specific company. They learn general skills for their trade in the classroom and employer-specific expectations on the job.

- College instructor with technical expertise
- Employer mentor for on-site management
- Contract for payment arrangements
- Administrative support for navigating registration processes

# Leaders Can Consider the Following Questions When Approaching Work-Based Learning...



**In what environment (classroom, simulator lab, worksite) are different skills and knowledge best taught?** Who is best positioned to teach them: trained classroom teachers or current industry professionals?



**What are existing capacities of employers versus the college?** For example, do employers have the capacity to actively supervise and mentor students on site? Whose equipment is better suited to teaching needed skills?



**Will all students be able to participate in work-based learning opportunities, or are some excluded by design?** For example, if the primary model for work-based learning is a summer internship, will students be paid by the employer? Will they receive enough pay to supplant wages from other sources? If not, will this practice automatically exclude students who cannot forego summer income?

# Case Study: Creative Resource Sharing for Work-Based Learning

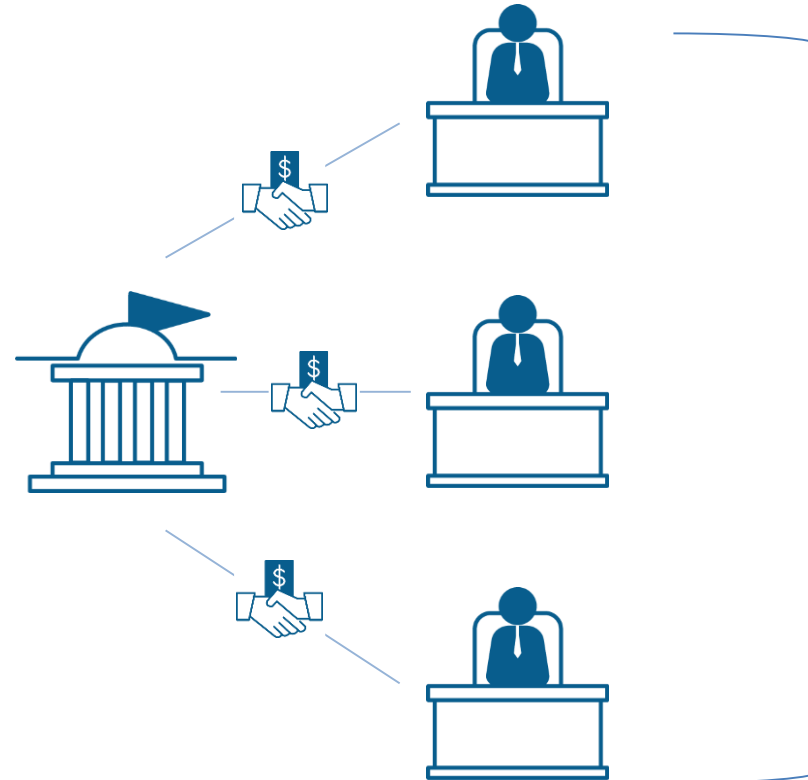
At San Jacinto College, maritime program leaders puzzled over how to teach hands-on skills to students ...



Needed to happen well before students participated in paid internships



Sending students onto boats was logistically difficult for employers and students



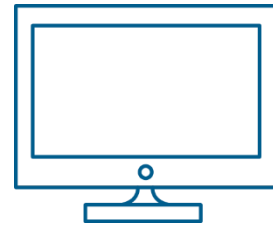
... so the college created an on-campus simulation lab with investment from employer partners.

- Enabled instructors to teach important skills the students would use on a real vessel
- Secured employer buy-in to a well-trained talent pipeline
- Employers could use facilities to help incumbent workers refresh their skills

# Thank You!



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