THE FUTURE OF WORKFORCE LEADERSHIP:
WEADERSHIP

A Guide for Workforce Leaders, Policy Makers, Funders, Practitioners, and Aspiring Innovators

Kristin Wolff & Vinz Koller
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Kristin Wolff is an adjunct member of the Social Policy Research team, the owner and founder of Thinkers+Doers, and a perpetual student. She lives in Portland, OR where she serves as an advisor to Hatch, a social innovation incubator, and to the Social Innovation Exchange, a global network of people trying to grow the field of social innovation, deepen the connections between business, government, and social sectors, and build better communities.

kwolff@thinkers-and-doers.com
@kristinwolff

Vinz Koller is the Director of Training and Technical Assistance at Social Policy Research Associates where he has spent more than a decade developing new ways to help workforce practitioners become workforce leaders. He and his colleagues on the training and technical assistance team have trained thousands of government, nonprofit and business leaders—online and face-to-face—on how to advance community change by using existing assets, strengthening partnerships, and building the capacity of all. He lives in Carmel, CA.

vinz_koller@spra.com
@kollerv

Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) is a leading research, evaluation, and technical assistance firm located in Oakland, California.

www.spra.com
THE FUTURE OF WORKFORCE LEADERSHIP:
WEADERSHIP

A Guide for Workforce Leaders, Policy Makers, Funders, Practitioners, and Aspiring Innovators

Kristin Wolff & Vinz Koller
ABOUT THIS GUIDE
This document was written by Kristin Wolff (Project Manager) and Vinz Koller (Project Director) of Social Policy Research Associates, under contract with the US Department of Labor, Employment Training Administration.

The Weadership Framework was developed as part of the Enhancing Workforce Leadership Initiative under project DOLQ101A21449. The initiative was designed to explore the meaning and practice of leadership in workforce development, identify the skills and behaviors that help leaders succeed, and inform the development of tools, resources, and opportunities intended to build next-generation leadership capacity within the workforce system.

The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the US Department of Labor. Mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations does not imply endorsement of same by the US Government.

August 2011
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
The authors (Kristin Wolff and Vinz Koller) would like to acknowledge the intergovernmental organizations and other contributors listed below for their assistance, insight, and for the work they do every day to enhance workforce leadership at all levels:

- National Association of Counties
- National Association of State Legislatures
- National Association of State Workforce Agencies
- National Association of Workforce Boards
- National League of Cities
- US Conference of Mayors
- California Workforce Association

519 Individual Workforce Leaders Contributors (to date)¹

We would also like to thank Gina Wells, Kathy Tran, and Aparna Darisipudi of the US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration for their invaluable guidance and support throughout the project.

Finally, we are grateful to all of the scholars, authors, experts, and practitioners cited in this report (and accompanying bibliography), whose work on leadership inspired and challenged us. Special thanks to Bob Johansen, Charlene Li, Dave Ulrich, Norm Smallwood, Kate Sweetman, Liz Wiseman, and Greg McKeown for allowing us to share some of their work with our intended audience.

Samuel Leshnick helped turned our words into a memorable visual framework, and beautiful published piece.

The Enhancing Workforce Leadership Project Team included: Vinz Koller, Kristin Wolff, Alison Gash, Ricki Kozumplik, Trace Elms, Sam McCoy, Michelle Saar, Annie Nyborg and Miloney Thakrar. Alison Gash merits special mention for helping to inspire the name “Weadership”.

¹ A Google map detailing the locations and roles of project contributors is here http://bit.ly/rnhtF9
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Introduction
- Seismic Changes........................................................................................................8
- New Leadership Responses ......................................................................................8
- An Emerging Framework: Weadership.....................................................................9
- How to Use This Guide..........................................................................................11

### The Six Practices
1. Adopt a Wide-Angle Point of View .......................................................................13
2. Build Diverse Networks .......................................................................................17
3. Embrace Openness ...............................................................................................21
4. Encourage Experimentation ..................................................................................25
5. Add Unique Value ...............................................................................................29
6. Cultivate Next Generation Leaders .....................................................................33

### Resources
- Select Project Resources .......................................................................................41

### Special Inserts
- How Social Media is Helping Workforce Leaders Lead ........................................44
- Key Innovations in Public Policy: An Overview for Workforce Leaders ................52
  - Social Innovation .................................................................................................52
  - Online Gaming for the Public Good ....................................................................54
  - Crowdsourcing (and Crowdfunding) ...................................................................56
  - “Gov2.0” ...............................................................................................................58

### Exhibits
- Resources Helping Workforce Leaders Learn & Lead ...........................................11
- What is Leadership? ...............................................................................................12
- Who is a Workforce Leader ...................................................................................12
- What Skills Do Today’s Leaders Need? ..................................................................36
- Three Questions Leaders Should Ask in Service of Cultivating Next Generation Leaders .........................................................37

### Appendices
- Methods: How We Launched and Managed the Enhancing Workforce Leadership Initiative ..................................................61
- Favorite Books on Leadership................................................................................62
- Curated Videos on Leadership ..............................................................................63
- Favorite Websites & Blogs .....................................................................................63
- How Workforce Leaders Know Where They Stand (Skills Assessment) ...............65
- The Multiplier Disciplines .....................................................................................66
- Great Storytelling by Traditional & Nontraditional Workforce Leaders ...............66
Team 3

Goals:
- Use ONET tools/LMI
- Conduct needs assessment
- Identify clusters that will grow
- Determine budget
- Deploy strategies to
  a) New businesses
  b) Workforce for skill gaps
  c) Strengths

Last, Analyze Pre-App programs

Career
“What’s changed the most in my nearly 25 years of public service is the complexity of the problems and the complexity of the necessary solutions.”

Mayor Sam Adams, Portland, Oregon

“You grow leaders by putting opportunities in front of them: trying things, being courageous, being creative, failing, learning from it, teaching others—voilà, leaders.”

Kris Stadelman, Executive Director, NOVA Workforce Board

“Ideas that transform industries almost never come from inside those industries.”

Gary Hamel
INTRODUCTION
Seismic Changes
Big changes are occurring all around us that challenge the ways we organize our communities and institutions.

First, we are hyper-connected, globally. Nearly four in five adults in the US use the Internet; among those under age 30, it’s nine out of ten. Globally, over 700 million people use Facebook. The ability to connect with each other outside traditional organizations and institutions changes how we share, organize, even govern ourselves, and suggests new possibilities for radically reorganizing learning, work, commerce, and every aspect of our lives in the years ahead.

Second, we are creating and enabling new media. Communication is more visual, more social, and more accessible to more people than ever before. Do-it-yourself (DIY) media is an increasingly important asset in our family, community, and professional lives. Any individual with the right tools can now communicate with more people than ever before in human history. And those people can respond to us and to one another. All of this occurs “in public”, turning media into conversation and not just publication. This new communications landscape requires new skills—not just technology skills but, information synthesis, reputation management, and whole new forms of digital and social media literacy.

Third, the combination of connectivity and new media is changing how we organize to get things done. For example, we are combining formerly distinct industries and disciplines in new ways to solve human problems—neuroscience, education, and psychology inform brain-based teaching; biomedical engineering is improving the way we diagnose and treat illness by using engineering methodologies in tissues, genes, pharmaceuticals, and devices; cyborg anthropology seeks to understand how humans and technology interact with one another and how that shifts culture. Increasingly, our contributions to our own fields of practice—including workforce development—will depend on our ability to synthesize and translate solutions from other fields as much as our efforts to improve what we already do.

Although the current recession has played a role in how we are experiencing these changes, their importance cannot be overstated. Workforce leaders confront profound questions about how to meet the needs of today’s firms, industries, and communities. At the same time they must prepare future generations for jobs that do not yet exist, in increasingly self-designed careers, within more resilient superstructured organizations and communities.

These and other trends are transforming the field of workforce development.

Compared to a decade ago:

• Workforce agendas are bigger, longer-term, and more diverse.

• Government, business, and nonprofit organizations each play important roles in workforce development, but not necessarily their traditional roles.

• Resources (public, private, and philanthropic) are increasingly constrained, while the demand for career and education services and employment solutions continues to grow.

• Technology is remaking “the workplace” and enabling whole new approaches to working and learning at every level.

In response, workforce leaders are finding new ways to lead.

New Leadership Responses
The Enhancing Workforce Leadership initiative sought to explore both the nature of workforce leadership today and the ways leaders are building their own skills and leadership capacity within their organizations and communities.

Toward that end, we:

• Grounded the project in a brief literature review;

• Convened group conversations with workforce leaders who play diverse policy and program roles;

2 “To ‘superstruct’ means to create structures that go beyond the basic forms and processes with which we are familiar. It means to collaborate and play at extreme scales, from the micro to the massive. Learning to use new social tools to work, to invest, and to govern at these scales is what the next few decades are all about.” FutureWork Skills 2030, Institute for the Future for the University of Phoenix Research Institute (2011).
• Conducted conversations with individual leaders nominated for their exemplary performance; and

• Engaged leaders and aspiring leaders through events, simulations, and conversations online and offline.

All told, in 12 months, we spoke with 519 workforce leaders individually, in groups, and during 7 highly interactive facilitated workshops. A more complete description of our methodology and link to a complete bibliography are available for reference (see Appendices p.61).

An Emerging Framework: Weadership
Together, these methods helped clarify our assumptions about leadership and pointed us to specific contributions we could make to this subject in the context of workforce development. They also reinforced our belief that this topic is tremendously important to the future of workforce development because leaders—as one respondent noted—“do real things” that their communities value in tremendously complex environments.

Because so much has already been written about the subject of leadership generally, we drew inspiration from scholars and practitioners who have examined leadership consistently for a substantial period of time (such as James Kouzes and Barry Posner); and those who emphasize the evolving nature of leadership in the 21st Century (such as Charlene Li).

We agree with Stephen Denning’s view of leadership as radical management, a perspective shared by many of the leaders we interviewed.

In traditional management, leadership is about promoting change, while management is about keeping the organization running smoothly [...] In radical management, the distinction between leadership and management dissolves. There is no difference between leadership and management. Managers are committed to change, and leaders also manage. Radical management is about making continuous innovation happen.4

We also believe leadership can be learned—even if not taught in the traditional sense—and that it can emerge anywhere at anytime from anyone. Leadership is not owned by people who are designated “leaders.”

Finally, we are convinced that the practice of leadership is changing. The “lone hero” model of a leader in control of a hierarchical organization is giving way to more collaborative approaches to leadership—whether in traditional organizations or more loosely affiliated networks.

Every one of the workforce leaders we engaged in this project indicated that knowing how to collaborate effectively is central to their work. But most had difficulty naming the kinds of skills required to collaborate successfully, and expressed uncertainty about the implications for their own development and that of employees, peers, and partners.5

We asked them about their own successful practices and those they admired in other leaders. We asked them to name the skill gaps apparent among peers and partners who had difficulty leading effectively in a collaborative environment. And we asked about their aspirations, strategies for change, and what they were doing to cultivate other leaders.

What emerged is a new framework for describing leadership—what communities expect and what leaders do—in the field of workforce development. For reasons that may seem obvious but are worth emphasizing all the same, we call this framework Weadership as an expression of the collaborative qualities of leadership.

The Weadership Framework (opposite) offers leaders six specific practices to consider as they invest in their own capacity and that of other leaders in their organizations and communities:

1. Adopt a Wide-Angle Point of View
2. Build Diverse Networks
3. Embrace Openness
4. Encourage Experimentation
5. Add Unique Value
6. Cultivate Next Generation Leaders

These practices do not comprise a recipe or checklist. Rather, they are an attempt at a synthesis based on our literature review and discussions with over 500 workforce leaders in person, via phone and through social media.

Moreover, these are not independent practices: the six complement one another and point toward a future in which workforce leadership is a shared role rather than a title.

---

4. This concern is mirrored in the private sector. A Center for Creative Leadership survey found that 86% of executives reported that the ability to work across geographic, demographic, stakeholder, and other boundaries is “extremely important,” but only 7% of these leaders described themselves as “very effective” at boundary-spanning practices. Accelerating Performance: Five Leadership Skills You and Your Organization Can’t Do Without, John Ryan, Center for Creative Leadership, August 2010 (White Paper).

5. Amazon.com lists nearly 70,000 titles, 1,280 of which were published in the last 90 days.

Leaders build skills and share knowledge in their communities.

6. CULTIVATE NEXT GENERATION LEADERS
Leaders build skills and share knowledge in order to develop new leaders in their field and in their communities.

1. ADOPT A WIDE-ANGLE POINT OF VIEW
Leaders look for new ways to apply their resources and expertise. They focus on community problems, not just workforce problems.

2. BUILD DIVERSE NETWORKS
Leaders collaborate with partners creatively, using informal networks alongside traditional boards or policy councils.

3. EMBRACE OPENNESS
Leaders share the role of leadership with staff, partners, and the public. They use social technologies to listen, inform, and collaborate.

4. ENCOURAGE EXPERIMENTATION
Leaders know workforce development needs new ideas, and new ideas need testing.

5. ADD UNIQUE VALUE
Leaders find ways their unique contributions can make a real difference in their communities. Only those who add value remain relevant.

