TALENT PIPELINE MANAGEMENT® NETWORK PROGRESS REPORT

MARCH 2021

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INTRODUCTION

This report discusses progress by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation (Chamber Foundation) Talent Pipeline Management® (TPM) initiative and its growing network of leaders. Since the TPM® pilot in 2015, Chamber Foundation staff and partner organizations have provided in-depth training and technical assistance to hundreds of business services professionals engaged in demand-driven workforce planning.

Professionals trained in TPM through the TPM Academy® are prepared to facilitate groups of employers through six TPM strategies. A peer-to-peer learning network, national conferences, and online tools support learning and exchange after enrollment in the TPM Academy. In 2020, the Chamber Foundation supported six TPM Academy cohorts, hosted two virtual TPM National Learning Network (NLN) summits with close to 150 participants each, and organized two volunteer committees to guide action on network-wide priorities.

This network of more than 400 professionals faces new challenges now that it has grown. Chamber Foundation staff initially provided one-on-one consulting and technical assistance to TPM Academy graduates and now increasingly rely on the leadership of professionals in the field. A handful of these professionals now support advanced statewide talent management systems, and dozens lead employers through regional data collection and analysis processes to advance their TPM strategies. Many of these employer collaboratives aim to document and quantify their results and their return on investment in TPM strategies. The collaboratives have also attracted the attention of training providers seeking to advance their role in the talent supply chain. This report details this progress and recommends ways to sustain momentum.

APPROACH TO PROGRESS EVALUATION

The TPM framework applies supply chain management principles to help companies meet their talent recruitment, training, and development goals. Through the process, companies learn to better communicate their expectations about needed skills to talent solution providers, employees, and future workers. To operationalize the talent management principles and organize employer collaboratives, the Chamber Foundation taps the expertise of local industry intermediaries, or TPM host organizations.

Intermediary organizations, primarily local and state chambers of commerce, select staff to attend TPM Academy trainings. Training imparts the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to implement talent supply chain solutions on behalf of employer collaboratives. For example, TPM Academy participants learn to communicate skill and training requirements in a way that helps service providers respond to employer needs more effectively.

Through previous evaluation efforts, the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC) worked with the Chamber Foundation and other TPM stakeholders to translate the TPM theory

of change into a logic model that has been applied in multiple cohort evaluations and integrated into TPM curriculum. The master framework for the logic model (see **Figure 1**) includes a set of common metrics that can be used to assess progress and performance during and after the TPM Academy training. Employer outcomes in this logic model reflect employers' key pain points in the process of hiring, retaining, and advancing talent and represent a set of potentially quantifiable results that could be used to demonstrate return on investment to participating firms. It is important to note that these outcome measures (fewer unfilled positions, lower turnover) also reflect outcomes important to individual students and workers seeking better employment outcomes.

Figure 1: TPM Theory of Change and Master Logic Model

Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Process Action Plan

Situation Statement: Companies can use supply chain management principles to better signal their needs to talent solution providers and existing or future workers.

Strategy-Specific Action Plans

Inputs	Activities	Program Outputs	Employer Outcomes (ROI)
Local partner leadership and resources Employer participation TPM process methodology TPM web tools	1. Organize Collaboratives 2. Engage in Demand Planning 3. Communicate Competency and Credential Requirements 4. Analyze Talent Flows 5. Build Talent Supply Chains 6. Continuous Improvement	Number of active **collaboratives** Number of **employers** participating in demand planning & needs assessments Number of **talent sources** adapting programs in response to analysis Number of collaboratives that: • analyzed talent source capacities and flows • chose providers based on designed criteria • built talent supply chains with providers • pilot tested and implemented improvements • calculated ROI • achieved positive ROI	Reduced number of unfilled job openings Increased number of qualified job candidates Reduced onboarding and upgrading costs Reduced staff turnover and increased retention rates Increased career advancement Increased employee diversity

This approach to evaluation is developmental, supporting the maturation of the network and continuous improvement of the curriculum through tracking of key metrics by individual employer collaboratives. Activities and output measures are specific to each of the six TPM strategies and each strategy aims to advance employer collaboratives toward meaningful and quantifiable outcome measures.

REPORT DATA AND ANALYSIS

For this report on the progress of the TPM network, CREC analysts reviewed administrative data on National Learning Network (NLN) activity,[1] conducted a national survey,[2] and supported a three-state survey and focus groups organized in parallel to the national survey. These activities allowed us to track TPM Academy graduates and NLN member progress, identifying milestones achieved by leaders throughout the network that advance the TPM theory of change as previously described. Our findings are based on results from these multiple data sources.

The national survey of NLN members was effective in gathering information on the state of employer collaboratives managed by the Chamber Foundation's most active TPM professionals as well as from recent TPM Academy graduates. Three hundred and fifty-eight NLN members were asked about employer collaborative progress, the relevance of the TPM framework to their work, and employer return on investment (ROI) tracking. The 68 survey respondents represented 19% of NLN members and 14% of NLN organizations, including respondents from 14 TPM Academy cohorts and 23 states. All respondents were TPM Academy graduates or current Academy participants. The survey questions captured variation in engagement across the network. See the survey instrument provided in Appendix A.

Working with two external consultants, we conducted a more extensive survey in three states, heretofore referenced as the state surveys. In order to avoid oversaturation from certain areas, those who participated in the state survey did not receive the 2020 NLN member survey but many of the same survey questions were included. The survey instrument is provided in Appendix B and survey methods are described in *Talent Pipeline Management: A Case Study Analysis of Best Practices and Common Challenges,* released in March 2021. We also participated in several facilitated focus groups to contextualize the results from the state surveys.

Administrative data collected from progress reports, the NLN roster, and the TPM web tool provided additional information on TPM activity across the country. While case studies and state reports previously collected by the Chamber Foundation highlighted the movement's most successful projects, the NLN roster and TPM web tool data gave analysts a window into the budding activity taking place outside TPM's most well-known hubs.

Our findings are discussed in the next section, followed by recommendations regarding future member engagement and future assessments of network progress.

1   The Chamber Foundation provided survey results and records of individual and group participation with the NLN from previous years as well as administrative data on user activity from the TPM web tool. The content shared with CREC by the Chamber Foundation consisted of case study interviews, email messages, meeting & event rosters, links to videos made by the Chamber Foundation or organizations participating in TPM, and a roster of 404-person NLN roster.

2   The Chamber Foundation surveyed 358 individuals in the NLN and received 68 valid responses. The 358 individuals include all NLN members minus those who participated in the state survey (Kentucky, Michigan, and Tennessee). If those who received the state survey did not complete it, they were asked to complete the national survey.

NLN MEMBER SURVEY FINDINGS

TPM IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL NETWORK MEMBERS

Through the 2020 national survey of NLN members, we were able to validate how the TPM curriculum and NLN are impacting the organization of employer collaboratives. We proposed that the TPM Academies were helping to prepare professionals to facilitate employer-led talent pipeline management strategies. More than 80% of survey respondents reported utilizing TPM strategies or activities to form or advance their employer collaboratives.

