



YouthBuild USA

Organizational Capacity Assessment

A Topic in Brief of the Sector Strategy How-to Guide

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Overview of Topic in Brief

A sector strategy requires a shared vision that builds on the existing capacity and assets of the organizations involved. The **Organizational Capacity Assessment** included in this brief supports YouthBuild programs with measuring capacity for optimal development of career pathways aligned with sector strategies and identifying opportunities for enhancement.

When to Use an Organizational Capacity

The Organizational Capacity Assessment can be used during the **Plan & Evaluate** stage to help YouthBuild programs evaluate whether they have the essential resources in place – staff expertise, policies and procedures, culture, and vision - to align with a sector strategy. YouthBuild programs can also use the assessment tool during the **Design & Implement** stage and **Build & Evolve** stage to determine the resources to prioritize and develop continuous improvement processes.

Uses of an Organizational Capacity Assessment

YouthBuild programs can use the Organizational Capacity Assessment in the following ways:



Communicate the role of YouthBuild to partners



Identify existing assets and resources



Create continuous improvement processes

Sector Strategy Alignment Checkpoint



Career Pathway Development Stages

Plan & Evaluate
Design & Implement
Build & Evolve



The ETA Sector Strategy Implementation Framework

Organizational Capacity & Alignment
Sustainability & Continuous Improvement



YouthBuild Program Reflection

1. What capacities represent your program strengths?
2. What capacities can your program further develop?

Definition of Organizational Capacity

When developing career pathways and integrating into a community's sector framework, a YouthBuild program's role may vary depending on the capacity of the program and the nature of the targeted industries. Organizational capacity, in this context, is defined as a YouthBuild program's ability to implement and sustain sector-based career pathway activities that lead to participant placement and advancement in jobs or postsecondary education. The organization's resources, structure, policies, procedures, vision, and culture can influence its ability to perform activities.

This brief includes a description of seven (7) aspirational capacities that shape the YouthBuild program's role in sector-related work. Programs may not possess all capacities but should aspire to cultivate them. While each program may address each capacity differently, the YouthBuild model addresses the following:

YouthBuild Program Capacities



Descriptions of the Seven Organizational Capacities

Ultimately, each capacity is intended to position YouthBuild programs to effectively engage within a community's sector framework and respond to the needs of participants, graduates, and employers.

Structure & Culture

An organizational **structure** and **culture** that prioritizes and promotes career pathways that respond to the needs of your participants along with the skilling and talent needs of your community's target, in-demand sectors.

Indicators of this capacity:

- **Staff Structure & Roles:** Your YouthBuild program has a staff structure with clearly defined roles to examine industry workforce trends and has dedicated roles (i.e., job developer) to engage sector partners.
- **Board Composition:** Your program's board of directors is comprised of industry sector representatives.
- **Policies:** Your program has clearly articulated policies, strategic plans, and charters that prioritize sector strategy goals and objectives.
- **Processes:** Your program has established processes to compile labor market information, conduct analysis, and work with your industry partners to validate needs, gaps, and opportunities.
- **Culture:** Your program's leadership prioritizes engaging and partnering with your community's business sector and ensures staff understand the approach and see its value.
- **Strategy:** Your program has a strategic plan that articulates its role in convening key stakeholders as part of its vision to integrate into and/or champion sector strategies and partnerships.

Staff Expertise

Program staff possess **expertise** and insight about the community's in-demand and growing industries and partner engagement strategies to support and implement workforce development solutions.

Indicators of this capacity:

- **Professional Development & Training:** Program staff have many opportunities to participate in networking and engagement events to remain current on local workforce and industry/sector trends.
- **Workforce Systems Expertise:** Program staff have experience working within their local workforce development systems and Workforce Development Boards.
- **Education Expertise:** Your program has experience co-designing with industry and education partners curricula and career pathways that respond to industry competencies and talent needs, goals, and objectives.
- **Career Pathway Expertise:** Your program has demonstrated success in designing career and Construction Plus pathways that enable your participants and graduates to attain necessary transferrable and technical skills, industry-recognized credentials, and gainful employment with career advancement opportunities.
- **Work Experience Expertise:** Your program has experience designing and resourcing Construction Plus pathways and work experience models that incorporate paid internships and/or align with pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship models.

Partnerships & Alliances

Established **partnerships** that demonstrate engagement with the appropriate local organizations to implement responsive career pathways within a community's local sector and in-demand industries.

Indicators of this capacity:

Your program is engaged with:

- **Education Partners** to align your curricula to career pathways to bridge secondary, pre-GED, and post-secondary education to a career.
- **Local industry associations and labor organizations** to identify target industry sectors, convene industry, and jointly address local workforce development needs and strategies.
- **Community-based organizations** to reach individuals that are currently underrepresented in the local labor market/sector and enable community-based organizations' services.

Support Services

Services and alliances with community-based organizations that connect participants to resources and supports that respond to their needs.

Indicators of this capacity:

Your program has experience, capacity, and established alliances with industry partners to address your participants' support needs and ensure they have access to the following:

- Affordable Housing
- Transportation
- Food Security
- Childcare
- Mental Health & Wellness

Marketing & Communications

An organizational **marketing and communications** function to articulate positive impact in responding to the needs of industry partners and the value-add to employers and participants.