THE FUTURE OF WORKFORCE LEADERSHIP: WEADERSHIP
We hope the Weadership Framework, and this guide to Weadership will be useful for leaders and aspiring leaders in workforce development and related fields.

How to Use This Guide
Our goal in creating this Weadership guide is to explain workforce leadership today—what leaders do, what they struggle with, and what they need to be successful—to policy makers, analysts, government, and board members and partners of workforce organizations. We also hope to contribute to a shared understanding of workforce leadership from a systems perspective, rather than a program or agency point of view.

The guide is organized into three main sections:

1. An introduction to the document and to the Weadership Framework, which serves as a visual map and introduces the six Weadership practices;

2. The main body, which explains each of the six practices and offers specific actions that can help build capacity in each area; and

3. Exhibits and Appendices, including explanations of words or concepts integral to the project, a description of the project’s methodology, and a collection of tools developed during the course of the project or reprinted from other volumes with the authors’ permission.

In addition, we have included two topical inserts:

1. How Social Media is Helping Workforce Leaders Lead

2. Key Innovations in Public Policy: An Overview for Workforce Leaders

Throughout the guide, we have provided references, links, even QR codes, that will help users access additional tools, information, examples, and other resources in video, audio, print, and digital format. The PDF version of the guide contains enabled links that connect directly to cited resources.

This guide is complemented by a shorter overview document that summarizes the six practices and provides links to additional resources.

Both documents are available at https://enhancing-workforceleadership.workforce3one.org/index.aspx which serves as a gateway to key project resources—video, audio recordings, slidedecks, discussion summaries, toolkits and social media. We encourage readers interested in the subject of leadership to explore the vast collection of links and resources cited in published documents.

We offer this collection as a contribution to the study of workforce leadership. However, it remains an emerging contribution. We expect to continue to learn about new approaches to leadership from every interaction everyday, and hope you do, too.

Resources Helping Workforce Leaders Learn & Lead
As part of the Enhancing Workforce Leadership project, we asked about the resources leaders employ to help them learn, grow, and cultivate other leaders in their own communities. In addition, we collected responses to the same questions during our workshops and engagement activities.

In total, leaders identified 32 resources—a mix of local and regional organizations (22); associations, events, and initiatives (9); and university-based leadership and professional development programs and resources (7).1

Descriptions and links to all of these resources are available in a searchable, curated collection on the project’s archive http://bit.ly/mgnrg2 A PDF version of the complete list is also available http://slidesha.re/n3FuU3

1 We assigned six of these resources to more than one category.
What is Leadership?
An enduring definition of leadership has eluded scholars and practitioners for decades. There are nearly 70,000 (English) titles on Amazon.com and hundreds of publications devoted to the subject of leadership. Although we did not review them all, we did learn some things about leadership early in our project that informed the way we carried it forward.

Many theories about leadership have been advanced, but leadership is difficult to define because so much leadership literature focuses on the attributes, skills, or behaviors of individual leaders (through profiles or case studies) rather than on the practice of leadership itself.

Key questions in leadership literature include:

- Is leadership is character-based, skills-based, context-based, or specific to situation?
- Do we understand leaders best as community stewards? Servants? Military strategists? Team captains? Business titans?
- Is leadership mostly about decision-making or is it about building relationships with people? Creating a vision? All of these?
- Are leadership and management different from one another or closer to the same thing?
- Is leadership innate or can be taught? Learned?
- What roles do gender, race, and culture play in leadership? What about personality?

Longtime leadership experts Dave Ulrich and Norm Smallwood assert that the field of leadership studies suffers from “concept clutter” and refer to the state of leadership literature as “alchemy.”

We focused our review on two subsets of leadership literature: 1) enduring work by scholars and experts who have studied leadership over decades; and 2) recent work that focuses on leadership and change. We did not just review books and papers but also blogs, podcasts, videos, and social media. Our complete bibliography is available at http://bit.ly/pYoBlp. Links to additional resources are included throughout this document.

Who is a Workforce Leader?
A Workforce Leader is anyone who is advancing better opportunities to work, learn, launch enterprises, or remake economies in service of community prosperity. Workforce leaders are elected officials and executives of workforce boards or educational institutions. They are also economic development professionals and social innovators. They work in federal, state, and local jurisdictions and tribal nations for governments, nonprofit organizations, and businesses. They can even be interns or neighbors. We adopted this broad definition so the project could incorporate insights from many leaders at many levels, reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of workforce development itself and pointing to new opportunities for all kinds of people to lead from wherever they are.

---

1 These authors were kind enough to share an advanced copy of their article, “What is Leadership?”, which will appear in a forthcoming volume entitled Advances in Global Leadership, Vol. 7, edited by William Mobley.
1. ADOPT A WIDE-ANGLE POINT OF VIEW

Leaders look for new ways to enhance and apply their resources and expertise. As a result, they define their roles more broadly than ever before. They solve community problems, not just workforce problems.

Today’s workforce leaders juggle dozens of rapidly evolving and often locally determined priorities. As a result, state and federal leaders face a tension between responding to local needs and charting a consistent approach to workforce development that assures people, firms, and communities access to similar services wherever they are. Meanwhile, local leaders who respond to community concerns and opportunities find that their approaches do not fit easily into traditional workforce development program categories.

One way leaders resolve this dilemma is by defining their roles broadly.

For Example, few of the leaders with whom we spoke defined their work by program—Workforce Investment Act (WIA) or Unemployment Insurance (UI). Rather, they reported being in “the talent business,” or “the workforce business,” or “the community prosperity business.” Some lean more toward education, others toward economic development. The strategic goals these leaders seek to achieve reflect social, economic or community change, rather than just program design, administration or implementation.

They adopt metrics that inspire action across a range of community organizations, agencies, and networks, explicitly connecting their policy priorities to broader community agendas. These workforce leaders collaborate with other community leaders and partners to identify significant problems, investigate their causes and solutions, and create a vision for change supported by simple, compelling

A Sampling of Workforce Leaders’ Priorities

- Increasing literacy.
- Reducing unemployment.
- Accelerating economic growth.
- Combating urban (and rural) poverty.
- Creating good jobs.
- Increasing broadband connectivity.
- Improving high school graduation, college access, and college completion rates.
- Improving or expanding technical training opportunities.
- Facilitating self-employment and entrepreneurship.
- Reducing skill gaps.
- Boosting wages.
- Improving our community infrastructure.
- Helping workers and firms transition from one job or industry to another.
- Communicating information that helps people achieve their employment, educational, and business goals.

---

1 As noted in our discussion of methodology, the first group of leaders we interviewed were invited by the Department of Labor’s Intergovernmental Organization partners, and participated because of their interest in the subject. The second group comprised individuals nominated by these initial participants as exemplary leaders.

1 During our conversations with workforce leaders, we asked them to either list their key priorities (in a web environment) or to name them (in a facilitated group environment). This list reflects the most common responses.
"Expectations of workforce leaders are greater today as the public’s understanding of education and economics has increased. It’s a positive change. Our agendas are bigger, if not always realistic."

Paul, Executive Director, Workforce Board

"Metrics matter and they should be strategic—linked to a collaboratively negotiated community-wide strategy and owned by multiple stakeholders who can hold each other accountable. Then, they are powerful."

Sam, Vice President, Membership Association
indicators of progress. This takes time, but it builds relationships, creates a deeper understanding of community issues among people who can help address them, and focuses attention on shared goals and the resources available to help advance them.

These leaders also look to other professional fields for resources that can help them solve problems. They draw insight from books about community, culture, or individual change such as Switch, by Chip and Dan Heath, and Outliers, by Malcolm Gladwell. Both books were mentioned several times, by our workforce leader respondents who are actively applying lessons from them. They look for workforce development implications in strategy documents, intelligence reports, and white papers that do not overtly address the subject, but inform it in some way. Our respondents named dozens of reports (local to global) about trade, health, sustainability, government reform, food policy, and the creative sector that they were analyzing for connections to their own workforce development priorities.

Leaders with wide-angle lenses also attend gatherings and convenings on subjects other than workforce development. They draw lessons from these events about context, content, and process—for example, how to design successful community engagement efforts.

Finally, because these leaders seek out diverse perspectives they tend to be effective re-framers. They begin with a set of assumptions about the shape, size, and cause(s) of a given problem. But as new information contradicts these assumptions, leaders with wide-angle lenses are able to integrate it, even if the effect is a change in course or a new definition of the problem.

THREE WAYS LEADERS CAN ADOPT A WIDE-ANGLE POINT OF VIEW:

1. Use qualitative and quantitative data, information, insights, and ideas from a wide range of sources to analyze key problems. Most of these problems are “wicked problems”—they are unstructured (have no single cause), multidimensional (have no single solution), and relentless (are not easily solved). Poverty, joblessness, skills gaps, literacy are all examples of wicked problems. Their complex nature makes it important to use many different analytical tools to understand them, and to validate analyses using observation and conversation with experts and non-experts alike.

2. Use “Theory of Change” or “Logic Models” to investigate the underlying causes of critical problems and align investments around shared strategies leading to significant impacts. These models help multiple community stakeholders define the problems they are jointly trying to address, develop a shared strategy for change, and measure progress so they know whether their actions are delivering intended results. A few workforce leaders are also experimenting with new network-based and context-sensitive strategy tools like Cynefin, and collective impact models that guide a range of activities that lead to impact, but are not rooted in single-intervention, cause-and-effect processes.

3. Collaborate with a wide spectrum of individuals and organizations in developing potential solutions to problems—regardless of who owns the agenda. Sometimes leaders take on the role of organizers and conveners and sometimes they can achieve as much by supporting change efforts lead by others.

---


“Training, economic development, workforce development, education, they all go together. We lead on some issues and not on others, but we’re at the table.”

Roger, Director, Workforce Agency
Workforce leaders have long collaborated with each other across programs and agencies. But as agendas become more complex, savvy leaders expand beyond traditional partnerships, leveraging contributions through coalitions, collaboratives, and networks that span disciplinary and geographic boundaries.

As leaders grow their networks, they may encounter non-traditional partners (people, firms, or organizations) who can offer complementary skills, needed resources, or important new ideas. However, such partners might share only a subset of their organizations’ interests, and may actively oppose others. Working with these non-traditional collaborators can strain relationships with existing partners who may be put off by differences in position or perspective. But such efforts can bring new energy to important community causes and expand narrow ideas about what is required for effective partnerships.

Diverse networks extend the reach of leaders and their organizations, and improve leaders’ ability to tap into needed resources. These networks can help leaders improve what they already do, and link to new ideas and fields of practice so they can better adapt to changing conditions.

**Evolving Ways of Organizing**

A decade ago, workforce boards were the presumed employment and training policy organizations in many communities. Board members guided policy, and board staff funded and managed One-Stop centers and related workforce programs in support of that policy.

Today, economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, industry associations, firms, colleges and universities, public schools, housing and transportation authorities, human service agencies, public health departments, private foundations, tribal nations, major nonprofit organizations, research institutes, even media organizations are among the regular partners of workforce organizations leading change efforts in their communities.

As agendas have become bigger and organizational boundaries more porous, workforce leaders and board members are building relationships that link their organizations to others in a wider array of configurations than ever before.

For example, leaders of different organizations with a shared interest in workforce development often leverage each other’s infrastructures: a workforce board might serve as the talent committee of an economic development council; a school board might serve as a youth council. These leaders also join—and sometimes even help establish—regional boards to connect and align their organizations and agendas across jurisdictions. It is increasingly common for workforce leaders to co-fund and co-brand initiatives not owned or managed by a single organization, but by community collaboratives, or coalitions. Such formal collaboratives are often complemented by less formal community “action teams,” “work groups,” and “networks.”

In this new environment, expectations of board members have changed. Nonprofit organizations and institutions want to engage people who are interested in contributing (not just providing advice or oversight). Workforce leaders

---

13 Not just members of workforce boards, but leaders and members of school boards, boards of higher education, economic development boards, and boards of nonprofit organizations and others institutions engaged in community benefit work.
“We can now keep what used to be weak links in our networks within our grasp, and build on them. This is a sea change affecting all industries and it won’t go away. We need to learn to leverage this powerful asset.”

Kim, Program Director, Community College

“We engage people—principals, parents, guidance counselors—whomever we need to. We don’t just exchange information; we ask them to help solve problems. You’d be surprised how often you ask people to help, and they do.”

Nancy, Executive Director, Workforce Board

“Diverse partners add the resources and expertise we do not have and the reverse is also true. You need partnerships to take on the hard issues. Knowing how to leverage them is an important aspect of leadership.”

Christine, Executive Director, Workforce Board
leaders who structure organizations to take maximum advantage of this trend stand to gain the most.

NEW METHODS AND APPROACHES
Social Innovation. People in the nonprofit and business sectors and in neighborhoods and communities all over the world are rapidly adopting new methods of collaborative problem solving and mission-focused enterprise development. Governments too are beginning to engage citizens and communities in public policy issues more creatively (see Key Innovations in Public Policy, Social Innovation, p.52).

Social innovation, social entrepreneurship, microphilanthropy, and impact investing are just a few of the latest trends in hybrid ventures—initiatives that borrow new decentralized tools, methods, and structures from all sectors and apply them to important social problems.