Survey respondents were asked to retrospectively assess their ability to support employers in developing their talent pool. Respondents rated their own abilities on a scale of 0 to 100 before and after attending the TPM Academy. The average difference between 'before' and 'after' ratings was more than 46 points. After the TPM Academy process, respondents gave themselves an average score of 78, a significant increase from the average of 32 they rated themselves before participating in the TPM Academy. Before attending the TPM Academy, only eight professionals (12% of the network) rated their preparedness level with a score of 75 or above. After the TPM Academy, 42 professionals (63% of the network) rated their preparedness at 75 or above.

This improvement suggests that participants highly valued the TPM Academy, TPM materials, and the TPM network in shaping their understanding of how to help employers achieve an ROI through talent development strategies. When asked to elaborate on a particularly important skill, tool, or resource that the TPM Academy process provided them, most responses indicated TPM's framework and language as most useful. Survey respondents also noted that the TPM process offered opportunities to connect and learn from NLN peers, rating this network building activity as a close second in importance.

A few individual responses to open-ended questions indicated that network members are engaging each other and providing mentorship outside of formal NLN events and activities. Interviews and previous conversations with network leaders confirm there are small group discussions and one-on-one mentoring relationships that have emerged organically among network members and that have been critical to leaders' success.

ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

NLN member survey respondents, and most TPM Academy participants, are affiliated with organizations that provide business services, primarily chambers of commerce and business associations. Over a third (35%) of NLN survey respondents represented chambers of commerce or business associations, and another third (34%) represented educational organizations. Workforce development boards (10%), economic development organizations (9%), employers (7%), and other organizations (4%) account for the remainder of the survey respondents.

MORE THAN 80% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS REPORTED UTILIZING TPM STRATEGIES OR ACTIVITIES TO FORM OR ADVANCE THEIR EMPLOYER COLLABORATIVES.

These organizations are in various stages of organizing and supporting collaboratives. Many of the educational organizations and their representatives are in support roles given the TPM process encourages that collaboratives are led by employer-facing organizations. More than half of the national survey respondents (59%) indicated that they started or supported employer collaboratives. Those who indicated they had not yet started or supported employer collaboratives, attributed their lack of progress to limited time and resources or other priorities diverting their attention.

The 68 professionals responding to the NLN survey represent 40 host organizations and 113 employer collaboratives from 23 states. On average, host organizations that moved forward with TPM formally support three to four employer collaboratives. Each host works with, on average, 32 employers total and about 9 employers per collaborative. There are 1,240 employers engaged in these collaboratives.

The 52 professionals who participated in the state-specific surveys conducted in Kentucky, Michigan, and Tennessee (omitted from the national survey) represented 30 host organizations and reported engagement with 526 employers. On average, each host organization represents one to two collaboratives. Each host works with, on average, 22 employers total and about 13 to 14 employers per collaborative. Compared to the NLN results, collaboratives in these states are larger and host organizations support fewer collaboratives. Survey respondents in these states were more likely to report they had started or supported an employer collaborative (64% compared to 59%), were less likely to represent chambers of commerce and business associations (21% compared to 35%), and were more likely to represent workforce boards and agencies (17% compared to 10%), as well as employers (12% compared to 7%).

Table 1: Percent of Survey Respondents by TPM Academy Cohort and Academy Year

TPM Academy Cohort No.	TPM Academy Cohort Year	% of Survey Respondents
0-III	2015-2017	19%
IV-VII	2017-2018	7%[3]
VII-XI	2019	31%
XII-XIII	2020	26%
Unconfirmed	Unconfirmed	16%

3   Low response numbers from Cohorts IV–VII were due to the removal of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Michigan members to avoid redundancy with the state survey conducted just weeks before the national survey.

NLN survey respondents seemed to be representative of the NLN, with respondents from various cohorts over time, with better response from individuals in more recent cohorts (2019 and 2020).

Kentucky and Texas were the states with the highest levels of participation, representing about a quarter of the survey sample. (Even with removal of Kentucky respondents who participated in the state-specific survey, Kentucky still had one of the highest number of responses to the national survey!) This group was followed by a second tier of high-response states that included Idaho, Arizona, and North Carolina.

Table 2: Percent of Survey Respondents by State, Top 5 States

State	% of Survey Respondents
Texas	13%
Kentucky	13%
Idaho	9%
North Carolina	9%
Arizona	9%

The TPM collaboratives engage employers from a variety of industries. Each collaborative is typically focused on one industry and/or common business function. The industries most represented by collaboratives supported by survey respondents were: Manufacturing, Health Science, Architecture & Construction, and Information Technology.

Survey responses show that employer collaboratives are progressing through the six TPM strategies and many have passed the early data collection and analysis stages. Of the respondents, 23 represent host organizations that are supporting employers with organizing and gaining insights (i.e., implementing strategies 2–4) while another 18 host organizations have advanced to supporting employers in working with talent solution providers (i.e., implementing strategies 5–6).

Despite the limited ROI data and results we were able to collect through the web tool, many collaboratives reported that they have begun to track training completions and training improvements as well as employer ROI measures. Twenty-five respondents, more than 1 in 3, attested that at least some of their collaboratives were tracking employer ROI in some way. The top three employer ROI metrics tracked were: increased number of qualified job candidates, reduced number of unfilled job openings, and reduced staff turnover and increased retention. These are measures previously identified by the Chamber Foundation and described in the TPM Academy curriculum, based on years of field testing with employers, and responses further validate the motivational power of these "pain points" and potential ROI measures.

Table 3: Number of Active Collaboratives by Industry

Industry	Number
Manufacturing	23
Health Science	20
Architecture and Construction	17
Information Technology	12
Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics	9
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics	9
Other	8
Education and Training	8
Business Management and Administration	6
Finance	5
Hospitality and Tourism	3
Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources	3
Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security	1
Government and Public Administration	1
Arts, Audio/Visual Technology, and Communications	1

Table 4: Barriers to Starting or Expanding Employer Collaboratives and Implementing TPM Strategies

Barrier	Percent
Employer engagement	30%
Employer resource constraints	22%
Other	13%
Host organization resource constraints	13%
Conflict with potential partners	9%
Political or public acceptance	5%
Host organization interest and commitment to process	4%
None/Not applicable	3%
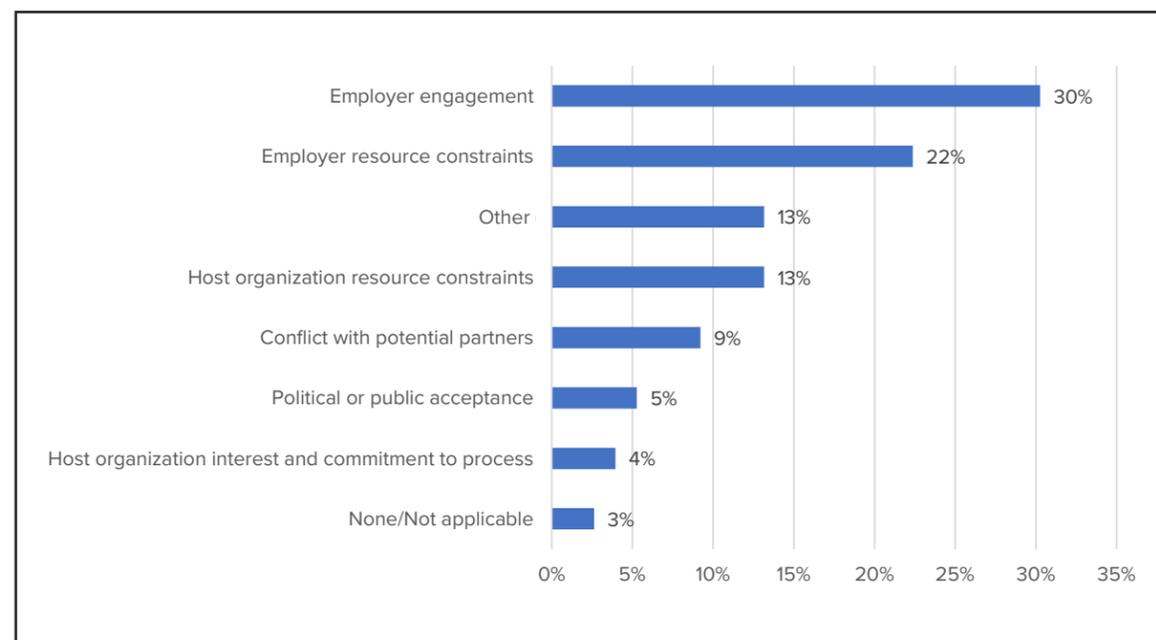
COMMON CHALLENGES