Indicators of this capacity:

- **Staff Roles:** Your program has a dedicated staff role to drive the key function of Marketing and Communications on behalf of your program.
- **Marketing Materials:** Your program has current marketing collateral to amplify and promote your career pathways and sector partnerships.
- **Media Relations:** Your program has close working relationships with local media to amplify your program's impact and career pathways.
- **Strategy:** Your program has a marketing strategy to advance strategic partnerships, increase visibility and awareness, and further influence sector support and buy-in.

Funding

Diverse and sustainable sources of **funding** to co-design and implement career pathways and strategies with sector partners and funders.

Indicators of this capacity:

- **Funding Sources:** Your program has sustainable funding and/or access to and a firm understanding of the landscape of available sources of funding to support career pathways and sector strategies.
- **Funding Experience:** Your program has experience working with community partners to find and braid funding and share underwriting to cover the costs to implement sector initiatives.

Evaluation & Assessment

Organizational **evaluation** and **assessment** functions that integrate culture, systems, and processes to monitor and track success and performance toward achieving goals.

Indicators of this capacity:

- **Standard Operating Procedures:** Your program has standard operating procedures to collect, monitor, and analyze data and other key performance indicators informed by your sector partners.
- **Continuous Improvement Processes:** Your programs senior leadership and board routinely assess, evaluate, and discuss outcomes, key performance indicators and other pertinent data related to your career pathways and sector initiatives.

Organizational Capacity Assessment Plug and Play Resources

Use the resources below to contextualize to your program.

The Organizational Capacity Assessment is designed to help YouthBuild programs determine how well they are integrating sector strategy initiatives into career pathway development and where they should prioritize future improvements. The assessment consists of a list of questions organized along the seven aspirational capacities.

Intended User: The assessment is intended for all YouthBuild program staff. It is recommended that multiple staff members take the assessment and leadership facilitates a discussion around the questions.

Organizational Capacity Assessment

Capacity: *Structure and Culture*

Key Assessment Questions	Yes	No	Partially
Does our program have clearly defined and dedicated staff roles (i.e., job developer) to engage business and sector partners in career pathways design and implementation?			
Do our program's senior/executive leadership and board of directors reflect representatives of our sector initiatives and strategies?			
Does our program have policies and a strategic plan that prioritize sector strategies?			
Does our program have processes to conduct labor market research and validate needs with sector partners?			
Does our program's leadership prioritize engaging and partnering with our community's business sector to align our career pathways offerings?			

Capacity: *Staff Expertise*

Key Assessment Questions	Yes	No	Partially
Does our program staff have experience working within our local workforce development systems?			
Does our program staff understand the effectiveness and purpose of workforce systems, sector strategy frameworks, and their role within them?			
Does our program have experience collaborating with education and sector partners to co-design curricula and career pathways?			
Does our program have evidence of measurable success implementing Construction Plus career pathways that enable participants to attain technical skills, industry-recognized credentials, and competitive employment?			
Does our program have experience working with sector partners to design, implement, and fund career pathways that incorporate work experience?			

Capacity: *Marketing & Communications*

Key Assessment Questions	Yes	No	Partially
Do we have a dedicated staff member to manage and direct our Marketing and Communications functions?			
Does our program have marketing collateral to promote our career pathways and strategic partnerships?			
Does our program know and work with local media to further sector support and amplify our program's impact, career pathways, and strategic partnerships?			

Capacity: *Support Services*

Key Assessment Questions	Yes	No	Partially
Does our program have established alliances with industry partners to support participants with housing ?			
Does our program have established alliances with industry partners to support participants with mental health ?			
Does our program have established alliances with industry partners to support participants with transportation ?			
Does our program have established alliances with industry partners to support participants with childcare ?			
Does our program have established alliances with industry partners to support participants with food security ?			
Does our program have established alliances with industry partners to support participants with financial services and capability programs ?			

Capacity: *Partnerships and Alliances*

Key Assessment Questions	Yes	No	Partially
Does our YouthBuild program have clearly defined partnerships with community colleges and universities to implement our career pathways and sector initiatives?			
Does our YouthBuild program have clearly defined partnerships with private training providers to implement our career pathways and sector initiatives?			
Does our YouthBuild program have clearly defined partnerships with labor unions and industry associations to implement our career pathways and sector initiatives?			
Does our YouthBuild program have clearly defined partnerships with Workforce Development Boards to implement our career pathways and sector initiatives?			
Does our YouthBuild program have clearly defined partnerships with community-based organizations to implement our career pathways and sector initiatives?			

Capacity: *Funding*

Key Assessment Questions	Yes	No	Partially
Does our program have sustainable funding (or access to diverse sources) to support career pathways and sector strategies?			
Does our program have experience leveraging from or braiding resources with strategic partners to implement career pathways?			
Does our program ask and successfully leverage our strategic partners and stakeholders to share in underwriting and covering costs associated with career pathways and sector initiative design and implementation?			

Capacity: *Evaluation*

Key Assessment Questions	Yes	No	Partially
Does our program have processes to collect, monitor, and analyze data and other key performance indicators to inform strategy and decisions related to career pathways and sector initiatives?			
Does our senior leadership and board routinely evaluate and discuss outcomes and key performance indicators related to our program's career pathways and sector initiatives?			