Social innovators might launch businesses that serve a social purpose, or apply the tools of innovation to social or environmental problems. Their efforts might take the form of businesses, nonprofit organizations, government programs, or volunteer initiatives, but nearly always involve extended networks of people representing a range of disciplines and sectors who play different roles in moving innovations from idea to implementation.14

Social innovations themselves include methods, institutions, capital, policy, and the whole range of enabling intermediaries and supports that can help make good ideas happen.

Social innovators and the networks that support them are more familiar to workforce organizations structured as nonprofit 501(c)(3) entities than those staffed by public agencies because the nonprofit sector has embraced the field of social innovation, featuring it on conference agendas and in communications and professional learning activities. However, social innovation holds promise for all workforce leaders—public, private, and nonprofit-sector—because it offers new methods for solving community problems and opportunities for building better networks.

Gov2.0. Government efforts to be more transparent, participatory and collaborative have also generated new approaches to policy, and attracted new people to causes workforce leaders care about. The president’s 2008 Open Government Directive unleashed the energies of people already working in mayors’ and governors’ offices. A wave of “Gov2.0” initiatives followed, resulting in the release of public data in open format (so citizens can work with it); competitions to create public interest “apps” for mobile devices; and new partnerships between elected officials (and staff) and public-minded technology professionals in their communities.

Interactive maps and smart phone apps that help people use public transportation more effectively were among the early results of such initiatives. Similar tools relevant to education and workforce development are just beginning to emerge.15

During our conversations, federal and local-level workforce leaders mentioned "Gov2.0" efforts more often than state-level leaders, but leaders at all levels are beginning to wrestle with the implications of this trend and cultivate the social networks required to participate in it (see Key Innovations in Public Policy, “Gov2.0”, p.58).

Global Village. Knowledge of international policies, methods, and initiatives is also more important to workforce leaders today than in past years, as cities and regions increasingly compare themselves to communities anywhere in the world, and not just to their neighbors. Forming relationships internationally can help leaders better understand increasingly global labor markets.

New Tools & Technologies. New (social) technologies have made connecting with other people and managing those connections simpler, easier, and less expensive than ever before. Workforce leaders cited Facebook and LinkedIn repeatedly as critical to their network-building efforts. Twitter was mentioned less often, but with great enthusiasm. Although these tools support online connecting, the networks they enable spill over into the offline (face-to-face) world as well (see How Social Media is Helping Workforce Leaders Lead, p.44).

THREE WAYS CURRENT AND EMERGING WORKFORCE LEADERS CAN BUILD DIVERSE NETWORKS:
4. Explore opportunities for collaboration with non-traditional organizations, firms, agencies, and networks. Workforce issues are on the agendas of many government agencies and private and nonprofit sector organizations and networks that also work on other issues. Connecting with them can yield organizational efficiencies. More importantly, collaboration with these actors helps link workforce issues to broader community agendas, and builds leadership capacity outside of traditional workforce organizations.
5. Connect with champions of social innovation, Gov2.0, and other community innovators around key priorities online and offline. Opportunities will vary from one community to the next, but creative ventures are emerging in each domain and at every scale—from local to global.

6. Meet with community leaders in small groups whether or not there are obvious synergies or common interests. As workforce leaders take on broader community roles, they need personal relationships with other community leaders who can help them get things done. These relationships create the opportunity for good things to happen even before leaders have any idea what those good things are going to be.

“We need to keep in mind that we are part of a global economy. The world is bigger than the community we live or work in.”

Stephen, Director, Interagency Workgroup
The idea that leaders “control” the people, information, and resources within an organization or about a particular issue is no longer plausible—if it ever was. Today, people use social technologies to connect, share, and collaborate with colleagues who can help them get things done, regardless of position or organizational affiliation. As a result, leadership can come from any corner of an organization or community, not just the management tier.

For governments, policy makers, and public programs, this shift has changed public expectations about how government, including workforce development, should work. Increasingly, citizens and residents expect to be informed, consulted, even asked to participate in policy making and community problem solving.

Workforce leaders can adapt to these changes by opening up the way they listen, share, and engage with communities to address key challenges.

OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY
The change in public expectations is often described as a new demand for “transparency”—or making the business of government visible. In response, some workforce leaders are opening up their organizations, and revisiting their practices in key areas:

- **Information Sharing.** While “sunshine laws” have long guided the conduct of public meetings, today’s workforce leaders confront infinitely more choices about what kind of information they share and how they share it. From releasing labor market data in open format to live streaming board meetings to posting reports and stories on blogs, Facebook or Twitter, new ways to make information available to the public challenge traditional information dissemination strategies.

- **Listening.** The same wealth of communication tools available to workforce leaders is also available to the general public. Workforce is already a subject of conversation among thousands of people every day. These conversations comprise important sources of intelligence and opportunities to engage new partners, citizens, and neighbors in working toward shared goals. Open leaders are learning to listen to them.

ORGANIZATIONAL OPENNESS
Openness is about more than transparency. Openness is about how leaders collaborate with others—colleagues, peers, and the public. Collaboration has long been at the center of workforce development, but new social technologies have changed how such engagement occurs and radically altered its scale.

Workforce leaders are just beginning to experiment with new kinds of collaboration—not just collaborative planning or strategy development, for example, but collaborative decision-making and solution-seeking.
“We need to be better information sharers. We know too little effort goes into making information useful in the field, and we’re working hard on it.”

Beth, Commissioner, Workforce Agency

“We’ve held ourselves back because we think effective presentation and communication is extra—not required. But increasingly our job as leaders is to engage the public. This means we need to tell our stories in ways that are compelling, not just through thick, dense reports.”

Kathy, Special Projects Director, Workforce Agency
**Decision-making.** Different kinds of decisions are suited to different kinds of processes, from highly centralized to loosely distributed. Technology provides leaders with new choices about how to structure, manage, and integrate online and offline contributions from people in their organizations and communities (or from anyone anywhere in the world). Popular platforms allow citizens to rank, vote, or comment on policy options, and more sophisticated methods are emerging. Workforce leaders are experimenting with some of these tools—engaging citizens directly in setting strategic priorities (see Key Innovations in Public Policy, Social Innovation, p. 52).

**Solution-seeking.** Workforce organizations ultimately identify and invest in solutions to critical workforce problems. Toward that end, they typically contract for public services and partner with organizations on initiatives supported by foundations, and state or local governments. But social innovation efforts, peer-learning platforms, and neighborhood exchange networks offer workforce leaders new ways to work with colleagues and neighbors online and offline to solve community problems. Although many leaders view them as coincidental complements to core programs, such initiatives can help realize strategic goals, generate new ideas, and cultivate leaders and champions outside the formal workforce development system.

These examples emphasize the public conduct of workforce organizations and agencies—soliciting ideas, perspective, or assistance from partner organizations and citizens, for example. For large organizations in particular, the parallel set of choices guiding their internal conduct can be just as important.

Openness creates new opportunities for interaction among colleagues, but can disrupt existing workflows and hierarchies. As organizations open up, leaders are learning to manage themselves in more flexible ways, aggregating the right resources for a task, completing it, and then moving on to the next one.

**SHARING THE ROLE OF LEADER**

Openness invites leaders to share leadership responsibility with others in and outside their organizations. Open leaders can act as catalysts: they set strategy in the context of shared vision; bring people together to exchange information and take action; and inspire excellence at all levels in service of a clear and compelling mission. While successful open leaders may be at the center of these activities initially, they tend to step back and encourage others to take the reins. For them, developing other leaders is among their most important responsibilities.

Openness is a matter of degree. Leaders of all organizations are moving toward openness, but different practices will suit different organizations. Leaders, their organizations, their boards, and their communities will all have to find the particular combination of open leadership practices that is right for them.

Finally, open leadership can be unpredictable, but it’s also inevitable. And for workforce leaders in particular, it represents an unprecedented opportunity to help communities find solutions to their most important social and economic problems, including “jobs.”

**FIVE WAYS WORKFORCE LEADERS CAN EMBRACE OPENNESS:**

1. Join an existing open data initiative (or start one). Most state, city, or county governments now have such initiatives. Joining can be an effective way to learn about why open data matters, understand what data sets are available, and advocate for those that would be helpful to you, or your organization or community. Such activities also help leaders understand the choices they have in making data and information more accessible and the benefits and consequences of each.

2. “Listen” to online conversations about workforce development in your community. Ask a team to select a tool or platform and conduct research on how your community is using it to share information about your organization’s key priorities.

3. Participate in a “crowdsourcing” effort aimed at advancing a key policy objective. Many communities use such approaches to inform budget processes, source solutions, find partners, or increase awareness of workforce issues. Whether online or offline, crowdsourcing...
requires engaging members of “the public”—people who are not workforce development experts or leaders of other community agencies or organizations (see Key Innovations in Public Policy, Crowdsourcing, p. 56).

4. Identify a successful local or regional initiative designed to achieve similar goals as traditional workforce development programs, but not funded or supported by public workforce resources—it might not even be a workforce program. Engage your colleagues and partners in answering the following questions: “What can we offer this initiative to help it improve, grow, or develop?” “What can we learn from this initiative?” “Are there opportunities to collaborate with the initiative team?”

5. Recruit a team to design a social media strategy for an initiative, program, or department, even your organization, together with a workflow that supports it. Insure that the team documents the experience so that lessons can be shared more broadly.

“Workforce organizations that are nonprofits have different kinds of opportunities, but most of them run first and foremost on policy and procedure. They are great at cross-agency collaboration, but there’s still a head-honcho, and it’s still pretty formal. There’s a whole world of citizens and neighbors to engage.”

Karen, Executive Director, Workforce Board

A recent Pew survey found that if people believe their government shares information well, they also feel good about their community and civic institutions, and are more likely to feel average citizens can impact government.”

For today’s workforce leaders, the speed and intensity of change in the workplace is a defining challenge.

Yesterday’s successful approaches may not meet the needs of tomorrow’s workers, firms, or communities. As change occurs, experimentation plays an important role in helping leaders identify new policies, strategies, and service designs better suited to new demands.

Every day, industries evolve, jobs change, and new skill sets emerge as “in-demand.” This can result in opportunity for some workers, but impede the job security of others. Should workforce leaders support training to avert layoffs? Invest in credentialing programs that helps skilled workers trade on what they know? The proper policy and program responses are not always clear. Workforce leaders need opportunities to analyze the effects of these changes and test a range of interventions in real time before making a long-term commitment to any one.

Workplace practices and value-chain relationships are changing too, creating opportunities for entrepreneurship, “gigs,” and contracting, and increasing demand for new kinds of career transition services such as adult internships or “returnships” that help mid-career professionals or former stay-at-home caregivers build new careers. Helping workers navigate these opportunities has not been the focus of traditional workforce services.

Teaching and learning practices are also undergoing radical reinvention, in the workplace and in traditional and non-traditional institutions. Social learning, for example, is emerging as a critical enabler of innovation across all kinds of sectors. Do-it-yourself (DIY) and community-based learning platforms like Peer-to-Peer University (P2PU), Udemy, Khan Academy, Skillshare, and others are both challenging traditional education and training approaches and enhancing them. These new tools and methods can inform the creation of whole new training and development approaches—gaming, and simulation, for example—not just new training programs. They also change expectations in the workplace about who learns and how:

1. **Encourage Experimentation**

   Even the way we understand learning itself is being contested. Traditional cognitive paradigms understand learning as the transfer of knowledge from a source (teacher) to a recipient (student). But modern scholarship increasingly posits learning as experimentation—motivated by interest, executed in context, and mediated by social experiences and technology tools. See Diana Rhoten, Laurie Racine, and Phoenix Wang, “Designing for Learning in the 21st Century” (working paper available at startl.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/21stCenturyLearning.pdf)

   Social Learning is exactly what it sounds like—learning through social connections. Because social media so radically increases the speed and scale of these connections, firms are paying attention to the ways in which they can facilitate and support it. See Tony Bingham and Marcia L. Conner. The New Social Learning: a Guide to Transforming Organizations through Social Media. Alexandria, VA: ASTD, 2010.

   DIY (Do-It-Yourself) is a colloquialism that refers to individuals launching all kinds of programs in nontraditional ways—typically outside of formal institutions. DIY options in the education sector are multiplying rapidly. For a comprehensive guide to DIY learning, see Anya Kamenetz. DIY U: Edupunks, Edupreneurs, and the Coming Transformation of Higher Education. White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Pub., 2010. A complement to the book, the recently published The Edupunks Guide to a DIY Credential (2011) offers advice and resources for learners of all skills levels about making the most of their self-directed or more traditional learning experience. http://bit.ly/oN2u6j
“Everything we do starts as a pilot. If it’s successful, we try to find ways to sustain it in partnership with our communities, so that they become invested too.”

Michele, Executive Director, Workforce Board

“In the last three or four years, technology has changed everything. Every industry and every job is affected, so workers (ourselves included) have to think about not just what we’re doing now, but what we’ll be doing in five years.”

Robin, Executive Director, Workforce Agency
more firms expect employees at all levels to take charge of their own professional development, for example—a new skill-set for many of them.

Some workforce leaders can respond to these needs by partnering with local providers to expand the range of services public workforce programs offer. But others must pilot new initiatives or otherwise invent services that do not exist in their communities in order to respond to compelling needs.