Survey respondents overwhelmingly identified employer engagement as the most common barrier to overcome, followed by both employer and host organization resource constraints. Note that the survey was conducted in October 2020, but respondents were directed to consider only barriers before COVID-19 disruptions.

"Other" issues identified by survey respondents include a lack of time (rather than interest) from small businesses specifically (1 response), the length of time for problem definition/research (1), difficulties in engaging training providers (1), and the TPM web tool requirement that employers register before they can take a survey (1).

In facilitated focus group discussions with Kentucky and Michigan, challenges with employer engagement and resource constraints were echoed by nearly every participant. Consultants overseeing the focus groups noted that when discussing employer engagement challenges, those in the focus group described the difficulties they have experienced with keeping employers engaged from the outset of forming a collaborative all the way through to the back end of the TPM process. Many employers were excited to participate in the program but hesitant to share information about their company, job applicants, hires, employees, skill requirements, hiring expectations, internal training, and employment. In some cases, human resources managers, the ones frequently tasked with completing the demand planning survey, indicated that they did not have the time to make it a priority.

Engaging employers as participants and leaders in the network has been and will continue to be key to advancing progress through the TPM strategies, including the ability of collaboratives to track output and outcome measures. Employers are the ultimate client and end-users of the talent development system. Working in collaboratives, they can provide the necessary accountability structure for improvements to the system.

Resources constraints were also discussed. Focus group participants reported that they often did not have adequate personnel or staff time to provide the level of support required for the employer collaboratives, employers were not willing to provide the time required to achieve success, and limited funding meant that training providers could not always modify or develop new training programs in response to employer needs. Focus group participants highlighted other challenges such as employee turnover and conflict with partners.

Another insight that emerged from the focus group discussions was the importance of teams in advancing local programs. Effective teams include individuals with complementary skill sets and networks representing multiple organizations. For example, in Kentucky, regional project managers support more detail-oriented and politically embedded partners working in their communities and with industry.

As we discuss in the following section, TPM champions often have advanced leadership and facilitation skills that they use to convene employers, foster network building, and gain collaborative-wide consensus on a common set of goals. Managerial and analytic skills are also needed to effectively manage the collaborative's data collection and analysis. It is a challenge to find all these skills in a single professional, explaining why TPM collaborative management is often a team sport.

NETWORK DEVELOPMENT FINDINGS

The Chamber Foundation launched its national TPM pilot program in 2015 with seven business-led organizations that translated the TPM framework and philosophy into a practical approach to executing demand-driven workforce planning. During this initial program, the Chamber Foundation team developed the *TPM Implementation Guide* to serve as a foundation for training employers on how to manage their education and workforce partnerships more effectively, ultimately leading to the creation of the TPM Academy and its accompanying TPM Academy curriculum. Since then, the Chamber Foundation has hosted six national academies and 10 state-based academies.

In 2019, the Chamber Foundation increased the TPM curriculum emphasis on upskilling, including opportunities to serve the needs of low-wage, frontline, existing workers, and launched the first TPM Upskill Academy in Arizona in partnership with the Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation that year. The second Upskill Academy, hosted by the Greater Houston Partnership, was conducted via virtual platform in 2020. Statewide and regional TPM Academies continued to roll out across the country. Table 5 reports the number of participants in each TPM Academy, many of which are hosted by state and metro area chambers of commerce.

Table 5: TPM Academy Participants by Cohort

Year	Cohort	Type	Number of Academy Participants
2015	Pilot	Pilot Program	7
2016	I	National Academy	19
2017	II	National Academy	25
2017	III	National Academy	17
2017	IV	Michigan 1.0	20
2018	V	Tennessee 1.0	17
2018	VI	Kentucky 1.0	44
2018	VII	Michigan 2.0	25
2019	VIII	Arizona 1.0	22
2019	IX	2019 National Academy	31
2019	X	North Carolina 1.0	19
2019	XI	California 1.0	15
2020	XII	2020 National Academy	29
2020	XIII	Texas 1.0	31
2020	XIV	Kentucky 2.0	38
2020	XV	Idaho 1.0	33
2020	XVI	2020 National Academy 2.0	20

The National Learning Network roster had grown to more than 400 professionals in 2020. The TPM movement includes leaders in 36 states and Canada. These professionals represent 330 organizations. Similar to the national survey results, over a third (37%) of the National Learning Network represents educational organizations, another third (30%) represents members of chambers of commerce or business associations. Employers (10%), economic development organization (7%), workforce development boards (3%), and other organizations (14%) account for the remainder of the network. Other organizations include nonprofits, consultancies, and public agencies. Table 6 reports the number of NLN members by organization type.

Table 6: NLN Members by Organization Type
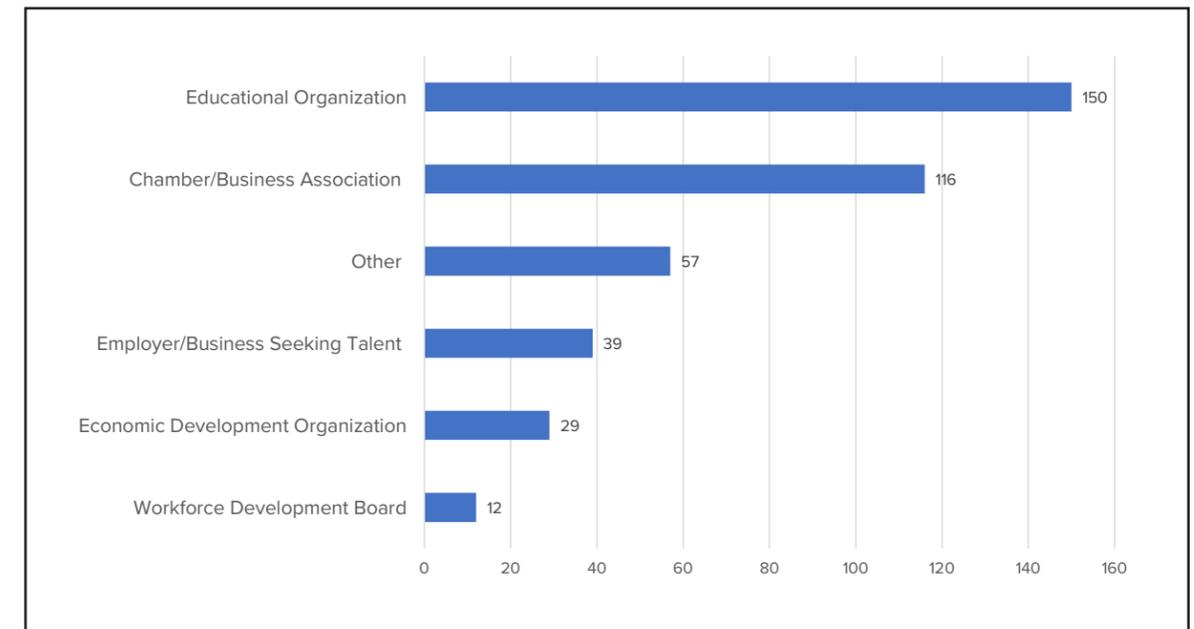
LEADING STATES

We identified states with the most affiliated host organizations, employer collaboratives, and employers engaged in collaboratives. See the top five states in each category in Tables 7, 8 and 9 on page 14. Michigan is in the top five in all three categories. Other states listed make the top five in only one or two categories.

Four of the top states have hosted their own state-level TPM Academy. Three have an identified, highly visible TPM champion in the state. This information suggests that it is likely that both support for a state-level Academy and the presence of a state champion represent TPM's ability to gain traction within a state. Kentucky and Michigan have both embraced the TPM model at the state level.

Kentucky's Talent Pipeline System is a public-private partnership. With state government support, the system integrated the TPM process across the state and aligned funding to help the Kentucky

Chamber Workforce Center hire full-time staff to develop and maintain these talent pipelines. In Michigan, the statewide approach has not been formalized by the state's government, as it has in Kentucky, but has been led by an employer champion, benefactor, and Michigan Talent Pipeline leader Consumers Energy, which led efforts to host two state Academies. With Consumers Energy's leadership, Michigan's TPM efforts are also overseen by an advisory board that supports planning for future academies, funding to collaboratives, and other leadership activities, and includes participation by fellow TPM pilot company DTE Energy as well as active members of the TPM NLN.

Table 7: States with Highest Number of Reported Host Organizations

Rank	State	Host Org Count (NLN Admin)	Host Org Count (TPM Web Tool)
1	MI	6	20
2	TX	5	13
3	IL	4	19
4	WI	7	5
5	CA	5	7

Table 8: States with the Highest Number of Reported Employer Collaboratives

Rank	State	Collaborative Count (NLN Admin)	Collaborative Count (TPM Web Tool)
1	KY	26	33
2	MI	11	26
3	TX	9	27
4	IL	10	25
5	AZ	7	27

Table 9: States with the Highest Number of Reported Engaged Employers

Rank	State	Employer Count (NLN Admin)	Employer Count (TPM Web Tool)
1	KY	185	316
2	MI	95	173
3	VT	98	130
4	AZ	79	170
5	CA	71	110

Some states with high levels of TPM activity do not consistently emerge as national leaders across all three measures (number of host organizations, collaboratives, employers engaged). For example, Wisconsin reflects a state among the top five for identified host organizations, but this state's TPM network has a much smaller presence as users of the TPM web tool. This could suggest that the TPM web tool may not be meeting the needs of Wisconsin leaders or that much more emphasis on the value of the TPM web tool is needed to improve progress tracking in that state. Other states, like Vermont, report a low number of host organizations and collaboratives but each of the host organizations are working with relatively larger numbers of employers. This may reflect the state's consolidated, state-based approach to TPM and its focus on a few targeted and highly active collaboratives.

SUPER ORGANIZERS AND NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Members of the NLN contribute to the work of the TPM initiative through advancing individual collaboratives, building statewide networks and serving in national leadership roles. To facilitate leadership development and advance the capabilities of the network, the Chamber Foundation has formalized leadership roles that TPM professionals can take to mentor their peers and provide feedback on the TPM process. These roles include TPM Faculty, Academy graduates now teaching and facilitating sessions during TPM Academy; TPM Fellows, Academy graduates that provide guidance as advisors on the continual expansion of the TPM initiative; and TPM committee coordinators, serving on issue-oriented committees.

A small group of highly productive TPM professionals have so far had an important role in building the TPM network and creating multiple employer collaboratives. These TPM champions or super organizers are active NLN members with a proven track record of success in implementing the TPM methodology. These individuals can document TPM progress across multiple collaboratives. And they have been extensively involved in the NLN, holding the distinction of being an NLN fellow, faculty member, or committee member. Rather than list the individuals here, we focus on the progress made in their home states.

To identify these super organizers, we began with reviewing collaborative activity across the network by state. We identified super organizers' states by the number of identified host organizations, collaboratives, active state affiliated NLN members, and whether the state hosted a state-specific TPM Academy. The most active states include Kentucky, Michigan, Illinois, Texas, Arizona, and Colorado. On average, these states have 4 host organizations that are supporting 11 collaboratives. Kentucky leads the network with a total of 26 employer collaboratives, followed by Michigan with 11 employer collaboratives. Four of the six states have hosted a state-based TPM Academy. Almost all six states have a high number of active state affiliated NLN members, an average of 36 members.

All super organizers associated with these states are from the first four cohorts. For example, one individual attended the second Academy cohort, represents a chamber, serves in four national leadership roles, and is associated with 26 collaboratives in one state. Another individual attended the fourth Academy cohort, represents a consultancy, serves in three national leadership roles, and has been associated with five collaboratives in two states.

The identified super organizers have long been actively engaged with the NLN. Several of these individuals attribute their success to Chamber Foundation staff support as well as to peer mentoring relationships that emerged organically from the TPM Academy cohort training program. These leaders, in turn, provide mentorship and guidance to other professionals joining the NLN. The formal leadership roles in which they serve increase the visibility of these super organizers to the rest of the NLN, facilitating knowledge transfer and mentorship opportunities between this group and less experienced TPM professionals.

Anecdotal evidence from administrative data suggests that these mentorships, formal or informal, positively impact TPM adoption in other areas. For instance, Laura Smith, of the Buffalo-Niagara Partnership in New York, stated that experts from "Houston, Phoenix, and others have been incredible mentors," when asked to elaborate on partnerships that were key to setting up TPM in her region. Another TPM professional shared that they had convened a group of NLN members from Wisconsin, Florida, North Carolina, and Kentucky to meet monthly and share best practices as an example of network members engaging each other outside formal NLN events and activities.

OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES DISCUSSION

The TPM Academy and NLN aim to position employers to manage their talent supply more proactively and effectively by using supply chain management principles. The TPM Academy curriculum describes six strategies to build robust talent supply pipelines. For each strategy, TPM provides tools for capacity building and implementing actions designed to generate ROI for participating employers. Measuring and reporting employer ROI is an ambitious and long-term goal that was integrated into the initial TPM planning process, but we expected it to take some time beyond the Academy process to achieve quantitative outcomes that could be tied to ROI. As an interim step, most collaboratives have been satisfied with measuring activities and outputs and qualitative outcomes in evaluating the success of TPM.