THE CHALLENGE OF EXPERIMENTATION

Many factors hinder experimentation in workforce organizations: risk-averse cultures, rigid systems, processes that do not lend themselves to change, and even pressure to meet performance goals and follow proven strategies all work against experimentation. But risk can be managed and appropriate incentives—from financial rewards to public recognition—can help support experiments and create a desirable balance between tried-and-true methods and innovative approaches.

Funding poses particular difficulties for workforce leaders. Typically, they support innovation by:

- Applying for state and federal grants from a variety of agencies (not just the US Department of Labor), as well as grants from private foundations, to support pilot programs and interventions. Although these grants are welcome sources of revenue, they often restrict program activity or test a theory of change developed by the funder, limiting the level of experimentation that can be done locally or regionally.

- Raising general funds themselves, through donations and contributions or by working with foundations that offer unrestricted grant awards. This can be done directly by nonprofit boards and colleges and universities, and through partners where workforce leaders are city or county employees who cannot compete for foundation grants.26 It takes considerable time and effort, and many workforce organizations are not structured to facilitate this kind of donor outreach.

- Using existing resources to leverage experimentation—organizing volunteers, for example, to run peer-to-peer workshops and training activities or manage online communities. While many workforce leaders experiment in this way, it is not easy to bring these projects to scale, and leaders do not always have the resources or the time to devote to disseminating results or lessons learned.

Funding constraints can also make it difficult for leaders to structure experimentation so that staff, board members, organizations, and communities (including the broader workforce community) can learn from it. For example, leaders of a successful foundation-funded experiment in a single community have little incentive and few options for sharing their innovation with the broader workforce development community.

BOLDNESS WANTED

Willingness to take risks also extends to small-scale “pilot projects” that are endemic to the field of workforce development. Today’s workforce leaders are working on more complex problems than in years past. They want bolder experiments that significantly improve their reach or impact.

Entrepreneurship poses similar challenges. Workforce leaders know they need to find alternatives to traditional “jobs” when employers are not hiring. Self-employment and business-ownership are viable options for some. Seventeen states27 offer a Self-Employment Assistance program as an alternative to traditional unemployment insurance, which “signals” a link between workforce development and business start-ups. Leaders in other states are forging their own connections with varying levels of success.

Whether tackling existing problems in innovative ways or attacking whole new problems, workforce leaders are eager to launch trials from which they can learn, and share lessons in more creative ways.

In a fast changing environment, experimentation is critical. It can help improve existing programs, identify new ways to meet emerging needs, and align the workplace...
practices of workforce leaders and their organizations with those of industry leaders.

THREE WAYS WORKFORCE LEADERS CAN ENCOURAGE EXPERIMENTATION:

1. Dedicate staff time and resources to exploring, integrating and testing new ideas. There are a variety of ways experimentation can be structured—design labs, designated staff, pilot programs, and even lunch-and-learn activities. There are as many ways it can be paid for—a grant, a percentage of every funding stream, or a corporate-sponsored innovator-in-residence are a few examples. Dedicating resources to an innovation agenda, and communicating this commitment publicly, is important. It signals to staff, partners, and the community that you are seeking good ideas and ways to implement them. Other innovators (and funders) just might offer to help.

2. Subject existing programs to close scrutiny to identify design or program changes that promise to improve outcomes or increase impact. Make one of these changes. Measure the impact. Repeat. This process may improve performance in the short term, while building a culture of experimentation over time.

3. Manage risk effectively. Workforce leaders engage their board members, partners, and communities in discussions about risk. This offers an opportunity to debate the merits in public and invest others in intended outcomes. Importantly, workforce leaders are learning to ask themselves about the risk of not trying new things. As one respondent noted, “Not changing is only easier in the short-term. In the long-term, it might put you out of business.”

“We often use a ‘coalition-of-the-willing’ model to experiment. Good ideas come from many directions—and we don’t know if they will work. We need low-risk ways to try new things.”

Kathy, Special Initiatives Director, Workforce Agency
Workforce leaders share a commitment to doing work that really matters—maximizing existing investments, supporting broader community change efforts, and championing important causes.

Effective leaders understand their strengths, and those of their organizations, as well as their communities. They seek ways their unique contributions can make a real difference in their communities.

They seek ways to measure their impact because they know that only those who add value remain relevant.

Unlike other kinds of public servants such as firefighters or schoolteachers whose roles are more clearly defined, workforce leaders must constantly demonstrate their unique value relative to their communities’ most pressing needs.

Effective workforce leaders offer a key asset to their communities: they can address policy issues relating to work and learning that span across government agencies or institutions. Youth unemployment, for example, is a key policy issue in many communities—a concern for schools, public safety agencies, families, even commerce and industry. Yet, none of these entities can address the problem alone. Workforce leaders across the country have stepped in to help find solutions that are right for their communities.

DELMERERING COMMUNITY VALUE
Fundamentally, workforce leaders aim to:

• **Maximize Existing Investments in Programs and Services.** Whether formula allocations, grant resources, or private donations, workforce leaders aim to secure resources and support services that significantly impact communities—systemically, and in measurable ways.

• **Champion Important Causes.** There are a myriad of workforce issues leaders seek to support and influence that are outside of their direct control—from infrastructure issues like broadband penetration to headline-grabbing goals like a 100% high school graduation rate. Workforce board members, elected officials, and nonprofit leaders can all play key roles by communicating the importance of these issues to the public, influencing policy, and modeling desired practices in their own organizations.

• **Support Broader Community Change Efforts.** Most workforce leaders go beyond championing ideas and seek to help make them happen. To do so, they play many different roles: they might contribute data, human, or financial resources, or even serve as critical conveners or "backbone organizations" that enable stakeholders to collaborate. Regional economic development or industry transition initiatives are examples of...
“We are not relevant if we don’t add value to the community, and how we do that changes over time.”

Kris, Executive Director, Workforce Board

“Establish shared goals and metrics that go beyond programs. This can help embed and scale broader change. But the process matters as much as the metrics. If it’s just obligatory, it won’t mean anything.”

Sam, Vice President, Membership Association

“One of the most important things we can do is create champions of workforce wherever we can. Getting communities to own this agenda is how we’ll be successful.”

Beth, Commissioner, Workforce Agency

“Leadership is not just about gap-filling, but strength-building. We might initiate a cause, but we want many to own it at the policy level, in neighborhoods, and at our own kitchen tables.”

Eric, Executive Director, Workforce Board
typical change efforts, but their specific nature depends upon community context.

THE MEASUREMENT CHALLENGE
Today’s workforce leaders are committed to delivering on required performance metrics, but they seek to go beyond those metrics to find new ways of demonstrating how they support positive community change.

As managers of public and charitable resources, their performance is often assessed against measures emphasizing narrow sets of activities over different periods of time. However, measuring performance is not the same as demonstrating impact. Nor do positive performance outcomes necessarily demonstrate how workforce development efforts make a difference in communities.

Nonetheless, workforce leaders are developing ways to communicate the bigger picture by demonstrating how their work adds value:

- They are developing benchmarks, dashboards, community indicators, and other ways to gage the effects of their own investments and those of partner agencies and organizations.

- They are using story and narrative techniques to document and communicate different kinds of impact—how their work has made a difference in the lives of individual people, or created opportunities for firms, for example.

- They are engaging partners in qualitative assessments of progress where changes cannot otherwise be easily captured or shared.

Workforce leaders take pride demonstrating the impact of their work. It helps them better communicate the value of the investments they are making and improve their strategies over time. However, they can also be frustrated by funders’ performance and reporting requirements that emphasize discrete activities, but render their major accomplishments largely invisible.

FOUR WAYS WORKFORCE LEADERS CAN ADD VALUE:

1. Identify ways your organization can uniquely contribute to your community’s most important goals—not just by allocating financial resources, but also by influencing the behavior of partner organizations or modeling the change you’d like to see.

2. Relentlessly (and honestly) assess individual and organizational strengths, relative to other leaders and partner organizations. Craft policies, strategies, and roles that make effective use of those strengths.

3. Share credit for accomplishments. Whether within or among organizations, sharing credit builds trust, encourages collaboration, and reduces the risks associated with tackling difficult, large-scale, or long-term community problems.

4. Measure what matters, even if funders don’t require it, and share accomplishments (and lessons) widely, including with funders. Quantitative data are necessary but not sufficient. Anecdotes, quotes from people, firms or partners, and other snapshots documenting they ways in which your activities made a difference can help you understand and communicate why your work matters. In addition, collaborating with others in your community or field of practice to address measurement challenges can inspire new methodological approaches and improve those you already use. Current leaders in the field of workforce development are concerned about who will replace them as another generational change is looming.

---

“Leaders do real things. Last year we put 15,000 young people to work. The need is 70,000, but now everyone knows it and a partnership is taking root.”

Robert, Program Manager, Workforce Agency

“When you use networks to move an agenda, it's influence and momentum that matter. Changes can be small and evolutionary, but they are also cumulative— one day you look up and a lot of things are really different. But we don't always have the ability to say 'A led to B.'”

Kim, Program Director, Community College
Leaders understand that the next generation will reinvent the field of workforce development, and with it, what it means to be a workforce leader. They are eager to share their knowledge and experience in ways that support this transition.

This generational change represents an important opportunity to cultivate leaders who have the skills, networks, and practices to succeed in a world that values Weadership, while at the same time deepening knowledge about the history and practice of workforce development within the field itself.

During our conversations, leaders reflected on the kinds of skills and attributes that helped them succeed, and the knowledge they accrued during their careers. They told us that their successors would benefit from this know-how, but will also need different skills. We explore these issues below.

BUILDING SKILLS
We asked workforce leaders what skills are most needed to be successful in positions like theirs. They named over 100. We sorted these into four categories: strategy skills, information and analysis skills, people skills, and narrative skills. The nature of needed skills is changing with new technologies and evolving expectations of peers, partners, and employees.

1. Strategy Development. Visioning, goal setting, prioritizing, planning, and convening were the most frequently named skills in this category. But leaders noted significant differences between how strategy work was organized in years past, and today’s expectations. The old strategic planning framework—emphasizing program implementation over five years—is giving way to a more action-centered model focused on achieving big goals. This approach is less rigid and allows for more experimentation and mid-course corrections along the way. Goals tend to be broader than any one funding stream or program and encourage alignment among workforce, economic development, and education partners. The new model is also more flexible about how big goals are achieved and at what scale. This iterative approach makes it easier to test new ideas and to shift strategies as conditions change.

2. Information and Analysis. Workforce leaders have long been effective users of information and data. Over time, some have also become sophisticated producers of data—through survey work, the development of indices and dashboards, and customized performance reports. But today’s leaders work in a data-rich environment. Increasingly, their value lies not in producing data, but in aggregating, interpreting, and making it available in ways that inspire people in their organizations and communities to take action. This work requires different information and analyses skills than in years past.

3. People Skills. While the ability to work well with all kinds of people has always been important for workforce leaders, today’s leaders interact with a wider ar-
“I think we need to be serious about investing in future leaders. Make a real commitment—whether it’s a training institute or providing opportunities for growth [...] and it’s okay if they don’t stay in workforce development. They’ll make a contribution somewhere, and it will help all of us.”

Carol, Workforce Development Director, Regional Development Agency

“My observation about government is that we don’t spend adequate time and resources developing people, organizational development isn’t really perceived as a valid thing.”

Karen, Executive Director, Workforce Board

“We need to spend more time and resources in our communities and nationally really developing leadership in workforce. We’re just beginning to have the kinds of jobs, talent, and skills discussions that should be ongoing. The leadership piece is the next place we need to go.”

Paul, Executive Director, Workforce Board
4. Narrative and Communication. Narrative skills help leaders generate understanding, promote learning, and encourage action. As complex economic and workforce data is more accessible, the ability to explain what it means to people who can use it to improve their lives and communities is more critical. Good stories attract and motivate partners and employees alike. Although workforce leaders have learned to use narrative and story more effectively over time, there is still much work to be done to move from an over-reliance on individual anecdotes to narratives that reflect broader systemic or community change. The capacity of workforce organizations in this regard is accelerating quickly as young media-savvy workforce professionals push for alternatives to traditional newsletters and publications to communicate the nature of their work and why it matters, in real time.

LEARNING AS A META-SKILL
Most leaders talked about the importance of learning in terms of its objectives—better engaging citizens in policy decisions, for example. But some recognize that learning itself is also a critical leadership skill. Prominent scholars argue that it is the most important skill:

- James Kouzes and Barry Posner find a strong correlation between engagement in learning and leadership effectiveness, concluding, “The best leaders are the best learners.”32 Importantly, they find that what really matters is the depth of engagement—not the learning style, tool, or tactic. Leaders need time and space for learning, and the opportunity to practice and improve.
- Bob Eichinger, Mike Lombardo, and Dave Ulrich find that learning agility—the ability to reflect on experience and then engage in new behaviors based on those reflections—is the key indicator of success in new managerial roles/jobs.33

Learning matters for leaders, and for everyone who aspires to lead.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE
Senior workforce leaders are also concerned about sharing professional knowledge. Workforce leaders understand that they are not cultivating leaders to fill their jobs, but to reinvent workforce development for future workers, firms, and communities. At the same time, they stated that the field of workforce development lacks historical knowledge and the kinds of institutions that would likely strengthen it:

- Unlike poverty studies, economic development or education, workforce development is not a widely recognized field of public policy. Even when it is raised in policy programs or academic papers, it tends to be characterized as “workforce training”—absent the context of community convening and policy making that workforce leaders say is the most important work they do.
- There are few serious professional development programs for workforce leaders, and those that do exist, tend to emphasize specific interventions and how they work, rather than the policy context that make those interventions good or bad choices.34

---

34 As a part of this project, we asked workforce leaders about the resources they use to be better leaders themselves and build leadership capacity within their organizations and communities. We aggregated and analyzed these resources on the project’s website here http://bit.ly/mgnrg2.