Quantitative data demonstrating how TPM is impacting ROI for companies being served in specific regions could be helpful for demonstrating impact to build interest and momentum and to attract funding. It could also be used to measure and track the performance of talent development systems by employers' standards to guide adjustments and provide accountability across the system. However, in examining performance monitoring and measurement systems for TPM, we found that the network has not matured greatly in tracking quantitative measures of ROI for individual companies in collaboratives.

While over half of national survey respondents report collaboratives and employers are actively tracking specific, predetermined outcome measures, reporting on these specific outcomes was limited. The most common metrics being tracked include increased number of qualified job candidates, reduced number of unfilled job openings, reduced staff turnover and increased retention rates—metrics that align with the primary goals established for TPM. However, TPM
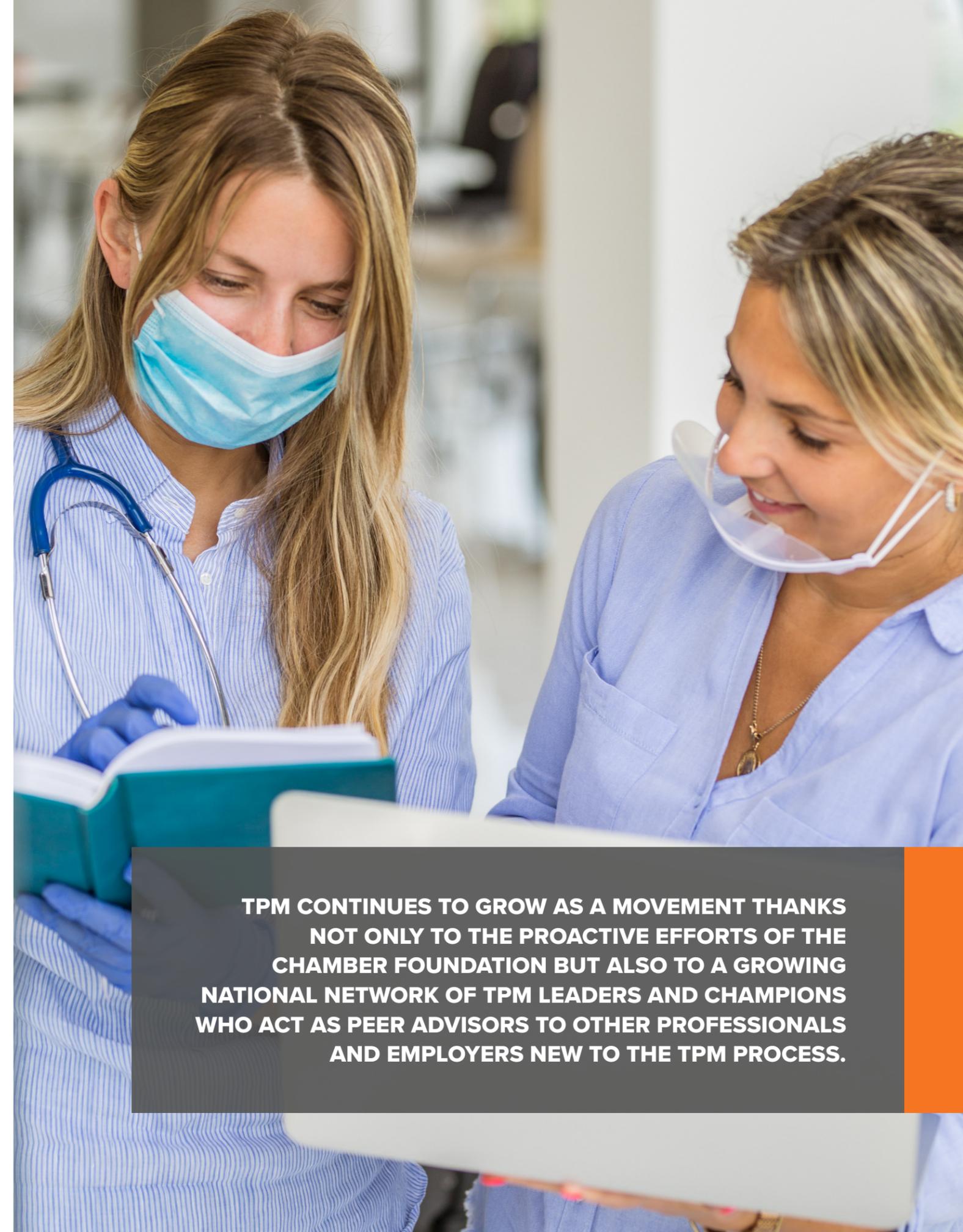
TPM CONTINUES TO GROW AS A MOVEMENT THANKS NOT ONLY TO THE PROACTIVE EFFORTS OF THE CHAMBER FOUNDATION BUT ALSO TO A GROWING NATIONAL NETWORK OF TPM LEADERS AND CHAMPIONS WHO ACT AS PEER ADVISORS TO OTHER PROFESSIONALS AND EMPLOYERS NEW TO THE TPM PROCESS.

host organizations are not yet reporting these outcomes publicly, even if they purport to track them. When asked to provide specific results, outputs, or outcomes being tracked, few survey respondents provided details about quantifiable results related to employer outcomes.

Instead, host organizations and employers seem satisfied with using proxies, such as customer satisfaction or collaborative strength and activity. For instance, their evaluation metrics focus on the number of collaboratives, employers and activities, and sometimes on leading indicators of success like program completion, and they might not be seeking data on individual or aggregate employer success. Kentucky accounts for almost half of the collaboratives tracking outcomes. According to interviews there and elsewhere, collaboratives are reporting substantial progress in employer satisfaction, and many are beginning to use structured mechanisms to track leading measures such as training program completion. Several survey respondents noted they have been able to identify and make improvements to training programs using this system of leading measures.

Usage data from the TPM web tool suggests that progress is being made across the wider TPM network as well. Of the 260 collaboratives identified as web tool users, 201 (77%) indicated they have engaged at least one employer partner and 42 that they have engaged with ten or more employers. Additionally, 179 collaboratives (69%) have recorded at least one employer survey via the web tool, while 60 (23%) have recorded five or more. Thirty-two collaboratives (12%) have recorded at least one action plan.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE YEARS

TPM continues to grow as a movement thanks not only to the proactive efforts of the Chamber Foundation but also to a growing national network of TPM leaders and champions who act as peer advisors to other professionals and employers new to the TPM process. The NLN is leading the TPM movement, and its members continue to share their TPM success stories, lessons learned, and suggestions for continuous improvement to benefit the network at large. This group is now more than 400 professionals—including 372 TPM graduates who participated in one of the sixteen TPM Academies. Launched in 2015, the TPM movement includes champions in 36 states and Canada and continues to grow. These professionals represent 330 organizations and more than 100 active employer collaboratives involving thousands of employers. And there are more than 1,600 unique individuals that have tested the TPM web tool, suggesting the NLN has helped to introduce a much broader network of professionals to the TPM curriculum.

The 2020 survey of NLN members confirmed that the TPM curriculum and NLN are making a difference in how employer collaboratives are organized. According to those surveyed, the TPM Academy, TPM materials, and the TPM network were influential resources when organizing their work with employers. After attending a TPM Academy or engaging with the NLN, respondents felt more prepared to organize and support their employer collaboratives. When asked specifically about TPM strategies and activities, respondents reported that they were critical in the formation and advancement of employer collaboratives. Overall, the NLN is now better positioned to work with employers to achieve ROI through demand-driven talent development strategies.

On average, according to survey respondents, host organizations that moved forward with TPM formally support three to four employer collaboratives. Each host works with, on average, 32 employers total and about nine employers per collaborative according to survey responses. There are at least 1,240 employers engaged in these collaboratives. Of the survey respondents, 23 represent host organizations that are supporting employers with organizing and gaining insights (i.e., implementing strategies 2–4) while another 18 host organizations have advanced to supporting employers in working with talent solution providers (i.e., implementing strategies 5–6).

For guidance and support, TPM graduates and the NLN rely on the leadership of the Chamber Foundation and on other TPM graduates as mentors and peers. Based on a comprehensive review of TPM and NLN network activity, the NLN includes a core group of about 69 individuals from 50 organizations.

There are a few leaders in the network that have distinguished themselves through their accomplishments as well as their active support of the NLN. These distinguished individuals are also responsible for directly supporting or overseeing TPM collaboratives and employer connections. Seven state leaders represent 46 active collaboratives, reflecting greater than 40% of total active collaboratives identified from the survey. Each of the leading TPM states (Arizona, California, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Vermont, and Texas) can boast a 'super organizer' (all of whom were trained as part of TPM Academy cohorts I–IV). It is also notable that most of these super organizers anchored their work in large metropolitan areas: e.g., Phoenix, Houston, Tampa, and San Diego. These leaders have been successful in bringing and expanding TPM to their respective states and often are the beacon of continuity and momentum for their region's and their state's program.

When the first TPM Academy was launched, organizers hoped that Strategies 1–6 could be completed in three to six months, operating at the speed of business. However, after several years of experience, it is clear that the work needed to organize collaboratives and build long-term commitment is more time consuming. From previous Academy evaluations, it is known that the TPM Orientation—an initial organizing stage added after several regions struggled early with finding employer champions and gaining host organization support—can be completed within three months of starting the TPM Academy but it can take much longer for some participants to get oriented. The varying time frames reflect the diversity of Academy participants, their organizational support, and previous experience as well as the industry dynamics in their local area. For example, larger metro area organizations with more resources may be able to dedicate more staff time compared to smaller rural area organizations that may already face capacity constraints. Interviews with TPM leaders suggest that, for those with existing talent development strategies that align well with TPM, the orientation and process to get through Strategies 1–2 can take two to three months.

A major contributing factor to this longer-than-expected implementation timeframe is the dearth of experienced organizers. There was no formal training program for employer collaborative organizers prior to TPM's launch in 2015. In the five years the TPM Academy has been actively training TPM professionals, many of those graduates who have had success as a collaborative organizer have accepted more senior roles within their organizations and had to backfill their former roles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Continue to conduct an annual survey that captures insights about NLN progress advancing collaboratives and resource needs.**

The Chamber Foundation must support a network that is rapidly expanding and outgrowing the close attention of its team. To illustrate, between 2019 and 2020, the number of host organizations expanded from 42 to 63. The number of collaboratives increased from 71 in 18 states to 113 in 23 states. As the number of collaboratives and the visibility of TPM continues to increase across more states, the Chamber Foundation will want to remain aware of emerging issues and challenges facing host organizations and employer collaboratives that may be less closely tied to the Academy process.

An annual survey that focuses not only on performance but also seeks to identify emerging new issues will be vital to expanding the impact of the network. While we recommend keeping the survey brief, rotating survey questions could help to further identify the impact of the TPM initiative on individuals and their organizations. In particular, responses this year suggested that host organizations may be extending their capabilities to support employer-led talent development, TPM professionals may be quickly advancing in their careers, increasing the percentage of time allocated to talent development—measuring organizational progress could help to describe the NLN theory of change. Additionally, we are curious how TPM leaders are engaging with others in their regional and state workforce development systems—for example, who are their most important partners in Strategies 2–4?

We also recommend providing more training in utilizing the TPM web tool which will be invaluable in tracking activity as the network grows. Training should provide applied and hands-on activities with instructions (e.g., walk through or simulate sending a survey) and review of results with training participants. Additional training may also be considered to address the common barriers identified by national and state survey respondents, such as the need to enhance employer engagement, improve effectiveness with limited resources, and facilitate the work of a collaborative in a virtual environment.

2. **Create a program designed to transfer knowledge from TPM Academy graduates to others in their organization and to their local partners.**

The TPM Academy process is rich in the detail and experience that it offers Academy participants; however, the network needs a way to help participants communicate and teach their colleagues about TPM. Some of the most successful host organizations have multiple participants in the TPM Academy who can work together to implement TPM.

There are several hurdles to overcome in institutionalizing the TPM approach at host organizations and in local areas. First, not all host organizations have the resources or capacity to train multiple TPM organizers. Second, the most experienced organizers are often promoted and have limited time to attend to individual collaboratives, sometimes continuing to oversee multiple collaboratives while taking on other responsibilities. When they acquire new staff, they may not have the resources or time to impart the TPM Academy experience and skills. Third, there are some organizations that may lose their trained TPM organizer altogether, and the future of their employer collaboratives relies on individuals not formally trained in TPM.

These challenges suggest the need for organizational as well as individual commitments in the form of time and attention dedicated to TPM and providing access to additional training opportunities for staff working at host organizations and their partners. Training would be helpful for the staff who may be inheriting responsibility for facilitating employer collaboratives but have never attended a TPM Academy as well as for every organization's executive leadership so that they may more fully support the TPM initiative.

3. **Develop a more structured process for obtaining employer-specific outcome data that could be anonymized and reported in aggregate.**

While several collaboratives indicate that they are monitoring employer ROI, there is no structured survey instrument to capture that ROI data. Presumably, this information is proprietary and sensitive. While it may be difficult to capture data from employers that is consistent and comparable, some leaders believe that a common survey instrument could help to overcome this barrier to aggregating ROI data. The NLN could be an invaluable forum for designing and testing an employer survey instrument designed to collect and measure outcome data that could be aggregated across the TPM network.

As CREC launched its evaluation this year, we expected that only a limited number of collaboratives had reached Strategies 5 and 6, and fewer still would be ready to report quantitative outcomes related to employer ROI. At this stage, the Chamber Foundation only has publicly reported employer-validated outcome metrics for one of its active collaboratives, from the Michigan Energy Workforce Development Consortium. We believe that many more employers may be tracking data associated with employer ROI and could be encouraged to continue to track relevant measures, share results with their collaboratives, and help develop guidance for others in the network. Some leaders in the network may be on track to demonstrate employer ROI but face barriers related to publicly reporting and sharing those successes. Identifying and overcoming those barriers would bolster network progress and further validate the effect of TPM strategies.

The lack of quantifiable outcomes to date suggests that it may be more challenging to validate or to report and share outcomes than initially expected. Employers engaged in the network would have the most pertinent perspectives and should be provided a forum to discuss the feasibility of generating data tied to intended outcomes and sharing success measures to motivate improvements in and investments across the talent pipeline.