---

Ray of community stakeholders than ever before, from regular citizens to peers and partners from elsewhere in the world, and their own Gen-X, Gen-Y, and Millennial-generation staff who demand mentoring, development opportunities, and the chance to exercise leadership themselves. Moreover, these interactions occur using vastly different technologies than were typical a generation ago—web-based technologies, but also other facilitation techniques, such as World Café,29 Appreciative Inquiry,30 and Network Weaving,31 that encourage shared learning, and create spaces in which people from diverse backgrounds can build trust and engage in collaborative change.

---

29 World Café is a facilitation approach grounded in a philosophy of conversational leadership that integrates tested design principles and methods in ways that build trust and support deep conversation leaders to change. For more information (including access to the World Café toolkit), see the World Café Foundation website at http://www.theworldcafe.com/about.html
30 Appreciative Inquiry is an approach to whole-system change that relies on questions intended to elicit strengths on which people and organizations can build as they aspire to improved performance, more significant impact, or a healthier social, intellectual, or business environment. For more information, see the Appreciative Inquiry Commons at Case Western Reserve University http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/
31 Network Weaving is a method and practice of building Smart Community Networks that enable significant and sustainable change. For more information and access to a variety of technical assistance and training resources, see June Holley’s Network Weaver website http://www.networkweaver.com/
Association and professional conferences tend to focus on legislative action, effective practice sharing, or training in specific approaches or the use of tools, but not the evolution of policy itself. In addition, these groups may limit participation in events or activities to their own members.

Investment in leadership development within workforce organizations is insufficient. Importantly, as much as 70% of leadership development occurs in the workplace by structuring workplace practices and assignments in ways that help people learn. Many workforce leaders were quite candid about the lack of investment, innovation, or consistency within their own internal learning and development practices and lamented the fact that the field overall was not more attentive to this issue.

Workforce leaders identified grounding emerging leaders in the history and context of workforce development as a real need that will spare them the pain of having to reinvent wheels. It also promises to deepen the connections between these new leaders and their colleagues and—in the process—strengthen the field of practice.

ADOPTING 21 CENTURY TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Workplace practices are changing in every field, including human resources.

Unfortunately, workforce development organizations are rarely found at the forefront of these changes—one respondent noted, “We are like shoemakers who don’t tend to their shoes.”

Leaders also noted that it does not have to be this way. Workforce leaders could choose a different path, experimenting with innovations like mobile or game-centered development approaches, social networking, work-life balance initiatives, or responding to other needs and preferences of the talent they seek to recruit.

Workforce leaders face an unprecedented opportunity to model the approaches they would like to see adopted more widely in the workplace, while cultivating the next generation of leaders—leaders with the right skills, a com-

---

What Skills Do Today’s Leaders Need?

We asked our respondents this question, but others have been investigating the issue, too. One of the most concise and conceptually interesting lists we found is this one, developed by Bob Johansen, Distinguished Fellow at the Institute for the Future.

Ten New Leadership Skills for an Uncertain World

1. Maker Instinct: Ability to exploit your inner drive to build and grow things, as well as connect with others in the making.

2. Clarity: Ability to see through messes and contradictions to a future others cannot yet see. Leaders are very clear about what they are making but very flexible about how it gets made.

3. Dilemma Flipping: Ability to turn dilemmas—which, unlike problems, cannot be solved—into advantages and opportunities.

4. Immersive Learning Ability: Ability to immerse yourself in unfamiliar environments, to learn from them in a first-person way.

5. Bio-Empathy: Ability to see things from nature’s point of view; to understand respect, and learn from nature’s patterns.

6. Constructive Depolarizing: Ability to calm tense situations where differences dominate and communication has broken down—

7. Quiet Transparency: Ability to be open and authentic about what matters to you—without advertising yourself.

8. Rapid Prototyping: Ability to create quick early versions of innovations, with the expectation that later successes will require early failures

9. Smart Mob Organizing: Ability to create, engage with, and nurture purposeful business or social change networks through intelligent use of electronic and other media.

10. Commons Creating: Ability to seed, nurture, and grow shared assets that can benefit other players—and sometimes allow competition at a higher level.


---

36 The 70-20-10 rule, developed by the Center for Creative Leadership over 30 years of research posits that leadership development occurs in three clusters of experience: challenging assignments (70%), developmental relationships and networks (20%) and coursework and training (10%). However, most firms and organizations (private and public sector) lack this synergistic approach to developing new leaders. See “Grooming Top Leaders: Perspectives from China, India, Singapore, and the USA,” (White Paper), Center for Creative Leadership (2010).

37 There were notable exceptions, however. A few leaders expressed either high levels of commitment to team-based professional development or had created their own academy or boot-camp style approaches to learning of which leadership was a component. Two of them had explicitly connected internal talent development and human resource practices to these efforts. In addition, as noted previously, the National Association of Workforce Boards is designing a professional development program in partnership with the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development and others.

and bring people from divergent cultures toward constructive engagement.
mitment to their communities, and the deep knowledge of past leaders on whose shoulders they stand.

THREE WAYS WORKFORCE LEADERS CAN BETTER CULTIVATE THE NEXT GENERATION:

1. Design immersive learning opportunities that connect workforce professionals from across generations into meetings and conferences. This exposes existing workforce leaders to new learning methods, addresses persistent gaps in the field, and creates higher expectations on the part of emerging leaders and professionals about what to expect from their field of practice.

2. Continue to experiment with development initiatives that show promise in growing and retaining emerging leaders, such as Academies and Institutes. These can be scaled to meet the needs of single jurisdictions or attract international audiences. They can be designed around any subject and engage professionals across disciplines. They might even serve as the building blocks of more formal credentialed development programs. Convening organizers, funders, and designers of existing academies and institutes would be one way to assess what is (or is not) working about this approach.

3. Adopt cutting-edge recruiting, management and development practices within workforce organizations or agencies, iteratively, and in manageable ways. Some workforce leaders are already doing this in the professional development sphere. Simple things like inviting interns to management meetings constructively disrupt hierarchies and change the way senior leaders view younger employees. Engaging younger workers in program or technology interface design and development has a similar effect. Creative workforce leaders are finding a myriad of opportunities to invite their younger colleagues to take leadership roles.

Three Questions Leaders Should Ask in Service of Cultivating Next Generation Leaders

Workforce leaders we interviewed were universally concerned about the next generation of leaders. Many were focused on nurturing a second-in-command, but had less clear ideas about how to bring leaders along at different levels. We found this deceptively simple list of questions, and tested it informally with workforce leaders we know. The first question, in particular, generated considerable reflection.

1. Which critical jobs will make the largest difference to your results in the next five to ten years? If you don’t know, how can you find out?

2. How well positioned are you to staff those critical jobs with the right people? What percent of the key positions are staffed by people who are qualified for the future?

3. What percentage of the key positions have qualified talent in place? What is your back-up ratio (the number of people qualified to move into key positions divided by key positions)?

“We have to build a new understanding of workforce in our communities. We have an old pipeline sense of how people make it through...maybe leadership is adaptability—the capacity to ramp up and learn new things quickly.”

Shari, Vice President, Membership Association

“We really need to grow the people coming behind us. Large transitions are just beginning to occur and cultivating new leaders could be very powerful.”

Cynthia, Deputy Director, Workforce Agency

“One of our biggest concerns has to do with the number of people reaching retirement age ...how to we institutionalize the knowledge and skills they have?”

Roy, Program Director, Workforce Agency
“Being a workforce leader today requires exercising skills that can seem like opposites—you’ve got to be decisive, but flexible; creative, but focused; visionary, but the devil is in the detail. The trick is knowing what skills to apply in what circumstances, and never being alone. You surround yourself with good people so they can pick up the ball when you can’t.”

Roger, Executive Director, Workforce Agency
SELECT PROJECT RESOURCES
The Enhancing Workforce Leadership team developed the following products and resources during the course of the project. We encourage readers to also explore other project documents accessible through the links provided.

- 5 Leaders on Leadership (Video) [http://bit.ly/mSDf5e](http://bit.ly/mSDf5e)
- 32 Leadership Resources: a collection of resources used by workforce leaders to build their own leadership skills and cultivate other leaders in their organizations or communities [http://bit.ly/mgnrg2](http://bit.ly/mgnrg2)

The Future of Workforce Leadership: WEADERSHIP

ABOUT THE SYMBOLS (OPPOSITE)

Those are QR (Quick Response) codes—special two-dimensional bar codes that can be read by most camera cell phones. While firms use them to connect customers to product enhancements or special offers, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, museums, schools, and community campaigns use them in all kinds of creative ways for as many purposes. The US Department of State, for example, uses them to provide the public with summaries of world events and share the Secretary’s travel schedule and public remarks.

The codes above are linked to the resources named, which are on the EnhancingWorkforceLeadership.org website.

To use the codes, you will need a QR reader (application). There are many free readers available for download quickly and easily through the application exchange for your mobile device: Android Marketplace for Android users; The App Store for iPhone users; and Blackberry App World for Blackberry users. Once the application is enabled, just scan the barcode to access the data behind it, including the urls above.
“Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and media like it have arrived as powerful tools of government policymaking.”

Paul McClosky, Government Computer News
In 2009, Tricia, a tech-savvy workforce board staff member in Portland, Oregon, noticed a series of news stories about people finding jobs and learning opportunities in new ways, using web-based and mobile technologies and social media. She talked to senior leaders in her organization about how the workforce board might use these technologies to advance its work, too. They asked her to design and lead an initiative that would accomplish this goal. She worked with a group to define goals, select tools, and begin experimenting. The group decided to use YouTube, to tell better stories and document programs, and Twitter, to learn from others and share resources relevant to the workforce community. The workforce board also started a blog. A year later, Tricia’s organization had become one of the most prominent workforce organizations on Twitter. Her team had also developed a series of fun and informative videos that explained what they do—especially to local community members. A direct dialogue ensued where blog readers began asking what happened to the individuals whose stories appeared on the blog. It was a first indication that this board had connected with the community in a new way.

Worksystems Inc.\(^{37}\) is an example of a workforce organization at the cutting edge of a trend that is transforming business: the rise of social media. Social media changes the way people learn, work, communicate, and collaborate in virtually every industry, including workforce development.

Many workforce leaders we engaged in this project were new to social media: some understood the significance of these new communication tools for job-seekers, but were less clear about their value to workforce organizations; others expressed concern about the staffing implications of using these new tools and methods; and still others were “power-users” of specific tools personally, but were operating in the absence of organization-wide guidance or policy in the workplace.

Social media is so profoundly changing the business of workforce development—and the role of leadership—that we offer this topical guide, which explains why social media matters and describes how workforce leaders are using it to accomplish their goals. More profoundly, social media enables an “ongoing conversation of the planet.”\(^ {38}\)

There are three critical pieces of this definition.

Social media is not a single tool or application. It is an ecosystem built on a few basic tools that facilitate different kinds of activities. For example, Facebook facilitates communication and content sharing within social networks; Twitter encourages public listening, conversation, and resource sharing; and YouTube supports content sharing and increasingly, collaboration. These and similar services are complemented by hundreds of applications that amplify, connect, aggregate, share, sort, search, and recombine shared content in ways that matter to users. Because the tools can change quickly, using social media requires a willingness to experiment, learn, and adapt, combining an array of tools in ways that meet your particular needs at a given point in time.

Second, the use of these tools is goal-focused. There are hundreds of social media tools and more emerging every day. Workforce leaders will likely have to experiment to determine the tools that work best for them. But these tools should help workforce leaders do their work—advance their goals—not just add to their workloads.

Third, the tools themselves are generally accessible online (or increasingly on mobile devices), but the collaboration they enable can occur both online and offline (face to face)}
face). This is what makes social media so powerful. People can connect with other people entirely outside of formal organizations or hierarchies and collaborate on just about anything.

For those who want to explore definitions, here are three starting points:

1. The ever-evolving Wikipedia entry on social media

2. Mashable’s effort to solicit 140-character definitions from the Twitterverse
   http://on.mash.to/kaxuYH

3. Erik Qualman’s video, “Social Media Revolution,” from Socialnomics.net

We offer the following examples of workforce leaders using social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter) to achieve their goals.

A. LINKEDIN

Casual users may think of LinkedIn as a place to post resumes and aggregate contacts, but many workforce leaders use the service in ways that explicitly build (and make visible) social networks. The key is LinkedIn’s “Groups” function. Individuals create online groups that both reflect and enhance their offline networks. We identified dozens of workforce leaders using the service to build relationships—across organizations, disciplines, and geographies—that help them achieve their goals. Here are three examples.