4.   Enhance the value of the NLN by expanding the services offered to network members.

NLN members are appreciative of Chamber Foundation's role to date and continue to seek additional help. From the survey, the most common resources or support requested include: (1) employer engagement strategies during COVID; (2) virtual consultations with TPM leaders regarding strategy; and (3) issue-specific problem-solving sessions with TPM network peers. A theme of these requests is a desire for more hands-on technical assistance and advice. This could be addressed through one-on-one and group coaching sessions as well as structured, pre-scheduled virtual office hours.

It may also be important to develop more structured forums and feedback through the TPM web tools, now that the community has grown sufficiently to sustain a moderated forum. In addition, the NLN may seek to create supplemental online and asynchronous training programs that provide graduates of the TPM Academy process with continuous learning opportunities. The goal is to develop stronger network links, build leadership and technical expertise in the Network, and maintain the magic of the Academy experience through on-going opportunities to meet peers and sustain those relationships over time using technology and NLN-sponsored events.

5.   Challenge NLN leaders to imagine a self-sustaining movement.

The Chamber Foundation and the NLN have established a structure to develop a new generation of TPM experts and leaders. As the TPM movement continues to mature, the NLN group may take on a life of its own and begin to organize as an independent network with the Chamber Foundation's guidance and funding. NLN leaders should consider how they might organize this self-sustaining movement. This could be done by creating a more formal leadership structure, developing an independent work program, and designing a business model for a TPM membership network that embraces the Academy process, the National Learning Network annual meeting, and the local efforts being implemented by the several hundred organizations now engaged in TPM. The core leaders of the current NLN would likely be critical to this effort and serve as the nucleus for an advisory board (or governing board) and would provide vision and direction for the future of the TPM NLN.

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ORGANIZATIONS
PARTICIPATE
IN TPM

APPENDIX A: 2020 NLN SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Thank you for taking the time to complete the first national Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Employer Collaborative survey! The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation is requesting this information to assess the growth and success of the TPM movement and network over time as well as the challenges. Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated and should only take 10 minutes.

You were selected for this survey because you attended a TPM Academy or participated in the TPM National Learning Network. Aggregate results will be shared with the TPM National Learning Network at the Talent Forward Conference in October. Individual responses will be confidential to our evaluation partners at the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness.

Please answer the following questions as honestly and accurately as possible.

The following questions are about you and your organization's work with employer collaboratives and Talent Pipeline Management strategies.

1. To get started, please enter your PIN from email

2. We are curious to what extent the TPM Academy, TPM materials and the TPM network have shaped your understanding of how to help employers achieve a return-on-investment through talent development strategies. To what degree has TPM influenced your work with employers? Choose a rating on a scale of 1-5 (1 least – does not inform my work, 5 most – strong influence on my work)

3. Did you start or support any employer collaboratives?
   a. Yes
   b. No

4. What were the biggest barriers to starting or expanding employer collaboratives and implementing talent pipeline management strategies?
   a. Host organization interest and commitment to process
   b. Employer engagement
   c. Conflict with potential partners
   d. Host organization resource constraints
   e. Employer resource constraints
   f. Political or public acceptance
   g. None/Not applicable
   h. Other (open ended)

5. What factors were most important to your success? Select all that apply.
   a. Host organization interest and commitment to process
   b. Active employer engagement
   c. Agreement among potential partners
   d. Resources from host organization
   e. Resources from employers
   f. Political or public acceptance
   g. None/Not Applicable
   h. Other (open ended)

6. How many employer collaboratives have you started or supported? Enter number

7. How many of these employer collaboratives are **active**? For example, employers in these collaboratives show up to meetings (pre-COVID-19 disruption). Enter number

8. Please select the industries represented by your **active** employer collaboratives as of February 2020. If none, please select "None/Not Applicable".)
   Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
   Architecture and Construction
   Arts, Audio/Visual Technology, and Communications
   Business Management & Administration
   Education & Training
   Finance
   Government and Public Administration
   Health Science
   Hospitality and Tourism
   Human Service
   Information Technology
   Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
   Manufacturing
   Marketing
   Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
   Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics
   None/Not applicable
   Other (open ended)

9. Among your active employer collaboratives, how many have completed data collection and analysis (Strategies 2-4)? (Enter number)

10. Among your active employer collaboratives, how many have reached Strategy 5 (Build Talent Supply Chains) or Strategy 6 (Continuous Improvement)? (Enter number)

11. How many employers currently participate across all your active employer collaboratives? For example, these employers show up to meetings. Enter number

12. Which of the following outcomes are your collaboratives tracking? (Check all that apply ONLY IF EMPLOYERS ARE ACTIVELY TRACKING AND REPORTING ON THESE OUTCOMES)
    a. Reduced number of unfilled job openings
    b. Increased number of qualified job candidates
    c. Reduced onboarding and upgrading costs
    d. Reduced staff turnover and increased retention rates
    e. Increased career advancement
    f. Increased employee diversity
    g. None
    h. Other (open ended)

13. Can you tell us about any specific outcomes you have tracked? Please describe examples with specific numbers below, if available. Let us know if you have reports or published materials you could share with the evaluation team. (open ended)

14. Have your collaboratives been active or engaged since February 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic? If so, please tell us how and why. (open)

15. What ways have you engaged with the TPM National Learning Network (https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/talent-pipeline-management) in the last year? Select all that apply.
    a. Used online resources
    b. Joined webinars
    c. Joined a working group or committee
    d. Taught a course or spoke to a group
    e. Attended Talent Forward conference
    f. None
    g. Other (please specify)

16. The TPM National Learning Network has held meetings annually for the past 5 years, how many NLN annual events have you attended? Enter number

17. What support or resources will you need moving forward? (check all that apply)
    a. Virtual consultations with TPM leaders regarding strategy
    b. Additional networking opportunities via online forums
    c. Improvements to the online TPM tools
    d. Training to use online TPM tools and resources
    e. Technical support for online TPM tools and resources
    f. Issue-specific problem solving with TPM network peers (diversity and inclusion, youth programming, alignment with higher education, etc.)
    g. Communications support – framing and messaging the work moving forward
    h. Employer engagement strategies during COVID
    i. Analytical or technical support (design or analyze surveys, output data from TPM tool)
    j. Other (open response)

18. How does support from the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation need to be different or changed this year in order to keep your TPM efforts moving forward? (open ended)

19. Are you interested in connecting to the TPM National Learning Network as a learner, teacher, or speaker or for further training or consultation?
    a. Already connected
    b. Yes
    c. No
    d. Not sure

APPENDIX B: 2020 TPM STATE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Thank you for taking the time to complete this brief survey. The purpose of the survey is to better understand the work of employer collaboratives and talent development, related challenges and achievements.

Evaluation partners include: Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Knoxville Chamber, Consumers Energy (Michigan), US Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness and American Enterprise Institute.

A summary of survey results will be provided to everyone that completes the 10-minute survey and provides their contact information. Individual responses will be confidential to the evaluation team.

The following questions are about forming and supporting employer collaboratives.