1. **Network Building.** Before you engage people, you’ve got to connect with them. Katharine McClurg Anderson, who coordinates sector initiatives in Colorado, established the PROs in Workforce and Economic Development group in LinkedIn in 2008. Two volunteer members now manage the network, comprised of 825 members representing economic and workforce development organizations (public and private), as well as think tanks, foundations, colleges and universities, and private-sector firms. A number of members represent organizations outside the US. They regularly share resources, including reports, articles, and notices about conferences and events where they might meet in person. Recent topics of conversation include innovation, approaches to On-the-Job Training, and whether or not the US has realized a “new normal”—high growth combined with low employment. Group members from diverse backgrounds share information and often connect other members to their personal networks in and outside of the group.

2. **Wide-angle Learning.** We, the authors of this guide, are members of a LinkedIn group called “Visualize Gov,” comprising 260 government and technology professionals and representatives of foundations and journalism schools (from inside and outside the US). We use the group to explore trends and effective practices in communication, visualization, and collaboration in government. It exposes us to new ways to make complex information easy to understand, and new tools, like those intended to support learning or simplify decision-making in government agencies.

3. **Open Problem-solving.** Veronica Reyes is the Human Resources Manager of the Aerospace Transition Center at Workforce Solutions in Houston, Texas. She is a LinkedIn power user. A member of dozens of LinkedIn groups, she also established the Aerospace Transition Center group on LinkedIn in June 2010; it now includes over 1,600 members. When asked about how LinkedIn helps her be a better leader, Veronica hardly knew where to begin. “LinkedIn is how I do my work,” she exclaimed. “I’m connected to hundreds of aerospace industry profes-
Leadership enabled a Facebook page for the project. During that time, we connected with 123 people, organizations, and agencies, with an expressed interest in workforce development. We asked a few of them how they use Facebook in their work. Their responses are summarized in the three points below.

1. **Supporting Events and Conferences.** Workforce professionals use Facebook to promote and support their events. By sharing agendas, information about venues, and other highlights in advance of planned events, organizers use Facebook to attract participants. During events, organizers use Facebook to communicate new information—changes in venues or room assignments for example—and to share details about activities as they are scheduled. For many conference organizers, communicating through Facebook is more immediate than using email and simpler and more dynamic than changing their websites.

2. **Reaching Young People.** For busy workforce professionals, email can be slow and cumbersome: wading through it is time-consuming, and conversations are not threaded so it can be difficult to find what you need quickly, especially on a mobile device. Younger workforce customers may change email addresses or not use email as their primary means of communication, making them hard to reach. Facebook solves these problems. As a result, young leaders, and even senior leaders who need to interact with younger colleagues, often prefer it.

3. **Enabling Peer Connections and Support.** People can communicate with each other publicly on Facebook. This means they can help each other solve problems rather than relying on a single person or organization. When customers share information on Facebook (a form of crowdsourcing), it can save workforce program administrators, managers, and outreach staff time, helping them do their work more efficiently. There are many examples of this on the pages of nonprofit organizations, and even a few on the US Department of Labor’s own Facebook page.

One of the challenges workforce professionals raised during our events and workshops is the issue of access to social media tools: many public agencies restrict access to Facebook, forcing employees who use Facebook to do their work using their home computers. Many of these Facebook users reported that they were not aware of a comprehensive social media policy in their organizations,
but that key social media sites in addition to Facebook were also restricted in the workplace.

Here are three resources to help you integrate Facebook into your communications and service strategies:

1. John Haydon’s Complete Facebook Guide for Small Nonprofits (2010) is accessible through Socialbrite’s website here http://bit.ly/lqKxtV. Keep in mind that Facebook changes quickly, so parts of the guide are already out of date. However, because the entire focus is Facebook, it offers users sage advice about the “whys” and “whats” of Facebook, even if the specific “hows” change.

2. IBM Center for the Business of Government’s An Open Government Implementation Model: Moving to Increased Public Engagement. Although not specifically about Facebook, the report provides a number of case studies in which public agencies use Facebook to accomplish key objectives http://bit.ly/izcpCv

3. For more experienced users, Inside Facebook offers the latest information about platform updates and redesigns and how to use them well http://bit.ly/jyh0Vu

C. TWITTER

When people first log in to Twitter, a typical response is, “I don’t get it.” Twitter is a microblogging service that lets users craft short (140-character) posts (including links) on just about anything. Users can follow other users, create lists of users, and link content together through the use of a hashtag—a word or phrase preceded by “#” that indicates the subject of the post and enables topical search.

There are an infinite number of ways people use Twitter. We found few Twitter users among the workforce leaders we engaged as a part of the project. However, all leader respondents knew what Twitter was, and most expect to be using the service in the future.

Here are three ways workforce leaders are using the service to achieve their goals:

1. Listening to Thought Leaders. Among Twitter’s 200-300 million users are many thought leaders in key fields, including economic and workforce development, education, human resources, economics, social innovation, and government. These people often test ideas, ask questions, and reveal not-yet-published data on Twitter. Followers use these updates to stay abreast of new developments in their fields and build their professional networks.

2. Sharing Learning During Events and Conferences. Increasingly, conference planners rely on Twitter to aggregate the “wisdom of the crowd.” By asking Twitter users to employ a hashtag, all of the updates by individuals in the same space, conversation, or event can be aggregated, regardless of who is following whom. This helps conference goers get more out of a typical event by giving them a view of sessions they cannot attend. It also enables attendees to share content with far-away colleagues. In addition, the aggregated feed provides conference organizers with unparalleled intelligence about their event—what people liked or did not, where there were logistical or other problems, or which speakers drew the largest crowds, for example.

3. Learning and Connecting with Peers Through Online Subject-Specific Chats Convened at Designated Times. For example, at the end of June, we participated in a “Talent Chat” (hashtag = #tchat) with human resource professionals attending the Annual Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) Meeting in Las Vegas, and regular participants in the weekly online “Leadership Chat” (#leadershipchat). Organizers used Twitter to share a list of questions in advance of the event, and participants joined for one hour to “chat”—respond to each other’s comments and questions about the subject matter. Similar chats oriented at learning, problem-solving, or intelligence-sharing among colleagues both local and remote occur every day.

Twitter appeals to different groups in different ways.

• Of Internet users, only one in ten white people use Twitter, but one in four African Americans, and one in five Latinos do.42

• Twitter is more popular on the West Coast and in the Southeast than elsewhere in the country, New York State and Washington DC are the exceptions in the Northeast.43

---

• The person most likely to use Twitter is a female, Hispanic, twenty-something who attended college, lives in a city, and earns under $30K or between $50K and $75K. 44

Although Twitter is the most popular microblogging service, other similar technologies exist for supporting group communication and collaboration, such as Yammer, SocialCast and Identi.ca. Moreover, this kind of communications capacity is now built into many enterprise level collaboration platforms intended for large firms, organizations, and agencies.

D. FOURSQUARE, GOWALLA, GEOLOQI, AND OTHER GEOLOCATION SERVICES

Geolocation services installed on your mobile device do two things: associate you with a geographic location; and communicate your location to other users of the service.

Additional social and game services can be layered on top of these basic functions. The most popular geolocation services include: Foursquare, Gowalla, Brightkite, and Loopt. New applications like GeoLoqi and Glympse offer constant location tracking, automatic check-ins and layers of more sophisticated add-on services (geo-tagging, auto-notification, mapping, etc.).

Only a few workforce leaders we talked to during the project knew about these services, but they saw the possible implications.

• Imagine that your mobile device lets you know that you are within a few blocks of a class that starts in ten minutes and has two seats available.

• Imagine that your device, which knows you are job hunting, tells you that the shop, office, or plant you are in front of is hiring.

• Imagine that your device lets you know that a hiring manager in your LinkedIn network is behind you in line for coffee.

Although these services are little known within the workforce community, they hold promise for workforce leaders interested in innovative approaches to connecting people, firms, and opportunities.


OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES

Social Media Policies

One of the concerns we heard from leaders exploring these new social spaces is uncertainty about how to govern their use. The following resources can help workforce leaders craft policies that fit their particular circumstances.

1. Beth’s Blog. Beth Kanter, co-author of The Networked Nonprofit (2010), is a leading expert on the use of social media in the nonprofit sector. Her blog at http://www.bethkanter.org is a virtual laboratory notebook. It offers a wealth of resources and is infinitely searchable

2. Chris Boudreaux’s website http://socialmediagovernance.com contains three invaluable resources:


• A link to a searchable database comprising 176 social media policies from a variety of industries and organizations, including government and nonprofit sectors http://bit.ly/mfzUBD

• A whitepaper entitled “When You Can Say ‘We have a social media strategy.’” that provides help aligning business goals with social media strategies. The paper is particularly relevant to large organizations http://bit.ly/mQkKr6

3. A brief from the Center for Technology Innovation at Brookings (part of its Issues in Technology Innovation series) called, “Designing Social Media Policy for Government.” Relevant to all levels of government, the guide offers eight elements for decision makers to consider as they craft social media policies http://bit.ly/IZVXdE

Our Favorite Websites & Blogs About Social Media for the Public Interest

We discovered hundreds of helpful social media websites and blogs. We returned to five of them time and again for resources, help on specific questions, links to videos or talks, and statistics. We hope you find them useful, too.

★ The Knight Foundation. Chock full of reports, resources, media, and inspiration at the intersection of democracy, journalism and community http://bit.ly/oNrlRu
★ **The Pew Research Center’s Internet and American Life project.** A key source of data about the use of social technologies. [http://bit.ly/n7yVHK](http://bit.ly/n7yVHK)


★ **Mashable.** The largest independent news source covering digital culture, social media and technology, the site curates content under the tab “Social Good” that might be of particular interest to workforce leaders. [http://on.mash.to/qPBN6L](http://on.mash.to/qPBN6L)

★ **GovFresh.** An inspiring site devoted to citizen participation in government at all levels, refreshingly non-federal. [http://bit.ly/kLnXRw](http://bit.ly/kLnXRw)

---

Our Favorite Books About the Impact of Social Technologies

We had a hard time narrowing down our list, but eventually landed on these five. We selected them because each offers insight independent of a particular set of tools. These books emphasize the broader social and economic changes social media is enabling, rather than a particular tool or single moment in time.


---

46 The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the US Department of Labor. Mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations does not imply endorsement of same by the US Government.
GET EXCITED AND MAKE THINGS
New technologies are helping to connect governments and change agents from across sectors, and putting new frontiers within reach of traditional institutions. In this section, we provide an overview of four such frontiers: social innovation, online gaming for the public good, crowdsourcing (and crowdfunding), and Gov2.0.

A. SOCIAL INNOVATION
Social innovation at its core is the successful implementation of new ideas that meet social needs. Social innovation is not new. Over time, social innovators have developed all kinds of services, tools, and products we now take for granted:

- Public drinking fountains were invented by a plumber (Halsey Taylor) who’s father died of a water borne-disease and a sanitary inspector (Luther Haws) who observed school children sharing a tin cup and thought he could find a better way to keep young people hydrated.

- Unemployment Insurance, launched during the Great Depression, helped stabilize families and communities during economic shocks—then and now.

- Microcredit, made famous by Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, is an approach to alleviating poverty in which small sums of money are loaned to poor people to make investments (in businesses, community infrastructure, education, etc.) that improve their socioeconomic opportunities and quality of life. Kiva now offers this opportunity to aspiring entrepreneurs in the US.

- Linux and Wikipedia are among the best known examples of social innovation in the Internet age, but open-source approaches to the creation of tools and technologies, and to problem-solving more generally, are transforming many professional fields.

Social innovation itself has a long history. However, the professional networks, methodologies, and institutions devoted to promoting social innovation at scale are only just emerging. From schools of social innovation and entrepreneurship to new legal forms—like the low-profit, limited-liability company (L3C)—to alternative investment vehicles, there is a groundswell of interest in non-traditional approaches to solving our most intractable social problems.

The Promise of Social Innovation for Workforce Leaders
Social innovation is not the domain of one particular sector of society. It is practiced in the public and private sectors, in nonprofit and civic organizations, and in neighborhoods and volunteer networks. Frequently, groups and individuals from more than one of these sectors collaborate to realize successful social innovations. Workforce leaders regularly support cross-sector convening and collaboration for educators, workforce professionals, and economic developers. Applying the same set of skills to different groups at different scales could create new possibilities for solving important problems that workforce leaders are already working on.

In addition, workforce leaders occupy a field of public policy that is among the top concerns for elected leaders and the public. This has certainly been true over the past two years during which a large majority of Americans expressed more concern about jobs and the economy than any other public policy issue. This kind of public awareness makes it very likely that people in many communities are already working on solutions and could be brought together.
er to test new approaches or grow those that are working. Workforce leaders need not have all the answers to what are clearly complex economic problems in their communities. Their partners and neighbors can help.

Further, many workforce leaders have invested time and effort exploring, learning, and practicing innovation, both to better understand the challenges their business partners face and to better position themselves as practitioners of innovation. Social innovation builds on this knowledge, but may constitute a more relevant field of practice for workforce leaders who are solving community problems. It may also help place them in a favorable position as increasing numbers of firms begin to broaden their missions to include social and environmental goals, as so many are beginning to do.

Finally, many communities are establishing social innovation initiatives—such as education programs through colleges and universities or social innovation incubators through nonprofit or business organizations, or commerce-focused business accelerators partnering with governments to address specific market failures. These offer opportunities for workforce leaders to solicit new ideas or help grow or improve nascent efforts that already show promise.

Although few workforce leaders claim a social innovation strategy or particular expertise in the field, many are interested in the subject and want to learn more.

**Social Innovation Resources**

*The Open Book of Social Innovation*, (NESTA and the Young Foundation, 2010) offers 527 methods, examples, insights, and ideas reflecting six different stages of social innovation from initial inspiration to systemic change. Available in book form, it can also be downloaded as a PDF from the Young Foundation’s website [http://bit.ly/oYYMqi](http://bit.ly/oYYMqi)

---

48 Ashoka offers a social entrepreneurship education resource guide that lists colleges and university courses relating to social entrepreneurship [http://ashoka.org/resources/social-entrepreneurship-education-resource-handbook](http://ashoka.org/resources/social-entrepreneurship-education-resource-handbook) Springboard Innovation in Portland, Oregon is launching Hatch, a community innovation lab to enable citizen entrepreneurs to launch eco-social enterprises [http://blog.springboardinnovation.org/2011/05/may-update-on-hatch](http://blog.springboardinnovation.org/2011/05/may-update-on-hatch) and Toronto’s Center for Social Innovation is home to a growing number of commercial social benefit organizations and companies [http://socialinnovation.ca/home](http://socialinnovation.ca/home)
Among foundations and philanthropists, Dr. Judith Rodin, President of the Rockefeller Foundation is at the forefront of social innovation—as a practitioner, champion, and investor. Here is her interview with Rahim Kanani on the evolution and promise of the approach http://bit.ly/pV286P

Harvard Kennedy School’s Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation recently launched the Project on Social Innovation. The project’s website offers social innovators—especially those working in cities—practical tools and resources, and supports their ability to connect with one another using social media http://bit.ly/pgL9F

Focusing specifically on workforce development, Root Cause, a well-known nonprofit research and consulting firm promoting social innovation, is working in the area of workforce development, conducting field-wide analyses and identifying effective practices. Although the organization employs a narrow definition of workforce development, its materials may be of interest to workforce leaders and are available here http://bit.ly/nF8M0

Social innovation is an exciting and rapidly expanding field of practice—globally. It offers leaders in any sector the opportunity to work together to rebuild, redress, reinvent, and reimagine our way to more prosperous communities.

Books About Social Innovation
A search of Amazon for books listed under “social innovation” reveals nearly 5,000—hundreds of them published during the past three years. Here are three to get started.


Other Ways to Tap into Social Innovation Networks
An active community of social innovators uses Twitter to connect with one another. Searching for the hashtags #socent (social entrepreneurship), #socinn (social innovation), or #socap (social capital)—this also refers to a particular conference on social capital markets—will help you find the conversation.

Social Innovation Exchange (SIX) is a global network that connects social innovators from government, academia, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and elsewhere so they can share ideas and resources that advance both policy and practice.49

LinkedIn offers dozens of groups comprising members that share an interest in social innovation, including one organized around the Stanford Social Innovation Review.

B. ONLINE GAMING FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

We found few gamers (or aspiring gamers) among the workforce leaders we interviewed. However many leaders expressed interest in gaming as an approach to skill development and curiosity about how the lessons of Massive Multiplayer Online Games (MMOGs) might transfer to community-wide policy making and engagement. Gaming holds promise for workforce leaders, not just for teaching specific workforce skills, such as literacy or technical skills for workers enrolled in workforce programs, but also as a platform for leadership development and for simulating the kind of work that workforce leaders do.

First, the numbers:50 there are 183 million active gamers (people who say they play regularly) in the US.

- Seven in ten heads-of-households play computer and video games, nearly all (97%) youth play.
- Forty percent of gamers are women.
- One in four gamers is over the age of 50.
- In 2009, 61% of surveyed (corporate) CEOs, CFOs and other senior executives reported taking daily game breaks.51 Gaming is a $68 billion industry. Jane McGonigal in Reality is Broken, argues that people are flocking to games because they offer compelling rewards that are too little present in real life: satisfying work that enables people to see the fruits of their efforts; the experience (or hope) of being successful; significant social connections; and meaning—the opportunity to be part of something larger than themselves. A number of job satisfaction and other talent management surveys and papers

49 Kristin Wolff, the primary author of this document, is a current member of the SIX Advisory Board.


corroborate these observations about the workplace.52
In the last three years, many gamers and game developers have turned their attention to a particular genre of games designed to achieve positive social ends in the real world. Called “social impact games”, “games for good”, or “serious games”, these games focus on building the kinds of skills that are critical for social change in the real world: taking a long view while also managing actions in the moment; ecosystem thinking that considers the impact of a change in one part of a complex system on many other parts; and pilot experimentation—running many tests at different times and growing the successful ones into significant impact.

In addition to skill building, games offer a number of other benefits for policy makers and leaders working in complex environments:

- They are compelling and low-risk ways of engaging the public in policy-making. Public agencies and governments at all levels are experimenting with budgeting, citizen engagement, and all manner of crowdsourcing ideas or resources.53

- They can engage people at various scales independent of geographic location. Games are one way to support the development of global networks workforce leaders say they need relatively inexpensively.

- They can help leaders develop scenarios relevant in the real world. Games, in effect, are simulations. Simulations can be cumbersome and expensive in the real world, but are far less so in the virtual one.

- They can inform how workforce leaders in particular think about program design for learning and work preparation in their local real-world communities.

As one indicator of the importance of games and gaming technologies to governments and policy makers, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is studying the potential of immersive online platforms like MMOGs and Second Life on collaboration and learning.54


53 See also “Crowdsourcing” section of this document, p.53

http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5kg9qgrpjy8g-en
What follows is a list of examples of games and gaming technologies governments, nonprofit organizations, and even community-minded businesses are using to advance the public interest.

Public Budgeting
American Public Media’s Budget Hero Game (federal) http://bit.ly/jquqDF
City of Santa Cruz (CA) 2009 Participatory Budgeting Process (local) http://bit.ly/mFnS3W

Public Engagement
Find the Future was an augmented reality overnight scavenger hunt hosted by the New York Public Library to celebrate its 100th birthday. The product is a collaboratively developed book based on the theme 100 ways to change the future inspired by 100 intriguing works of the past.
Game site http://bit.ly/mhprNG
About the Game http://on.mash.to/j110d9

Scenario Planning
World Without Oil was a simulation game involving 1,900 players from all 50 US states and 12 countries around the world in which players imagined that there was no more oil. For 32 days, they submitted blog entries, videos, and strategies—and worked together to create a new world without oil. Many players reported that the experience was life changing for them—and that it altered their behavior in the real world.

Spent is an online role-playing game that challenges players to live for one month on $1,000 while avoiding homelessness. Developed by Urban Ministries of North Carolina and McKinney Advertising, over a million people from all over the world have played it.
Spent (game site) http://bit.ly/luOLFg

Other Resources:
• Movement.org post “Saving the World One Game at a Time” (includes links to a toolkit for organizations interested in building their own social interest games): http://bit.ly/mlZd5W
• National Public Radio Story on Public Interest Gaming: http://n.pr/IG2AQi

C. CROWDSOURCING (& CROWDFUNDING)
Although the concept of crowdsourcing is not new, technology—specifically the Internet and social media—have opened up new possibilities for accessing our collective imagination and knowledge to address common problems. Our understanding of crowdsourcing’s potential is evolving as citizens, organizations and governments experiment with its many applications.

Crowdsourcing is a distributed model of problem-solving and production. When a project or task normally assigned to an individual or group of colleagues is instead “outsourced” to a large group of users or potential users, it is crowdsourced. Wikipedia is the product crowdsourcing. So is the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) project. You probably use a version crowdsourcing in your daily life—consulting with family members, friends, and members of your extended social networks in planning a trip, for example.

Social technologies encourage this kind of collaboration on an infinite number of subjects at mass scale. People consult product reviews offered by complete strangers before they make purchases. They use tools like Yelp to share information about local restaurants and other community amenities. They customize platforms like Ushahidi to find each other or offer help during natural disasters. Increasingly, government agencies, civic leaders, foun-

---

55 “Augmented reality” refers to the experience an object or environment in the real world whose components are enhanced by the instant availability of data (usually via mobile device) that increases the users’ understanding of the object or experience of the environment. Using a mobile device to read a QR code on a public art installation that takes the observer to information about that art installation is an example of augmented reality.
Crowdsourcing can be done in a myriad of ways—from gathering intelligence from existing social media, to launching a customized platform that supports contributions, ranking, voting, and social networking.

Workforce leaders consulting with their communities now—about plans, investment strategies, or their ideas for the future—are doing a version of crowdsourcing. But new technology platforms can help reach and engage infinitely more people, including those who do not participate in traditional ways.

Here are three ways workforce leaders can crowdsource new ideas today:

- Search LinkedIn groups for conversations about the issues you care most about. You might search by issue to identify a large number of ideas from across the country (and beyond), or you might search by geographic location to find conversations among people in your community.

- Search crowdsourcing.org for examples of tools and approaches to crowdsourcing or experts relevant to your interests and needs. Crowdsourcing.org is a useful gateway to platforms and guides about how to use them well, practitioners of crowdsourcing across sectors and geographies, and a myriad of other resources that can accelerate your learning curve.
• Explore an existing community platform. LikeMinded.org, for example, is a new project of Craigslist Foundation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation’s Technology for Engagement Initiative. While currently in beta, you can view ideas and projects submitted to date. Already, there are many solutions relevant to job creation, unemployment, and skills training.

Crowdfunding
A close cousin of crowdsourcing, crowdfunding is a collaborative funding model in which a network or community of people pool their resources, usually via the Internet, to support projects initiated by other people or organizations.

Dozens of platforms are springing up to support crowdfunding in particular communities, for specific fields of practice, or for a variety of causes. Total resources invested in this way are tiny compared to more traditional investments or philanthropy, but the number of donors/investors is growing quickly. For example, Kickstarter, the most popular platform has secured $35 million in pledges by December 2010, but by April 2011, “backers” were pledging $7 million dollars per month.

Why Does Crowdfunding Matter?
Workforce leaders are unlikely to turn to crowdfunding as a mechanism for supporting core programs, but there are a number of reasons these new tools might be attractive to them.

First, they provide lessons about how to generate support from “the public” for small projects that workforce leaders may want to pursue. Successfully funded projects or initiatives documented on various platforms may provide valuable insights: What level of funding is appropriate to request in this way? How do you communicate the goals of your initiative in a compelling way? Which platforms are more effective for what kind of initiatives?

Second, they offer a source of new ideas and potential contacts. For example, workforce leaders may find a new approach to training or placement for a particular demographic group or industry sector. They might fund the project or contact the project’s owner for a follow-up conversation.

Third, these platforms invest groups of people in the success of the project. Project investors will often help promote the project, support implementation, or otherwise connect with project organizers and other investors in ways that help the project succeed—even when there is no promise of financial return. This approach to generating community support for initiatives also offers lessons for workforce leaders.

Finally, many workforce leaders are searching for ways to promote job creation. While crowdfunding platforms do not typically result in traditional jobs, they do connect people to paid work. For aspiring business owners or people seeking “gigs” rather than traditional jobs, crowdfunding can offer an opportunity to test an idea, build a network, and access funding to support community projects or launch new businesses. Workforce programs can facilitate this, and also learn from it.

Engaging “the crowd” is not a panacea for addressing the critical and complex challenges workforce leaders confront. However, it can play an important role in helping leaders experiment with new ideas, enhance their networks, and demonstrate value to the broader community.

D. “GOV2.0”
Gov2.0, a phrase coined by Tim O’Reilly (O’Reilly Media) refers to government making use of Web2.0 technologies: social media, cloud computing, crowdsourcing, and the smart application of open data in the world. Importantly, the point of Gov2.0 is not just technology-savvy government or even open government, it’s better government. And to the extent that government is a significant actor in the broader marketplace, it’s better communities—a better world.

There is no more compelling explanation of the potential of Gov2.0 than Tim O’Reilly’s talk from the 2010 Gov2.0 Summit, “Government as a Platform for Greatness.” It is here: http://bit.ly/mT6ZSW

And for a more international look, Ovi Gormley’s 2009 documentary UsNow, featuring Don Tapscott, Clay Shirky and other thought leaders in this space, remains remarkably current. View it here: http://bit.ly/xOiOj9

Early Gov2.0 initiatives tended to emerge out of Mayor’s...
or Governor’s offices or among networks of tech-savvy professionals working in the public sector. A few years into the Gov2.0 era, we see evidence of deeper and more frequent connections between developers who want to do important things with open data and policy makers who are knowledgeable about community problems that need solving.

Workforce leaders are experimenting with Gov2.0 approaches, but there is much more to be done to if we are to use the data we’re collecting to inform solutions to our most intractable problems. In that spirit, we offer three examples of progress.

1. **Code for America.** A nonprofit organization that connects technologists with government agencies to solve community problems, has teamed up with the Departments of Defense and Labor on Joining Forces—an initiative designed to connect returning veterans and their families to the jobs, educational opportunities, and support networks that will help them thrive. Code for America fellows are working with agency staff, as well as returning veterans and community based organizations serving them, to link the most relevant information, services, and supports together in a single easily navigable platform. In addition, the platform will link returning vets to each other and to other vets in their communities—to help establish critical social networks as veterans reenter civilian life.

   Code for America [http://c4a.me/kNQFsw](http://c4a.me/kNQFsw)
   White House [http://1.usa.gov/kjVZe1](http://1.usa.gov/kjVZe1)

2. **Give A Minute.** Based on a concept developed by CEOs for Cities, Give a Minute is a technology platform designed to engage citizens in improving their communities by “crowdsourcing” their ideas in an open, public way. The City of Memphis is using the platform to engage people around skills. It asks: “Hey Memphis, what skills would you love to develop professionally or put to use?” The site lets users know that four people are “listening” to responses—one of them is Mayor A.C. Wharton, Jr., and another is Doug Scarboro, Executive Director of the Office of Talent and Human Capital, City of Memphis. To date, citizens have contributed 128 responses. Skills offered or desired range from child-care to graphic design to biofuel conversion. Requests for small business assistance and information about training programs are also prevalent. We asked Doug Scarboro what he hoped would happen as a result of the experiment. He responded, “In the future, this could help us develop our budget. Plus, by measuring the key areas of concern, we can see how the city is responding to citizens.” The city is partnering with the workforce board to identify critical next steps.

   Related Links:

3. **Education Hackathon, Portland, OR.** Organized by Cyborg Anthropologist and Geoqi cofounder Amber Case, the Education Hackathon grew out of a broader CivicApps initiative designed to engage technologists in making government data more useful to communities. But this event (May 2011) provides an example of workforce solutions coming from unexpected places. Mayor Sam Adams’ Education Strategies Director, Kali Ladd, identified ‘connecting young people to summer activities and jobs’ as a key educational challenge technology might help address. Eight hours later, the winning team had built a mobile app that addressed just that problem—and conducted an impressive bit of asset mapping in the process. The code is open source. If you’d like a similar tool in your city, you can get started here [http://bit.ly/lOIinW](http://bit.ly/lOIinW)

   Related Links:
   Winning App [http://bit.ly/k8o1At](http://bit.ly/k8o1At)

Both Mayor Sam Adams and Education Strategies Director Kali Ladd cite the Education Hackathon in our interviews with each of them.


APPENDICES

1. METHODS: HOW WE LAUNCHED AND MANAGED THE ENHANCING WORKFORCE LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

The goal of the Enhancing Workforce Leadership was to better understand the nature of workforce leadership today and how it is changing. We sought to learn about the work of workforce leaders, the challenges they face, and what they do to develop their own leadership abilities and to cultivate other leaders in their communities. Our aim was to share this information with key workforce development stakeholders who have an interest in workforce leadership, and inspire better ways to support current and emerging leaders in the field.

Toward that end, we used four qualitative methods:

1. Literature Review. We reviewed a collection of traditional leadership books and papers, but we also reviewed important work that speaks to leadership from new perspectives, such as Jane McGonigal’s *Reality is Broken* (about gaming), and Stephen Goldsmith’s *The Power of Social Innovation*. Our complete bibliography is online here [http://bit.ly/ppryTc](http://bit.ly/ppryTc) or available in PDF form on the project archive here [http://bit.ly/pYoBlp](http://bit.ly/pYoBlp).

2. Group Conversations. We conducted group discussions with members of, and in partnership with, key intergovernmental organizations including the National Association of Counties (NACo), National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA), National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB), the National Governors Association (NGA), the National League of Cities (NLC), the National Association of State Legislatures (NCSL), and the US Conference of Mayors (USCOM). We convened these discussions in a web environment using a combination of text-based “chat” and oral discussion. The results of this first phase are summarized in a collection of blog posts [http://bit.ly/moVwGr](http://bit.ly/moVwGr), a stack of cards [http://slidesha.re/oWV3e9](http://slidesha.re/oWV3e9), and a narrative summary [http://slidesha.re/pYOMwl](http://slidesha.re/pYOMwl).

3. Individual Conversations. We identified approximately 40 exemplary workforce leaders, and used a web-based randomizer to select 12 (six state-level representatives and six local-level representatives) for individual discussions. We conducted these using both traditional conference calls and video-based chat (Skype or Oovoo).


In total we convened 519 workforce leaders in conversations about leadership.

- We interviewed 119 workforce leaders from 33 states.
- We engaged over 400 workforce leaders in 6 simulation events and three community convenings.
- We reached approximately 7,100 individuals (not all workforce leaders) online, through our blog, Twitter and Slideshare, Google map, and a brief Facebook pilot project.


---

Although we cannot be certain these were all unique individuals, we took care not to double count. For example, if a visitor viewed one document from our simulation exercise, we assumed they also viewed the supporting documents, and did not count total views, only the number of views associated most frequently viewed document in each set.
2. FAVORITE BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP
We tried to narrow the list to ten, but had to settle on eleven. This collection includes books that focus on leadership specifically, and others that address the changing landscape in which leaders are working, and practices they are adopting to help them learn, lead, and grow other leaders.

The Art of Public Strategy Mobilizing Power and Knowledge for the Common Good
Geoff Mulgan. Oxford University Press, 2009. Explains how government policies and strategies can be shaped to achieve important social goals.

Leading Across Boundaries: Creating Collaborative Agencies in a Networked World

This collection includes books that focus on leadership specifically, and others that address the changing landscape in which leaders are working, and practices they are adopting to help them learn, lead, and grow other leaders.

Leading Outside the Lines: How to Mobilize the Informal Organization, Energize Your Team, and Get Better Results

Liquid Leadership: from Woodstock to Wikipedia: Multigenerational Management Ideas That Are Changing the Way We Run Things
Brad Szollose. Greenleaf Book Group, 2011. Explores techniques to bridge generational divides within the workplace and accelerate the adoption of new technology.

Macrowikinomics: Rebooting Business and the World
Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams. Portfolio Penguin, 2010. Explores the forces that have shaped our models of economic and social innovation and continue to revolutionize the way that we think and work today.

The New Social Learning: A Guide to Transforming Organizations through Social Media

Open Leadership: How Social Technology Can Transform the Way You Lead

The Power of Pull: How Small Moves, Smartly Made, Can Set Big Things in Motion.

The Sage Handbook of Leadership

Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard

The Truth about Leadership: the No-fads, Heart-of-the-matter Facts You Need to Know

3. CURATED VIDEOS ON LEADERSHIP
A. Favorite Videos on Leadership (And Why Video Matters)
In his July 2010 TED talk, Chris Anderson offers a profoundly important insight: people are using video to learn from each other, advancing whole fields of practice in the process. Web video is accelerating innovation. Across disciplines, generations, geographies, institutions, and cultures, people are teaching each other new skills and pushing each other to develop further, faster in all kinds of activities, professions, and pursuits. His talk, together with links to the collection below, is here: http://bit.ly/m65qZl

Our favorite examples are not of experts teaching leadership skills, but of insightful people who have something important to say about leadership.

Derek Sivers: How to Start A Movement

Steve Ressler on Next-Generation Government
Leaders create a culture of impact. http://wapo.st/lXOBzA
Simon Sinek: How Great Leaders Inspire Action
Great leaders lead from the inside out.

Hans Rosling: 200 Countries, 200 Years, 4 Minutes

Derek Redmond: You’ll Wait For Me
Leadership is not always about winning.
http://bit.ly/kL8jtj

B. Project Videos on Leadership
As a part of our community engagement strategy, we conducted video interviews with five workforce leaders during which they shared their insights about what it takes to lead today. These leaders63 knocked our socks off. We hope you will learn as much from them as we did.

Five Workforce Leaders on Change, Innovation, and Why Leadership Matters

Mayor Sam Adams on Leadership, Complexity, and Engaging People

Kali Ladd on Collaborative Leadership and Doing Work that Matters

Kris Latimer on Sharing Leadership and Managing Risk

Fred Slone on Leadership, Change, and “Never Enough”
http://bit.ly/n4EnB0

Kris Stadelman on Innovation and Building Leaders
http://bit.ly/oqp8M8

4. FAVORITE WEBSITES & BLOGS
We read hundreds of blogs posts and reviewed dozens of websites looking for leadership content that spoke to the needs and concerns of workforce leaders.

Project Director Vinz Koller lives in Northern California. Project Manager Kristin Wolff lives in Portland, Oregon. Each asked leaders they know—their neighbors, really—to speak on camera. Mayor Sam Adams, Education Policy Director Kali Thorne-Ladd (Portland, OR), The Oregon Consortium and Workforce Alliance Director Kris Latimer (Albany, OR), NOVA Workforce Board Executive Director Kris Stadelman, and Bentech Director of Literacy Operations Fred Slone all graciously obliged. We thank them

We found a treasure trove of compelling content, much of which is cited in this document, at enhancingworkforceleadership.workforce3one.org, or on the project archive enhancingworkforceleadership.org. Among these were a few sites we returned to over and over again for provocation, insight, and specific answers to our leadership questions. We provide links and descriptions below.

1. Harvard Business Review (HBR)
   Full of articles and links to books, papers, and videos, we appreciated the frequent special initiatives, including this blog series on leadership http://bit.ly/pbuKKv, which we further curated here: http://bit.ly/mSDeL7

2. Fast Company
   We like the magazine and the website offers a host of easy to search signature and online platforms with specialized content http://bit.ly/mTt7lW, including “The 30-second MBA”, a major focus of which is leadership http://bit.ly/qw2yxQ

   Part of the Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society at Stanford University, SSIR is a magazine, journal, and multimedia site dedicated to sharing insights and practical experiences that will help those who do the important work of improving society do it even better. Many important issues raised by leaders were also subjects of roundtables, debates, and webinars http://bit.ly/qJxQvl

4. Management Innovation Exchange (MIX)
   The stated mission of MIX is to serve as an “open innovation project aimed at reinventing management for the 21st century.” The combination of posts, videos, and other dynamic content, together with the open-innovation model, inspired us to return again and again. We particularly liked Hacks—“boundary-pushing proposals for changing the way organizations work and leaders lead” http://bit.ly/q5p3Q9

5. Human Capital Institute (HCI)
   HCI is the “global association for talent management and new economy leadership.” It offers a plethora of webinars on as many topics—some at no cost—and current news about conferences, events, and activities in the world of talent management. Most of this content is directed at human resource and talent management professionals in firms; however it also speaks to a broader community. For example, HCI hosted a webinar about community innovation supported by a US Department of Labor grant: http://bit.ly/n35Scm
5. HOW WORKFORCE LEADERS KNOW WHERE THEY STAND?
A self-assessment can help. Here is one from Charlene Li’s Open Leadership. It speaks to most of the key practices that comprise the Weadership framework.

### OPEN LEADERSHIP SKILLS ASSESSMENT TEST

Score yourself on a scale from 1 to 5

(1 = “I find this hard to do”, 5 = “I can do this very well and I actively practice this regularly”).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEMONSTRATE AUTHENTICITY</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I seek out and listen to different points of view.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make myself available to people at all levels of the organization.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use social technologies effectively to communicate.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I actively manage how I am authentic.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AVERAGE</strong></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRACTICE TRANSPARENCY</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I take the time to explain how decisions are being made.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I reach out to customers frequently via social technologies, wherever they may be.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I encourage people to share information.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I update people regularly using social technologies.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I publicly admit when I am wrong.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AVERAGE</strong></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEVELOP AND ENCOURAGE OPEN LEADERSHIP</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I identify and actively nurture potential open leaders at all levels of the organization.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I train and encourage people to use open leadership skills.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I encourage the use of social technologies throughout the organization.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I create a support network for open leaders.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask “What did we learn?” when things fail.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AVERAGE</strong></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted with author's permission from: Li, Charlene (2010).
6. THE MULTIPLIER DISCIPLINES
In *Multipliers: How the Best Leaders Make Everyone Smarter*, Liz Wiseman and Greg McKeown identify five disciplines that help leaders bring out the intelligence in others and build collective intelligence in organizations. These disciplines include:

1. The Talent Magnet: Attract and optimize talent.
4. The Debate Maker: Debate decisions.
5. The Investor: Instill accountability.

Wiseman and McKeown found that leaders who exercise these disciplines get twice the capability from people than “diminishers” who do the opposite.

7. GREAT STORYTELLING BY TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL WORKFORCE LEADERS
Storytelling was cited by many workforce professionals as an increasingly important leadership skill. Here are some of our favorite examples of great storytelling.

1. **The San Diego Workforce Partnership** is an industry leader in storytelling. We found two examples that both warmed our hearts and told big stories:


2. **Mike Rowe** (Mike Rowe Works, Discovery Channel) testifying before the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee about the importance of skilled trades. It is a lesson on how to communicate about jobs. [http://bit.ly/jx3hOC](http://bit.ly/jx3hOC)

3. **This American Life** is the most popular podcast in the country. While there are a number of episodes dedicated to the economy—and one specifically to job creation—nearly all of them exemplify effective storytelling about complex, difficult, and unlikely subject matter. Because this episode generated controversy, we have also included the statement from the National Public Radio Ombudsman,