1. Please describe your organization type. Select one.
    a. Employer/Business seeking talent
    b. Chamber or Business Association
    c. Workforce Agency or Board
    d. Educational Organization
    e. Economic Development Organization
    f. Other (open ended)

2. From your perspective, are employer collaboratives utilizing talent pipeline management strategies in your state?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Not sure

3. What have been the biggest barriers to expanding or creating employer collaboratives and implementing talent pipeline management strategies? (Select two)
    i. Employer engagement
    j. Conflict with potential partners
    k. Resource constraints
    l. Political or public acceptance
    m. I do not form or support employer collaboratives
    n. Not applicable
    o. Other (open ended)

4. Could employer collaboratives be more effective in building talent pipelines in your state? If so, how? If not, why not? Please explain.

5. Please list organizations that we should speak to regarding how to achieve return-on-investment for companies/employers through talent development or talent pipeline management strategies. (open ended)

The following questions are about you and your organization's work with employer collaboratives and Talent Pipeline Management strategies.

6. Did you attend a US Chamber of Commerce Foundation Talent Pipeline Management Academy (herein "TPM Academy")?
    a. Yes
    b. No – skip to end of survey.

7. What year did you attend the TPM Academy? (open ended)

8. What type of organization were you affiliated with when you attended the TPM Academy? Select one.
    a. Chamber or Business Association
    b. Workforce Agency or Board
    c. Education Organization
    d. Economic Development Organization
    e. Employer/Business seeking talent
    f. Other (open ended)

9. Did you start or support any employer collaboratives?
    c. Yes
    c. No – skip to end of survey

10. What year was your most active employer collaborative created? (open ended)

11. Before attending the TPM Academy, did you have any pre-existing employer collaboratives?
    a. Yes
    b. No

12. How many employer collaboratives have you created since the TPM Academy? (Enter number)

13. How many employer collaboratives were still active as of February 2020? (Enter number)

14. Please select the industries represented by employer collaboratives that were inactive as of February 2020. If none, please select "Not Applicable".
a. Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
b. Architecture and Construction
c. Arts, Audio/Visual Technology, and Communications
d. Business Management & Administration
e. Education & Training
f. Finance
g. Government and Public Administration
h. Health Science
i. Hospitality and Tourism
j. Human Service
k. Information Technology
l. Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
m. Manufacturing
n. Marketing
o. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
p. Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics
q. Not applicable
r. Other (open ended)

15. Please select the industries represented by your active employer collaboratives as of February 2020. If none, please select "Not Applicable".)
a. Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
b. Architecture and Construction
c. Arts, Audio/Visual Technology, and Communications
d. Business Management & Administration
e. Education & Training
f. Finance
g. Government and Public Administration
h. Health Science
i. Hospitality and Tourism
j. Human Service
k. Information Technology
l. Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
m. Manufacturing
n. Marketing
o. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
p. Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics
q. Not applicable
r. Other (open ended)

16. What business function and/or critical jobs are your active collaboratives focused on?

17. Among your active employer collaboratives, how many are early stage or building momentum? Enter number

18. Among your active employer collaboratives, how many are more established and have completed data collection and analysis (Strategies 2-4)? (Enter number)

19. How has the pandemic affected your efforts to expand or create employer collaboratives or implement the Talent Pipeline Management? (open ended)

Please respond to the following questions considering challenges and results across all your employer collaboratives combined.

20. Did you use TPM strategies/activities in forming or advancing your employer collaboratives? (TPM strategies include: 1) Organize Employer Collaboratives, 2) Engage in Demand Planning, 3) Communicate Competency and Credential Requirements, 4) Analyze Talent Flows, 5) Build Talent Supply Chains, 6) Continuous Improvement.
a. Yes
b. No
c. Not sure

21. Which of the following strategies have been successfully implemented by your active employer collaboratives? (Select all that apply)
a. Identified critical jobs and business functions
b. Organized the collaborative
c. Completed demand planning and/or needs assessment
d. Employers identified shared competency and credential requirements
e. Employers communicated competency and credential requirements to potential talent sourcing providers
f. Analyzed talent flows to identify talent sources to employers for critical positions
g. Built talent supply chains
h. Created incentives for talent sourcing providers to meet performance standards
i. Implemented continuous improvement / identified and addressed issues in the talent supply chain
j. None
k. Other (open ended)

22. Did or do you face any barriers or limiting factors in your efforts to follow the TPM process? Select all that apply.
    a. Host organization interest and commitment to process
    b. Employer engagement challenges
    c. Conflict with potential partners
    d. Host organization resource constraints
    e. Employer resource constraints
    f. Political or public acceptance
    g. None/Not Applicable
    h. Other (open ended)

23. How many employers participate in all your employer collaboratives as of February 2020? (For example, these employers show up to meetings.) Enter number

24. How many employers are actively tracking the progress of talent sourcing providers as of February 2020? (For example, these employers are attending meetings to review results or otherwise actively evaluating one or more talent sourcing providers.) Enter number

25. How many talent sourcing providers have adapted programs in response to employers' review of their performance as of February 2020? enter number

26. Which of the following programs have been created or adjusted in response to employers' review of their performance? Select all that apply.
    a. Apprenticeships
    b. Secondary school career and technical education programs
    c. College postsecondary credit programs
    d. Postsecondary non-credit programs
    e. Third-party certification programs
    f. Employer-specific credentials or recognition programs
    g. Industry-specific credentials or recognition programs
    h. None
    i. Not applicable
    j. Other (please specify)

27. Which organizations or companies have been your most effective partners in working toward return-on-investment outcomes for companies/employers (for example, working to reduce time and cost to hire and improve retention)? (open ended)

28. Which is the best estimate for the total value of financial or in-kind support that your collaboratives received from employers at any time during the process? Select one.
    a. $0
    b. $1-$10,000
    c. $10,001-$50,000
    d. $50,001-$100,000
    e. $100,001-$250,000
    f. Greater than $250,000 (please provide your best estimate of the total)
    g. Other (open ended)

Outcomes Tracking and Reporting

29. Which of the following outcomes are your collaboratives tracking? (Check all that apply ONLY IF EMPLOYERS ARE ACTIVELY TRACKING AND REPORTING ON THESE OUTCOMES)
    a. Reduced number of unfilled job openings
    b. Increased number of qualified job candidates
    c. Reduced onboarding and upgrading costs
    d. Reduced staff turnover and increased retention rates
    e. Increased career advancement
    f. Increased employee diversity
    g. Other (open ended)

30. Please report the specific outcomes your employer collaboratives have achieved (for example, tell us that one employer reduced the number of days a specific type of job went unfilled for x days to x days or reduced onboarding costs by x amount). Include as much detail as possible. (open ended)

Satisfaction with the TPM Process

31. What has been the most compelling action taken or result achieved so far in establishing your collaboratives? (open ended)

32. Are you interested in engaging with the TPM National Learning Network (https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/talent-pipeline-management) at any point in the next year (e.g., use online resources, join webinars, join a working group, teach a course, speak to a group)?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not sure

Background Information

Your information will be confidential to the evaluation team. A summary of survey results will be shared with everyone that provides their email address. Your name and organization name are important to ensuring 100% response from key stakeholders.

33. First Name

34. Last Name

35. Your Organization Name

36. Location (State)

37. Your Email Address

38. Please provide links to any public facing information about your collaborative(s) and additional information that you think would be helpful.

Thank you!

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION