



U.S. Chamber of Commerce
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Talent Pipeline Management[®]

TPM Job Quality Resource Guide



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Introduction

Welcome to the Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Job Quality Resource Guide. This resource guide is for organizations and professionals leading TPM initiatives, as well as their employer partners, interested in incorporating job quality in TPM collaborative discussions and interventions. Other stakeholders, including education partners, workforce program practitioners and funders, and community-based organizations interested in TPM may also find the materials in this guide useful.

Many employers recognize the negative impacts low job quality can have on workers, families, communities, and regional economies, and desire to provide higher quality jobs to improve talent attraction and retention for their businesses. However, making job quality investments and changes can often feel overwhelming, impractical, or incompatible with employer goals. The purpose of this guide is to provide a framework and practical tools for TPM practitioners and their partners to address talent pain points by designing higher quality, more attractive jobs for candidates and current employees.

What Is TPM?

Led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, TPM is designed to be a scalable, authentically employer-led solution designed to close the skills gap in ways that generate shared value and a return on investment (ROI) for employers as well as learners, education and training providers, and the communities in which they reside. This systemic approach unlocks employer leadership and engagement in a novel way by speaking the language of—and leveraging strategies and practices associated with—supply chain management.

Taught through the TPM Academy® and supported by the TPM Academy curriculum and implementation resources, TPM provides a structured process that facilitates employers engaging in collective action; producing primary source data about their workforce needs and challenges; and designing and implementing solutions that address their most pressing shared talent pain points. Launched in 2014, the growing TPM movement is now in 44 states, D.C., and Canada, with hundreds of active employer collaboratives involving thousands of employers.

Why Focus on Job Quality Through TPM?

At the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, we believe effective, employer-led efforts to improve job quality can advance an organization's business goals, address specific employer pain points in their talent pipelines, and improve TPM performance. How jobs are designed impact employee satisfaction, productivity, workplace diversity, time to hire, retention and turnover, and other key performance metrics that benefit both employers and the workers themselves. While worker preferences are not all the same (i.e., a good job for one worker may not be a good job for another), designing (or redesigning) jobs to improve job quality can address employer pain points by ensuring workers from different backgrounds:

- Apply for and accept offers for critical jobs
- Can be successful on the job
- Are sufficiently rewarded based on their goals and needs
- Report higher job satisfaction and stay with an employer for longer period of time
- Experience greater rates of internal promotion

Simply put, designing good jobs is good for business.

What Is Job Quality?

The U.S. Chamber Foundation worked with leading job quality experts to identify eight job quality features for employers and employer collaboratives to consider:

- **Earnings:** Compensation for work performed, including hourly wage or annual salary, commission, tips, bonus, or profit share.
- **Benefits:** Health insurance, paid leave, employee education benefits, retirement plans, childcare subsidies or support, and other benefits, including those that address barriers to work. This includes support accessing and maximizing benefits provided (e.g., financial wellness and career coaching).
- **Safety and Security:** Policies and practices to promote physical safety (precautions against disease or injury) as well as mental and emotional safety (e.g., training and clear policies for reporting, investigating, and addressing harassment or discrimination). This also includes psychosocial safety and the level of role stressors employees experience (e.g., extent employees feel safe to take risks, feel cared for by colleagues, are clear on what is expected, and extent work tasks create ongoing conflict with other colleagues, teams, or departments).
- **When and Where Work is Performed:** Employee input on work schedule and location (if applicable), predictable hours, advance notice of schedule changes, and compensation when using on-call scheduling.
- **How Work is Performed:** Use of skills, proper tools and technology to be productive, connection with co-workers, level of input, autonomy and control in the performance of duties, and extent employees feel their work tasks are significant, interesting, challenging, aligned to business objectives.
- **Learning, Development, and Advancement:** Pre-employment training partnerships, onboarding, technical skill training, cross-training, mentoring and coaching, sponsorship, upskilling opportunities such as apprenticeship or targeted degree programs, and structured promotion pathways.
- **Employee Voice and Engagement:** Valuing and acting upon employee input and engagement through surveys, stay interviews, employee resource groups, and meaningful task forces or improvement teams. In some cases, this may also include open-book management, broad employee ownership (e.g., through Employee Stock Ownership Plans, or ESOPs), participatory management (co-operative), and productive relationships with organized labor.
- **Management and Supervision:** The culture established, modeled, and reinforced by the leadership and management teams. This includes the qualities, management competencies, and communication practices of individuals responsible for managing people and the quality of relationships employees have with direct supervisors. This may also include the level and quality of team-based models and shared leadership opportunities for all employees.

Designing for Job Quality



What Is Included in the Resource Guide?

This resource guide will walk through definitions, benchmarking exercises, considerations, and practical resources to assist TPM practitioners and employers in considering and improving the eight job quality features for critical jobs. Specifically, this job quality resource guide is broken down into three parts:

Resource 1: TPM Partner Orientation to Employers – This resource is intended to help TPM practitioners, as well as community-based organizations, education partners, and worker advocacy organizations understand common employer language, perspectives, priorities, challenges, and language related to job quality. With a better understanding of how employers approach this topic, TPM practitioners and partners can more effectively introduce, collaborate, and support employers and employer collaboratives through job design efforts that improve job quality and address employer pain points.

Resource 2: Employer Orientation to Job Quality – This resource is intended to help employers better understand the national research landscape about job quality and resources that can support adoption of new business practices. This section will also help employers secure internal buy-in and evaluate the success of job quality initiatives on the metrics that matter most to them.

Resource 3: Leveraging TPM to Address Talent Pain Points Through Job Quality – This resource describes how TPM practitioners and employers can lead job design efforts to improve job quality in each of the eight job quality features for critical jobs. The resource includes case studies, definitions, reflection questions, and examples for practitioners to take action, all within the context of TPM Strategy 1 (Organize for Employer Leadership and Collaboration), Strategy 3 (Align and Communicate Job Requirements), Strategy 5 (Build Talent Supply Chains), and Strategy 6 (Engage in Continuous Improvement and Resiliency Planning).

After reading through this resource guide, TPM practitioners will have the knowledge and tools to begin (or accelerate) efforts to design jobs in a way that increases job quality, address TPM pain points, position businesses as “employers of choice”, and increase an employer’s or employer collaborative’s ability to support the well-being of workers, families, and local communities.

How to Use the Resource Guide

This guide can support a range of uses. The resources can be used as stand-alone documents or bundled together, depending on your needs or the needs of your audience. The following are examples of how you can use the documents together or separately.

- **Getting the Word Out:** The resources can be distributed via email, embedded in a newsletter, or used as collateral at related events to help socialize TPM with potential employer partners, job quality stakeholders, and practitioners working with employers or employer collaboratives on job design efforts.
- **Meetings/Presentations:** The resources can be used as preliminary reading or as a reference during one-on-one or group meetings, such as those with chambers of commerce, public agencies, or nonprofit and community-based organizations. They can also be highlighted in or used to inform presentations on TPM, job quality, or employer engagement best practices.
- **Workshops/Orientations:** The resources can guide workshops with employers, job quality partners, and TPM practitioners to explore best practices for employer engagement or application of the TPM framework from the lens of job quality. They can also be incorporated into in-person or virtual orientations for people learning about the TPM framework.
- **TPM Academies:** If you choose to participate in or co-host your own TPM Academy, these resources can be included to complement the TPM Academy curriculum. They can also support outreach and recruitment of participants for a TPM Academy.

Further Exploring TPM and Job Quality

Whether you are an employer committed to strengthening job quality, a TPM practitioner supporting talent pipeline strategies, or a partner organization working to improve workforce outcomes, the TPM Job Quality Resource Guide offers tools and insights tailored to your needs. TPM is designed to enhance and complement existing efforts as well as support the design of new efforts. TPM can add value by bringing structure, data discipline, and an outcomes-focused approach to collaborations aimed at improving job quality across industries. For employers, TPM can help align internal job quality efforts directly to talent pain points and talent pipeline strategies; for workforce development leaders, it offers a replicable methodology; and for partners, it provides a shared framework for engaging businesses more effectively.

If this is your first exposure to TPM, we encourage you to connect with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation team, TPM Fellows, or experienced TPM practitioners who can offer guidance and examples from the field. In addition to this guide, a growing body of TPM resources is available to deepen your understanding. Employers, workforce leaders, and partners alike can explore the TPM Academy curriculum to learn the strategies and practices that define the TPM system (<https://tpmacademy.uschamberfoundation.org/the-curriculum/>). For those ready to take the next step, this is an opportunity to integrate TPM principles and discussions on job quality, with the goal of strengthening talent pipelines, enhancing worker experience, and supporting long-term organizational performance.

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Thank you to the Aspen Institute, Walmart, and our TPM partners and job quality subject matter experts that contributed to this resource guide.



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TPM Job Quality Resource Guide

Resource 1: TPM Partner Orientation to Employers

This resource is intended to help TPM practitioners, public agencies, community-based organizations, education partners, and worker advocacy organizations understand common employer language, perspectives, priorities, challenges, and language related to job quality. With a better understanding of how employers approach this topic, TPM practitioners and partners can more effectively introduce, collaborate, and support employers and employer collaboratives through job design efforts that improve job quality and address employer pain points.

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1.1 Orienting TPM Practitioners and Partners to Employers for Job Quality Efforts

This resource is an orientation for TPM practitioners and partners interested in collaborating with employers to address talent pain points through job quality initiatives. It is part of a set of resources that, when combined with the Introduction, make up the **TPM (Talent Pipeline Management®) Job Quality Resource Guide**. Building strategic and successful relationships to support job quality requires employers, TPM practitioners, and partners to develop a mutual understanding of each other's worlds and the roles that different professionals and organizations play in making partnerships work.

The objective of this orientation is to help TPM practitioners and partners clearly connect their value proposition to employer needs, resulting in more effective collaboration. By working directly—and often differently—with the employer community, TPM practitioners and partners can help create conditions that improve job quality while also strengthening talent pipelines. With clearer communication and a shared understanding, the needs and challenges related to training, hiring, retaining, and upskilling workers can be addressed in ways that create value for both employers and employees.

Orienting TPM Practitioners and Partners to Employers for Job Quality Efforts

TPM practitioners and partners seeking to engage employers in job quality initiatives should begin by developing a strong understanding of the employer ecosystem, how employers are structured and operate, where decision-making authority lies, and how to engage effectively with professionals at every level. A compelling and clear value proposition is essential for meaningful employer engagement, especially on sensitive issues related to benefits, compensation, internal culture, safety and security, and other elements of job design that make up job quality. Making job quality investments and changes can often feel overwhelming, impractical, or incompatible with business goals for many employers. It is critical for practitioners to understand the limitations and opportunities employer partners face and focus on what can be done, not what cannot be done.

1.2 Employers Are in Both the Public and Private Sectors

People think of employers as primarily for-profit businesses in the private sector; however, an employer is any person or organization that employs people through a variety of employment relationships ranging from regular full-time employment to contractual employment. Employers are in both the public and private sectors. They can be for-profit businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government organizations, including the military, schools and colleges, as well as community-based organizations. Private sector employers can be registered as U.S. companies or as companies from other countries with locations in the United States.

Key Takeaways

When working on job quality, do not forget about employers in the public and nonprofit sectors. State and local agencies, schools and colleges, and community-based organizations are also employers that face their own job quality priorities, challenges, and opportunities.

1.3 Employers Are Typically Classified by Industry, Size, and Location(s)

In the private for-profit sector, employers vary widely depending on their size and the types of economic activities they carry out (e.g., manufacturing food products), the goods they produce, and the services they provide—across one or more physical locations. These types of economic activities and goods and services produced are called industries (e.g., manufacturing, healthcare). Physical locations that carry out one or more economic activities are called employer establishments (e.g., store, factory). Small employers—which are the largest job producers in the United States—typically carry out one major economic activity (e.g., food service) at one establishment (e.g., restaurant) within one geographic area (e.g., county). However, larger employers in the private for-profit sector, sometimes called business enterprises, carry out multiple economic activities through multiple firms with many different establishments around the world and across states, counties, and cities.

Employers in the private nonprofit sector also can vary widely. Nonprofit employers are in a wide variety of industries including education, healthcare, and social services. They can be large, diverse organizations spanning multiple industries with multiple establishments, or they can be smaller organizations with specialization in one industry and with only a single establishment.

In describing the private sector employer community, many refer to small, mid-size, or large employers based on the amount of sales and/or number of employees. There are no widely accepted definitions for sales or number of employees to be classified in each category for specific industries in the United States.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) generally refers to small businesses as those with fewer than 500 employees. Employer size is frequently reported based on the number of employees at a specific business establishment.

The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is the coding system used by government statistical agencies in classifying business establishments according to their primary economic activity and goods and services they produce. This system was developed for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy; however, it is used for a range of administrative purposes, including data collection for unemployment insurance and to produce labor market information (LMI) for employment trends and projections at the state and regional levels.

Employers use their own language when describing their industry or industry sector, based on what they consider their primary economic activity. For example, Amazon, the e-commerce giant, could be considered a technology company, a retailer, or a warehousing and logistics company. The firm is involved in many other industries and hires a range of occupations and skillsets. Amazon, and companies like it, often have talent management professionals (e.g., human resources) focusing on different business functions dealing with different issues and talent pain points. At Amazon, for example, the talent pain points and job quality priorities may be very different for management and professional jobs at corporate headquarters compared to warehousing and transportation jobs.



Key Takeaways

The employer community is highly diverse, so it's important to understand who you're engaging and use the language employers themselves use. Knowing an employer's NAICS code, location, and establishment size helps clarify their workforce needs and the scale of potential job quality efforts.

1.4 Employers Can Have Both Unionized and Non-Unionized Employees

Unions are organizations formed by workers to collectively negotiate with employers on issues such as wages, benefits, working conditions, and job security. While some employers operate in unionized environments, others do not. This distinction matters because unions often play a significant role in shaping job quality standards and advocating for the job quality features that matter to their members. They can be valuable partners in efforts to improve job quality, as they bring the voice of workers to the table and have formal structures and organizing capability to ensure any agreed upon changes are sustainable.

For TPM practitioners, understanding whether an employer has unionized employees is essential before engaging in job quality discussions. Unionized workplaces typically have collective bargaining agreements that govern many aspects of employment, including training, career pathways, and compensation. Engaging unions early can foster collaboration, avoid conflicts, and align workforce development strategies with existing agreements. This awareness helps practitioners design solutions that respect negotiated terms while supporting both employer needs and worker advancement.

Key Takeaways

Understanding whether an employer is unionized is essential, because unions influence job quality standards and collective bargaining agreements, making early collaboration critical to designing workforce solutions that align with negotiated terms and support both employer and worker needs.

1.5 Employers Vary in How They Organize Work and Define Their Critical Jobs

Employers, even in the same industry and of the same size, differ in how they organize the work to be performed. These differences show up most often in how they divide this work between different jobs, job titles, and job descriptions, with distinct levels of compensation. As a result, employers in the same industry vary significantly in how many positions (number of people employed and openings) they have for what types of jobs and with what range of compensation, benefits, schedules, and other job quality considerations.

For example, healthcare and social service employers often employ professionals with the job title of “case manager”. For some employers, this position requires a master’s degree, a specific state license (e.g., Licensed Clinical Social Worker), and requires employees to perform clinical responsibilities including diagnosing emotional and behavioral health disorders and developing clinical treatment plans. For other employers in the same sector, case managers are used to provide more general support and navigation and do not require any formal education or licensure. While both employers use the same job title, the roles and needs are very different. Similarly, a manager at a small business may supervise three employees, where the title “manager” at a large corporation may supervise 3,000.

In some cases, employers from different industries may share common business functions and jobs that may be organized similarly or differently. For example, employers in healthcare, manufacturing, and retail may share similar information technology jobs in cybersecurity and network management. They may also choose to work together in addressing their similar workforce needs in these shared jobs.

The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is the coding system used by government statistical agencies to classify occupations by their primary work tasks. As with NAICS, this system was developed for

the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data. Although SOC information is useful in understanding some of the common work tasks and skill requirements for job families, it is important to understand both the similarities and the differences in how employers define their own jobs.

Even employers that similarly organize work, define jobs, and determine staffing patterns may still differ in how they define their most critical business functions and jobs. Critical jobs are those that are most important to the competitiveness and performance of employers at the enterprise and establishment levels.

Employers also differ in how they define and prioritize their pain points for these critical jobs. Pain points refer to the different types of talent management challenges and priorities such as unfilled job openings; onboarding, training, and upgrading costs; career advancement, turnover, and retention; and increasing the diversity of a workforce. Some employers may have greater challenges in recruiting qualified talent and filling job openings, whereas others have more trouble retaining employees. Other employers may face greater challenges in recruiting and retaining a more diverse workforce to reflect the diversity of their customers and communities where they are located.

For example, two manufacturing businesses may describe their biggest hiring need is for industrial maintenance mechanics. One of the companies may describe a lack of qualified applicants as their biggest pain point, whereas the other is most focused on retaining these professionals. While the occupation is the same, each employer may be approaching the collaborative with a different problem they are hoping to solve.

Employers also may differ in how clearly they are able to define and prioritize their challenges. In some cases, employers have done a comprehensive analysis of their needs and priorities and are ready to discuss them with partners. In other cases, employers need to work with

partners to review their own data and to set priorities. For example, employers may focus initially on filling open positions but then realize that many of these openings are the result of growing retention problems, which should be addressed first.

Key Takeaways

Employers—even within the same industry—organize work and define critical jobs differently, which means their talent needs, job structures, and workforce pain points vary widely. Understanding these differences is essential for effectively identifying true challenges, aligning support, and designing job quality strategies that meet each employer’s unique context.

1.6 Employers Utilize Professionals in Multiple Roles That Can Impact How a Job Is Designed

Employers, especially large employers, utilize a variety of professionals who assume different roles in addressing their workforce needs. These professional roles go by many job titles, but include:

- **Executive Leadership.** Chief executive officers and other upper management professionals provide overall direction and leadership on the strategies and initiatives to recruit, develop, and retain the best talent for their most critical jobs. This executive leadership is critical in gaining the buy-in and resources needed to establish and sustain partnerships carried out by other lower-level professionals in the organization.
- **Government and Community Relations.** These professionals take the lead roles in working with federal, state, and local governments as well as community leaders. They are typically the major points of contact for government and community initiatives, including those in workforce and education.
- **Human Resource (HR) Professionals.** HR professionals are responsible for managing and coordinating core HR functions at the corporate and establishment levels, including recruiting, hiring, and onboarding new employees. They are also responsible for administering compensation and employee benefits, including employee tuition aid programs as well as training and professional development. HR professionals usually work directly with hiring managers to determine the company's workforce needs.
- **Recruitment and Screening.** These professionals are responsible for supporting HR by marketing career opportunities, working with talent sourcing partners, identifying and recruiting applicants, and managing the application and applicant tracking and screening process for HR professionals and hiring managers. These professionals can work directly for an employer or with a recruiting company that is under contract with an employer.
- **Hiring Managers.** These managers have the responsibility for determining the hiring needs and requirements for critical jobs they manage and supervise. Hiring managers typically make the final decision on hiring and career advancement.
- **Training and Development.** These professionals are involved in the onboarding and development of new hires as well as the upskilling and career advancement of existing employees. This category includes professionals who manage specific training programs, such as apprenticeship programs.
- **Other Subject Matter Experts.** This refers to employees who are considered experts in the performance of critical work tasks and in understanding the knowledge and skills required to perform these tasks at elevated levels of proficiency. These experts are usually the most experienced and highest-performing workers employed in critical jobs and are consulted by hiring managers or HR professionals when setting hiring requirements.
- **Employee Support Professionals.** These professionals—either employed by the company or retained on contract—provide a variety of support services to current employees to improve job performance, career advancement and retention, and employee satisfaction. They are sometimes employed by a third-party partner who works directly with employees on a confidential basis on matters such as housing, financial literacy, transportation, and childcare.

It is important to understand how the size of a business (i.e., small, mid-size, or large) often determines which professional you will likely engage in job quality efforts. Depending on how a company is organized, it could be that numerous teams or divisions should be involved. Professionals in small and mid-size companies have multiple roles. In addition, top executives and managers are likely to be more directly involved in decisions

that involve resources, priorities, and strategies. For larger employers, top executive and HR leadership buy-in is critical, but these individuals may not get directly involved in partnerships. Also, top executive and HR leadership at the local establishment level (e.g., manufacturing plant managers, retail store managers) may have to get higher-level buy-in from their corporate headquarters to establish partnerships.

Key Takeaways

Employers rely on many different professionals—each with unique responsibilities, authority, and influence—to recruit, develop, and support talent. Understanding who plays which role, and how those roles vary by company size and structure, is essential for engaging the right partners and designing effective job quality and workforce initiatives.

1.7 The Role of Human Resources (HR) Differs Dramatically Across Companies

Human Resources (HR) plays a critical role in shaping how organizations attract, develop, and retain talent—but its scope and influence can vary dramatically across companies. In some organizations, HR is a strategic partner involved in workforce planning, employee development, and culture-building. In others, HR may function primarily as an administrative department focused on compliance, payroll, and benefits. These differences impact how decisions about hiring, training, and advancement are made, and how flexible an employer may be in adopting new talent strategies.

For talent pipeline initiatives, understanding an employer's HR structure and priorities is essential. HR often controls or influences policies related to recruitment, onboarding, career pathways, and

employee engagement—all of which are central to building a sustainable talent pipeline. If HR is deeply involved in strategic planning, they can be a powerful ally in aligning external workforce development efforts with internal goals. Conversely, if HR is more transactional, practitioners may need to engage other leaders, such as operations or department heads, to implement job quality improvements. By assessing HR's role early, TPM practitioners can tailor their approach, foster collaboration, and ensure that initiatives complement existing systems rather than conflict with them.

Key Takeaways

HR's structure and level of influence vary widely across employers, shaping how decisions about hiring, training, advancement, and employee engagement are made. Understanding an employer's HR function early helps TPM practitioners tailor their approach, engage the right decision-makers, and ensure job quality and talent pipeline strategies align with internal priorities and capacity.

1.8 Employer Perspectives, Opportunities, Challenges, and Priorities Related to Job Quality Are Impacted by All of These Factors

When engaging with employers on the topic of job quality, it is important to understand their size, sector (i.e., public or private), industry, whether or not their employees are represented by a union, the role of their HR function, and how the employer's leadership and culture approach job quality. All these factors, and more, can influence if and how an employer partner will be

interested or able to engage in job quality discussions and initiatives as part of a TPM collaborative. It is often helpful to understand these factors for each employer in a collaborative prior to engaging in a discussion to get a clear understanding of how each employer may be approaching job quality.

Example: Specific Limitations of Behavioral Health Employers on Wage and Benefits by Settings.

Behavioral health employers often struggle to offer competitive wages because reimbursement rates, especially through Medicaid and other public payers, are typically low and have not kept pace with rising operating costs. Benefits packages are frequently limited as well, since many community-based providers operate with thin margins that constrain their ability to fund comprehensive health coverage or retirement plans. Employers may need to consider creative approaches—such as flexible scheduling, expanded professional development opportunities, supportive workplace cultures, or non-traditional perks—to attract and retain workers when they have limitations on their ability to compete for talent on wages and benefits alone.

The resources, challenges, decision making processes, priorities, and the leverage points to make changes in one or more of the eight job quality features are very different for a multi-national Fortune 500 company and a family-owned regional small business. A public education agency's (e.g., a school district) employee benefits change process and requirements are often very different from a private nonprofit education provider, even though they might both employ teachers or childcare workers.

Two helpful questions many employers are interested in at the outset of a discussion are often:

- How do the job quality offerings our organization provides compare to similar employers in my industry and region? Understanding the context of your employer partners and bringing examples from similar organizations can help TPM initiatives focused on job quality go further, faster.
- How did a similar organization—operating in a similar context—address this job quality issue?

Key Takeaways

Understanding an employer's unique context—its size, sector, union environment, HR structure, and organizational constraints—is essential for effectively engaging in job quality efforts. Tailoring TPM discussions to these differences, and drawing on examples from similar organizations, helps build credibility, accelerate progress, and ensure that job quality strategies are both feasible and meaningful.

1.9 Employers Directly Engage in Workforce Initiatives and Partnerships, as Well as with Trusted Intermediaries, Including Business Associations

Employers directly engage in national, state, and local initiatives and partnerships to address their workforce needs as well as with a variety of industry and professional organizations and other public and private intermediaries. Many of these organizations are based on a membership model in which companies pay dues and expect value; others have employers engaged as one of many partners or in an advisory capacity. Examples include:

- **National, state, regional, and local chambers of commerce.** Chambers are the most widespread business-led associations in the United States and the world, but they are also incredibly diverse. They are independent business entities, but some chambers belong as members to other chambers and form what is commonly referred to as a “federation.” For example, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has a federation of more than 1,500 state, regional, and local chambers as dues-paying members. Chambers are organized in many ways and play many distinct roles. Their primary membership is the business community in their defined geographic footprint, but they can include other community partners and leaders as well (e.g., area schools and colleges). Their missions vary, but most typically focus on growing and improving their community, supporting pro-business policies, serving as the “voice” of the business community on issues of importance to companies, and networking.
- **Industry sector organizations.** These are business associations that represent employers in specific industries or sectors. These associations can be national or regional (e.g., state-based) in scope. Some examples include the National Association of Manufacturers, the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association, and the National Retail Federation.
- **Professional associations and unions.** Many times, employers and employer organizations partner with professional associations and unions to address workforce needs. These associations represent people working in specific trades and professions, such as HR professionals, engineers, real estate agents, and electricians. An example is the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM).
- **Special purpose employer organizations.** These are organizations that employers join for specific purposes, such as veterans-hiring initiatives or opportunity-youth initiatives.
- **State, regional, and local economic development organizations.** These public and quasi-public organizations promote economic development and work with employers to improve their competitiveness and growth, including improving the workforce.
- **Other intermediaries.** Examples include public and private intermediaries, such as workforce boards.

These organizations frequently serve as conveners; they host events related to education and workforce topics (e.g., addressing a skills gap or closing an achievement gap). Their role is primarily to elevate awareness of an issue but not necessarily become the lead organization when it comes to implementing a solution. The convener function is usually executed in ways that drive up business-member interest and engagement in a new partnership or initiative that is led by others.

In addition to convening employer members, intermediaries also engage directly in original research (i.e., publishing reports with new data), or they launch education and workforce initiatives. An example of the latter is when companies coalesce around a tutoring program in a high school; sponsor a mentorship program for those involved in the criminal justice system; or establish a career awareness communications campaign to address misperceptions about or stigmas associated with opportunities in their industry.

It is common for these organizations also to be recruited as members of advisory boards or to play a role in initiatives tasked with engaging employers. Typically, these intermediaries are involved in a similar fashion to how employers are engaged but are presumed to speak on behalf of their membership and to be able to coordinate requests back to them (e.g., an increase in the number of internship offerings). Business associations are often asked to weigh in on industry workforce needs, skills and credentials requirements, labor market forecasting, etc., even if they themselves are not an employer engaged in the primary economic activity and work that is of interest to the advisory board or partnership.

It is important to note that while some business associations have an education or workforce mission and a dedicated staff for education and workforce policy and programming, this is by no means the rule. Business associations vary in terms of their capacity and willingness to engage on these issues.

It is also important to note that employers are repeatedly asked by different state education and workforce agencies, schools and colleges, and nonprofit organizations to participate in major initiatives, sector partnerships, and advisory groups. This results in employers being pulled in many different directions without knowing how these different partners work together to address their needs. Business and industry associations can play a role in organizing and coordinating employer engagement in ways that can provide benefits to both employers and TPM practitioners.

Key Takeaways

Business associations, chambers, industry groups, and other intermediaries play a major role in convening employers, coordinating engagement, and elevating workforce issues—but their capacity, mission, and level of involvement vary widely. Understanding how these organizations operate helps TPM practitioners identify the right partners, streamline employer engagement, and reduce duplication across initiatives.

1.10 Employers Often Use Business Language to Talk About Job Quality Efforts and Priorities

Low job quality can have negative impacts on individual workers, their families, local communities, and regional economics. Many employers recognize this and desire to provide higher quality jobs. While many social service and workforce agencies may use words and phrases like “support job quality,” “creating economic mobility,” and “increasing community impact” as part of a workforce program, these and other phrases may not resonate with employer partners interested in participating in a job quality initiative.

Below are examples of the types of phrases that employers may be more familiar:

- **Job Design:** The process of creating a job that enables the organization to achieve its business goals while motivating and rewarding employees. This includes the work tasks, knowledge, skills and competencies, job qualifications, total rewards, and other job quality features.
- **Total Rewards:** A corporate human resource term that refers to the combination of benefits, compensation, and rewards that employees receive from their organizations. This can include wages and bonuses as well as recognition, workplace flexibility, and career opportunities.

- **Employer of Choice:** A company people really want to work for. It’s highly sought after by job seekers and is also extremely attractive to passive job candidates. Many employers may approach a job quality initiative from the lens of becoming an “employer of choice.”
- **Talent pain points:** An area or issue in an employer’s hiring, internal training, and retention process that is causing challenges for their organization and/or negatively impacting their business goals. This could be high turnover, low productivity, lengthy time-to-hire, or limited internal advancement opportunities.

Using and recognizing this terminology during employer discussions about job quality are likely to make the conversation feel more aligned to how employers discuss job quality topics internally.

Key Takeaways

Using employer-aligned language—such as job design, total rewards, employer of choice, and talent pain points—helps frame job quality discussions in terms that resonate with business leaders, making partnerships more effective and grounded in how employers naturally think about their workforce challenges and goals.

1.11 Employers Seek a Clear Value Proposition

Employers seek a clear and compelling value proposition. Increasingly, businesses recognize that improving job quality—through better work design, supportive management practices, competitive compensation, and stronger career pathways—drives significant advantages, including improved retention, higher productivity, more efficient hiring, greater innovation, stronger customer satisfaction, and enhanced brand reputation. Practitioners working on job quality initiatives should focus their value proposition on outcomes that matter to both

employees and employers. These outcomes should be mutually agreed upon and should reflect benefits for all parties involved. For example, if a measure of success is simply the number of hires made, but those hires leave quickly due to poor working conditions, then the number of hires is not a meaningful measure of partnership success. A strong value proposition aligns job quality improvements with employer pain points and demonstrates how better jobs can solve those challenges.

Figure 1.1: Value Proposition Guidance and Sample Employer-Facing Language

Guidance for TPM Practitioner/Partner	Sample Employer-Facing Language
Speak to the employer pain point first and how solutions may involve job quality strategies.	Employers—like you—in our area continue to express challenges with finding and retaining a qualified workforce for roles that are essential to your company’s growth and competitiveness. We understand the costly issues associated with recruiting, onboarding, turnover, and the need to continually upgrade employee skills and credentials.
Acknowledge what they are doing now; thank them for their efforts.	We know you and other employers have invested considerable time and resources into addressing your talent needs and have participated in many local initiatives. You also serve on several advisory groups. We greatly appreciate the leadership and commitment you continue to demonstrate.
Suggest a new effort or strengthening of an existing initiative.	We aim to work more effectively together to create shared value by improving job quality and addressing common workforce challenges. We want to leverage a systematic, employer-led approach to either (1) launch a new initiative focused on your needs or (2) deepen employer leadership within an existing effort.
Ask what success looks like for them.	When thinking about your current workforce challenges, what does success look like for you? What goals are you hoping to achieve as you address these pain points?



Guidance for TPM Practitioner/Partner	Sample Employer-Facing Language
Explain potential benefits to employers (what's in it for them), using asset-based language that emphasizes positive workforce outcomes associated with job quality.	Based on what you've shared about your talent challenges and what a successful partnership looks like, here are ways improving job quality can help you overcome these obstacles—for example, strengthening retention, reducing hiring costs, improving productivity, enhancing customer satisfaction, boosting innovation, and improving your company's reputation as an employer of choice. Here are also the mutually defined measures we can use to gauge whether we are making progress together.
Get agreement to attend the first meeting.	Would you be willing to attend a meeting with our team to discuss our respective goals and determine how to get started?

Key Takeaways

A compelling value proposition connects job quality improvements directly to employer pain points and business outcomes. By emphasizing shared values—such as stronger retention, better hiring efficiency, greater productivity, and a more engaged workforce—practitioners can more effectively align job quality strategies with employer priorities and inspire deeper partnership and commitment.

1.12 Recommended Actions for TPM Practitioners and Partners



Gather information about the job quality practices, priorities, and efforts of partner employers now. Most employers think about how to design their jobs, offer total rewards to attract and retain talent on a regular basis, share information about job quality on their website’s career page, and are open to discussing their challenges related to one or more of the eight job quality features. Reviewing employer partners’ public job postings can also be a helpful way to get oriented to the current job design for critical jobs for partner employers.

Questions to consider:

- How do partner employer job quality offerings in their public materials (e.g., job postings, website) stack up to industry benchmarks and/or local competitors?
- Which of the eight job quality features do partner employers say are their strengths?
- Which of the eight job quality features do partner employers say are their challenges or areas of opportunity?

Explore Employer Association Partnerships: Contact employer associations in your state and local area to identify existing employer-led initiatives. Explore their willingness and capacity to establish partnerships with multiple employers that are willing to work together to address shared needs related to job quality.

Questions to consider:

- a. Which employer association (e.g., chambers of commerce, sector associations) have the credibility to organize multiple employers in a workforce partnership?
- b. Which employer associations, if any, have a history of organizing employers successfully or are currently organizing employers that have an interest in working on job quality initiatives.
- c. To what extent are these associations familiar with or making use of the TPM Framework?

Engage the Right Employer Professionals. When engaging employers, ask employer representatives about their role in their organizations and make sure you have the buy-in and support of higher-level executives and the right professionals at the table who have the decision-making responsibility necessary for effective partnerships. Also, establish who would be the major point of contact for partnerships and which professionals should be engaged when addressing specific issues or priorities, including how well-equipped the organization is to support efforts to address talent pain points through job quality. Many employees within an organization may have a desire to make corporate policy or practice changes but simply do not have the authority or influence to drive the needed changes within their organizational structure.

Questions to Consider:

- a. Have I secured the buy-in and support of senior leadership at one or more companies? If so, how do I know?
- b. For those employers where I have gained the buy-in and support of senior leadership, who is my point of contact and what professional role does this person play in the company?
- c. Does my point of contact have the support of a team inside the company, and if so, what are their respective professional roles? Are there any potential gaps that need to be addressed?
- d. Can TPM provide a more streamlined approach for coordinating teams of professionals within multiple companies through a single point of contact at an association?

Get the Facts Straight First: Gather Data Directly from Employers on Their Needs and Priorities.

Supplement government and other available LMI by working directly with employer association partners and the right employer professionals to identify the most critical jobs, pain points, the scale of their needs (e.g., projected job openings), and what prioritization and organization buy-in has been given to addressing talent issues through internal job design changes. Many employers are not ready or willing to make internal job quality changes to address talent points and may be more focused on building sourcing and recruitment partners; that is OK. Others will be ready, willing, and able to begin working with you on job quality issues. Avoid making assumptions and talk with employers directly to identify which organizations are ready.

Questions to Consider:

- a. Am I using data to guide planning and decision making, and what is the source and assumptions underlying that data?
- b. What data, if any, come directly from the companies I plan to partner with (e.g., job projections, current pain points, total rewards, culture strengths and challenges, in-demand competencies and skills), and who is supplying these data within a company?
- c. For the critical jobs that are of most interest to the companies I am partnering with, is there a sufficient and consistent level of need to make investments of time, resources, and money to make job design changes that increase job quality?
- d. If the employers and employer association(s) we are partnering with are not using TPM, can it be a useful framework to get clearer, more granular information about employer needs and priorities?

Key Takeaways

Effective job quality work starts with gathering accurate, employer-specific information, understanding current practices, identifying the right partners, engaging the appropriate decision-makers, and grounding all efforts in primary data. By avoiding assumptions and securing true leadership buy-in, TPM practitioners can target job design changes where they are most needed and most feasible.



U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Foundation



TPM Job Quality Resource Guide

Resource 2:

Employer Orientation to Job Quality

This resource is intended to help employers better understand the national research landscape about job quality and resources that can support adoption of new business practices. This section will also help employers secure internal buy-in and evaluate the success of job quality initiatives on the metrics that matter most to them.

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2.1 Orienting Employers to Job Quality

This resource provides employers with an orientation to job quality and the organizations and initiatives focused on job quality. It is a part of a set of resources that, when combined with the introduction, make up the TPM (Talent Pipeline Management®) Job Quality Resource Guide. Strategic and sustainable employer-led initiatives and partnerships to improve job quality require employers to understand partner language, priorities, and discourse about job quality and how to connect partner goals with their business goals.

This orientation aims to help employers better connect their own pain points to local and national organizations providing services, expertise, and funding to support job quality with the goal of creating more effective, long-term job quality initiatives that produce value for workers, employers, and communities. This resource guide is designed to help employers clearly articulate their job design priorities and challenges to partners, workers, and candidates within the context of local, state, and national initiatives focused on improving job quality.

2.2 A Variety of Organizations Are Working on Policy, Practice, and Research Efforts Related to Understanding and Improving Job Quality for Workers

While all employers have to navigate and comply with a range of federal, state, and local employment laws and regulations designed to protect workers (e.g., minimum wage), individual employers and employer collaboratives interested in making job design changes that improve job quality can collaborate with

a range of partners to support their efforts. Below is a list of the different types of organizations that commonly incorporate job quality priorities, standards, or incentives into their funding, advocacy, and partnership efforts.

Key Takeaways

A wide range of organizations—from unions and public agencies to colleges, workforce boards, nonprofits, and economic development entities—shape and influence job quality through their policies, incentives, and partnerships. Understanding how each of these partners defines, supports, and measures job quality helps employers engage more effectively and align their job design efforts with community expectations, funding priorities, and regulatory requirements.

Figure 2.1: Types of Organizations Involved in Job Quality Efforts and Their Roles

Type of Organization	Common Ways They Engage in Job Quality Efforts
Unions and organized labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in collective bargaining on behalf of workers Administer and oversee training and apprenticeship programs to increase advancement opportunities. Advocate for public policy on behalf of workers
Federal, state, and local agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate requirements or incentives for prevailing wage, local hire, and other job quality features into contracting Evaluate and prioritize workforce and education grants and discretionary funds to industries, regions, employers, and projects with a demonstrated ability to help workers and students secure, stay, and advance in quality jobs, based on their definition (e.g., living wages, health benefits, worker engagement). Set and enforce worker protection laws and regulations
Local workforce development boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize training investments and employer incentives to employers that provide a living wage. Conduct research, establish sector strategies, and set up programs in local industries that offer quality jobs, based on their own definition of what that means.
Colleges and universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize curriculum, partnership, and support for students interested in working for local employers and industries with demonstrated track record offering/providing quality jobs.
Non-profit workforce agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often measured and required to track and report back to public and philanthropic funders on their ability to get individuals into jobs that offer living wages, health benefits, stable full-time schedules, job retention, advancement, and other job quality features often defined by funders.
Economic development and planning agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus business attraction and retention efforts and incentives on employers committing to providing living wages, full-time work with benefits. Conduct research on the number of quality jobs in a local community or region which can influence local and state strategies, priorities, and public investments.

While Figure 2.1 does not represent the full range of organizations that participate in, advocate for, or are interested in increasing job quality in their given community, it represents the common types of organizations that engage in local job quality efforts. Understanding the common ways these organizations approach job quality, including their incentives, requirements, and metrics, can help inform how employers can productively engage with these organizations on a job quality initiative.

2.3 Review of National Data, Frameworks, and Discourse on Job Quality

Some employers and practitioners are working to identify the critical elements that define a “Good Job” as a starting point to improve job quality in their businesses and in their communities. While TPM and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation do not promote a single definition of what a quality job is, it can be helpful to understand some national perspectives informing state and local government, education, and non-profit actions and efforts in this area.

The Aspen Institute developed one such definition with more than 100 leaders representing business, labor, workforce development, policy, philanthropy, and research institutions. The definition is both foundational and aspirational—this group’s perspective is that job quality indicators are foundational to all good jobs in all sectors and all stages of a career with the aspiration of creating good jobs where all or most of these indicators are high. To learn more about the process, definition, and signatories of this working definition, read the [Aspen Institute Statement on Good Jobs](#)¹.

Figure 2.2: Example of a Working Definition of a Good Job

Good Jobs: A Working Definition

Economic Stability

- Stable, family-sustaining pay
- Sufficient, accessible, and broadly available benefits
- Fair, reliable scheduling practices
- Safe, healthy, and accessible working conditions

Economic Mobility

- Clear and equitable hiring and advancement pathways
- Accessible, paid training and development opportunities
- Wealth-building opportunities



Economic Stability

- Organizational and management culture, policies, and practices that:
 - are transparent and enable accountability
 - support a sense of belonging and purpose
 - advance DEIA*
 - and address discrimination.
- Ability to improve the workplace, such as through collective action or participatory management practices

*DEIA: diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility

The [Shift Work Forward Job Design Framework](#)² and [Jobs for the Future](#)³ are examples of other national workforce organizations that have advanced frameworks that are used by advocacy organizations, technical assistance providers colleges and universities, and public federal, state, and local agencies.

1. <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/good-jobs-champions-group/>
 2. <https://shiftworkforward.org/resource/job-design-framework/>
 3. <https://www.jff.org/quality-jobs/>



Key Takeaways

Many employers and practitioners look to national guidance to understand the core elements of a “Good Job.” While TPM and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation do not endorse a single definition, several widely used frameworks help shape state, local, education, workforce, and nonprofit efforts to improve job quality.

2.4 Good Jobs Are Good Business: The Business Case for Designing Quality Jobs

Low job quality can have negative impacts on individual workers, their families, local communities, and regional economics. Many employers recognize this and desire to provide higher quality jobs. However, making job quality investments and changes can often feel overwhelming, impractical, or incompatible with business goals. Employer and employee collaboratives can work through these common barriers by connecting job design changes to TPM performance measures and common pain points. A well-designed and executed job quality strategy can address employer pain points, improve employee satisfaction and retention, and improve company performance. Specific leading and lagging measures from TPM impacted by job quality include:

- Increasing number of qualified candidates from education and training providers that compete for your critical jobs, reducing the time to hire.
- Increased employee satisfaction and performance (Source: [Gallup](#)⁴)
- Increased retention, reducing the cost of turnover (Source: [SHRM](#)⁵)

Quantifying the true costs of low-quality jobs and the financial benefits of job redesign efforts can help make the business case for employers, external stakeholders, and employees. According to the authors of the

[Financial Case for Good Retail Jobs](#)⁶, Bach, Kalloch, and Ton, companies that prioritize minimizing labor costs often face pervasive issues such as high turnover, poor attendance, and inconsistent customer service. These “bad jobs” generate significant hidden costs—including expenses related to rehiring, retraining, operational inefficiencies, and lost revenue—which outweigh any short-term savings from low wages and limited investment in employees.

They propose a structured method for quantifying both the true costs of low-quality job designs and the financial benefits of job redesign efforts. The method involves:

- Calculating costs associated with employee turnover and absenteeism
- Estimating the revenue gains from improved customer experience and operational stability
- Comparing these metrics against investments in better pay, training, empowerment, and work conditions

Employers looking to determine the potential impacts of quality jobs initiatives can utilize the [Cost of Turnover Tool](#)⁷ (Aspen Institute), a simple, “back of the envelope” calculator to estimate how much it costs your business to replace staff.

4. <https://www.gallup.com/394373/indicator-employee-engagement.aspx>

5. <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/tools/toolkits/managing-employee-retention>

6. <https://hbr.org/2019/06/the-financial-case-for-good-retail-jobs>

7. <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/cost-of-turnover-tool/>



Key Takeaways

Improving job quality isn't just good for workers—it strengthens business performance. By redesigning jobs to better meet employee needs, employers can reduce turnover, improve satisfaction and productivity, attract more qualified candidates, and ultimately lower hidden costs that come with low-quality jobs.

2.5 Employees, Colleagues, Supervisors, Managers, and Executive Leaders All Play a Role in Job Quality at an Organization

Job quality is shaped by multiple layers of influence within an organization, and every role, from frontline employees to executive leadership, contributes to the outcome.

Employees play a direct role by engaging in their work, providing feedback, and participating in improvement initiatives. Their experiences and insights often reveal gaps in scheduling, workload, or training that affect job quality.

Colleagues and teams influence job quality through collaboration and workplace culture. Supportive peer relationships can improve morale and productivity, while toxic dynamics can undermine engagement and retention.

Supervisors are critical because they manage day-to-day conditions, such as scheduling, workload distribution, and communication. They often serve as the first point of contact for addressing concerns and implementing changes that impact job satisfaction.

Managers oversee broader operational decisions, including staffing levels, resource allocation, and performance expectations. Their priorities can either reinforce or hinder efforts to create stable, well-supported roles.

Executive leaders set the tone and strategy for job quality by defining organizational values, approving investments in wages, training, and technology, as well as aligning job design with long-term business goals. Without leadership buy-in, systemic improvements are difficult to sustain.

Understanding these interconnected roles is essential for TPM and job quality initiatives. Effective strategies require collaboration across all levels, engaging employees for feedback, equipping supervisors with tools, aligning managers on operational goals, and securing executive commitment to invest in people. This holistic approach ensures that job quality improvements are practical, supported, and embedded in the organization's culture.

Key Takeaways

Job quality is shaped by every level of an organization. From frontline employees to executive leaders, each role influences working conditions, culture, and opportunities for growth. Improving job quality requires coordination across all levels—engaging employees for feedback, equipping supervisors, aligning managers, and securing leadership commitment to ensure changes are practical, supported, and sustained.

2.6 Securing Buy-In for Change

Designing for job quality requires organizational commitment and resources. The entire company needs to be involved and committed, from HR to executives to hiring managers and frontline employees. Below are a few questions to consider:

- What are major pain points in your talent pipeline (e.g., long time to hire, low retention rates, lack of diversity in candidate pool and/or workforce)?
- To what extent do you attribute these pain points to the job quality offerings within your job design?
- Would employees and candidates agree with your assessment? How might you get their input?
- Would managers and other key decision makers agree with your assessment? How might you get their input?

The answers to the above questions will help inform the specific problem a job redesign may seek to solve, the critical data points needed to inform decision making a secure buy-in, the key stakeholders to engage, and how broad or narrow your focus will be.

Key Takeaways

Securing buy-in for job quality efforts starts with clearly diagnosing talent pain points and gathering input from employees, managers, and key decision-makers. A shared understanding of the problem and its root causes is essential for prioritizing job design changes and building the organizational commitment needed to implement them effectively.

2.7 Connecting Job Design Goals with Common Employer Pain Points

In the TPM Academy core curriculum, employers and employer collaboratives are prompted to reflect on their key pain points for proactively managing their talent supply chain. In this section, we will explore how job quality efforts can address these pain points.

Figure 2.3: Job Design Goal and Common Employer Pain Points

Job Design Goal	Common Employer Pain Points
Goal 1: Increase the number of qualified candidates that compete for open jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lengthy time to hire • Lack of diversity in candidate pool and workforce
Goal 2: Employees from different backgrounds can be successful on the job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low productivity and engagement • High rates of turnover • High cost of turnover
Goal 3: Employees are sufficiently rewarded with financial and non-financial incentives based on their goals and needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low rates of internal promotions • High rates of turnover • High cost of turnover
Goal 4: Increase the number of employees that report high job satisfaction and stay long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low rates of internal promotions • Low productivity and engagement • High rates of turnover • High cost of turnover
Goal 5: Higher rates of internal promotion from employees of different backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of diversity in more senior roles • Low rates of internal promotions • Low number of people in leadership/senior management roles that have been promoted internally
Goal 6: Maximizing the value of existing talent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the current design of our jobs maximize the skills and talents of our employees?

Key Takeaways

Job quality goals can directly address common employer pain points like low productivity and engagement, high rates of turnover, and lengthy time to hire.

2.8 Understanding How the Job Quality Features of Critical Jobs an Employer Offers Stack Up to Industry Benchmarks and Employee or Candidate Expectations Is an Important First Step

Employers and employer collaboratives can conduct job analysis to identify key competencies, credentials, and other hiring requirements for critical positions. Using the considerations and benchmarking tools below, employers can assess how each of the eight job quality features measure up as part of that job analysis.

With this analysis, employer and employer collaboratives should consider benchmarking job quality offerings and assessing the impact current offerings are having on key pain points. It is important to ensure employees (and learners from talent providers, if possible) from diverse backgrounds and roles have an opportunity to provide input into this analysis through surveys or stay interview data. This could be an internal exercise within a single company or an employer collaborative exercise facilitated by a TPM practitioner.

Table 1: Earnings Definition, Considerations, and Tools & Resources

Earnings: Compensation for work performed, including hourly wage or annual salary, commission, tips, bonus, or profit share.	
Job Quality Considerations ⁸	Job Quality Tool and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we offer competitive compensation relative to our industry? Other job offerings available to qualified candidates in our talent pool? How often do we evaluate and adjust pay scales to remain competitive? Do we have pay disparities by race, gender, age, or geography? Does our compensation allow full-time workers to meet their needs given local cost of living? Does our compensation match what employees and candidates are looking for? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>MIT Living Wage Calculator</u>⁹: Estimates the local cost of living based on typical expenses for multiple household types.

8. Earnings considerations, tools, and changes should be discussed and implemented at the individual employer level (not in collaboration with two or more employers in a collaborative) in compliance with federal antitrust law prohibiting anti-competitive wage.

9. <https://livingwage.mit.edu/>

Table 2: Benefits Definition, Considerations, and Tools & Resources

Benefits: Health insurance, paid leave, employee education benefits, retirement plans, childcare subsidies or support, and other benefits, including those that address barriers to work. This includes support accessing and maximizing benefits provided (e.g., financial wellness and career coaching).	
Job Quality Considerations	Job Quality Tool and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we offer competitive benefits packages? • Are there differences in benefits offerings or enrollment across different groups? If so, why? • To what extent do we tailor benefits to acknowledge that individual employees value different benefits in different ways? • Is there one or more benefits we don't offer that existing employees or candidates are looking for? • Do we adequately communicate total rewards (in addition to earnings) and provide support to employees to increase benefits access and usage? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity Navigator¹⁰: Helps companies create a customized road to identify and improve benefits (and other job quality) offerings. • Summary of findings¹¹ from 2019 WorldatWork PTO / Paid Parental Leave Program and Practices Survey¹² to be used for benchmarking Paid Leave offerings. • Employer Roadmap¹³: Childcare Solutions for Working Parents provides benchmarking data (as well as solutions) for childcare benefits to support caregiving employees.

10. <https://www.opportunitynavigator.org/>

11. <https://worldatwork.org/research/paid-time-off-programs-and-practices>

12. <https://worldatwork.org/research/paid-time-off-programs-and-practices>

13. <https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/employer-roadmap-childcare-solutions-for-working-parents>

Table 3: Safety and Security Definition, Considerations, and Tools & Resources

<p>Safety and Security: Policies and practices to promote physical safety (precautions against disease or injury) as well as mental and emotional safety (e.g., training and clear policies for reporting, investigating, and addressing harassment or discrimination). This also includes psychosocial safety and the level of role stressors employees experience (e.g., extent employees feel safe to take risks, feel cared for by colleagues, are clear on what is expected, and extent work tasks create ongoing conflict with other colleagues, teams, or departments).</p>	
Job Quality Considerations	Job Quality Tool and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we provide the best available safety training and personal protective equipment (PPE) to prevent disease, injury, or death? • What is in place to ensure our work environment is free from discrimination and harassment? How well do our employees know the process for reporting incidents? How safe do different employee groups feel in reporting incidents? • Is psychological safety part of our work culture? • Do employees feel safe expressing their opinions without fear of consequences? • What role-stressors exist in our job design (unclear expectations, conflicts with other roles)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Safety Council Benchmarking Tool¹⁴: Allows employers to compare injury and illness incidence rates with national averages. • OSHA resources on PPE standards¹⁵, safety and health indicators¹⁶, and workplace violence¹⁷. • Psychological Safety Research and Practices at Google¹⁸: 6-minute video on Google’s approach and research to creating psychological safety in the workplace • 5-minute psychological safety audit¹⁹: 7 questions to ask employees to better understand the current state of psychological safety within a team, department, or organization.

14. <https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/work/industry-incidence-rates/how-to-benchmark/>

15. <https://www.osha.gov/personal-protective-equipment>

16. <https://www.osha.gov/leading-indicators>

17. <https://www.osha.gov/workplace-violence/resources>

18. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-zrLI-Osg88>

19. <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/media/j1nf3cju/practical-tool-2-psychological-safety-audit.pdf>

Table 4: When and Where Work is Performed Definition, Considerations, and Tools & Resources

When and Where Work is Performed Definition, Considerations, and Tools & Resources: Employee input on work schedule and location (if applicable), predictable hours, advance notice of schedule changes, and compensation when using on-call scheduling.	
Job Quality Considerations	Job Quality Tool and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do employees have input or control on when and where work is performed? Do we provide predictable schedules so workers and families can organize caregiving, healthcare appointments, education, or other commitments? Do we provide advance notice of schedule changes? If using “on-call” scheduling, are workers compensated if they are not called in? Are workers compensated for a portion of their shift if they are sent home early? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Good Jobs, Good Business Toolkit</u>²⁰: Tool from Pacific Community Ventures to define and plan efforts to provide more predictable scheduling practices. <u>The Gap Inc.</u>²¹: Review of stable scheduling pilot at 28 stores in San Francisco and Chicago in 2015. Discusses business case, employer pain points, and results of changes to schedules. <u>Advantages and Challenges of Hybrid Work</u>²²: Gallup research on what workers say are the best and worst parts of hybrid work.

20. [https://www.pacificcommunityventures.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/PCV_Good-Jobs-Good-Business.pdf#:~:text=Operate%20With%20Slack%20also%20enables%20employees%20to%20have%20more%20predictable%20schedules&text=Learn%20how%20Cooperative%20Home%20Care%20Associates%20\(CHCA\)%20used%20innovative%20scheduling](https://www.pacificcommunityventures.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/PCV_Good-Jobs-Good-Business.pdf#:~:text=Operate%20With%20Slack%20also%20enables%20employees%20to%20have%20more%20predictable%20schedules&text=Learn%20how%20Cooperative%20Home%20Care%20Associates%20(CHCA)%20used%20innovative%20scheduling)

21. <https://worklifelaw.org/projects/stable-scheduling-study/report/>

22. <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/398135/advantages-challenges-hybrid-work.aspx>

Table 5: How Work is Performed Definition, Considerations, and Tools & Resources

How Work is Performed: Use of skills, proper tools, and technology to be productive, connect with co-workers, level of input, autonomy and control in the performance of duties, and extent employees feel their work tasks are significant, interesting, challenging, and aligned to business objectives.	
Job Quality Considerations	Job Quality Tools and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do employees have autonomy and control in the performance of duties? • Are workers engaged in discussions on what are the skills, tools and technologies they need to be successful? • Is the work performed something that people want to do and would find meaningful? • Do workers feel challenged? Do workers feel their skills are fully utilized? • Do employees have positive workplace relationships? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs for the Future²³: Blog post that offers an overview of human-centered design that led to creation of a maturity model.

23. <https://www.jff.org/blog/what-human-centered-design-looks-workforce-system/>

Table 6: Learning, Development, and Advancement Definition, Considerations, and Tools & Resources

Learning, Development, and Advancement Definition, Considerations, and Tools & Resources: Pre-employment training partnerships, onboarding, technical skill training, cross-training, mentoring and coaching, sponsorship, upskilling opportunities such as apprenticeship or targeted degree programs, and structured promotion pathways.	
Job Quality Considerations	Job Quality Tools and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do workers have training and support to be successful? • Are we satisfied with the internal upward career mobility? Are certain employee populations experiencing a higher rate of promotion than others? • Are there opportunities to improve onboarding, cross-training, and company-wide training opportunities? • Do we offer meaningful mentorship and sponsorship opportunities? • Do we offer any structured learning opportunities? If so, do they specifically connect to advancement? • Do we adequately communicate advancement opportunities and the pathways to achieve them to current employees? • Do we provide direction, incentives, and training to managers to make learning, development, and advancement a major responsibility? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Upskilling playbook</u>²⁴: Employer tool from the Aspen Institute to assess and implement different internal training programs. • <u>Opportunity Navigator</u>²⁵: Helps companies create a customized roadmap to identify and improve learning, development, and advancement, among other job quality benefits. • <u>Measuring the Impact of Skills-Based Talent Practices</u>²⁶: Provides a blueprint for how to benchmark, design, and measure the impact of key skills-based talent practices at your company intended for HR and DEI leaders tasked with expanding DEI outcomes, economic opportunity, and mobility.

24. <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/upskilling-playbook/>

25. <https://www.opportunitynavigator.org/>

26. <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableMultiplePathwaysInitiativeMeasuringtheImpactofSkills-BasedTalentPractices.pdf>

Table 7: Employee Voice and Engagement Definition, Considerations, and Tools & Resources

<p>Employee Voice and Engagement: Valuing and acting upon employee input and engagement through surveys, stay interviews, employee resource groups, and meaningful task forces or improvement teams. In some cases, this may also include open-book management, broad employee ownership (e.g., through Employee Stock Ownership Plans, or ESOPs), participatory management (co-operative), and productive relationships with organized labor.</p>	
Job Quality Considerations	Job Quality Tools and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we currently seek employee input and how do employees in different roles and backgrounds perceive these efforts? • How do employees participate in continuous improvement processes? • Do employees feel a sense of ownership of their work and the business? • Do all (not just a select few) employees have any ownership or formal decision-making role through an ESOP, co-op, or other broad-based employee ownership structures? If so, how well is that communicated and how does it impact engagement? • Are our employees under a collective bargaining agreement? If so, how does that impact job design? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Gallup Employee Engagement Index</u>²⁷: Widely cited benchmarks and trends of employee engagement using decades of survey data. • <u>Engaging Frontline Employee Voice</u>²⁸: Tool from Talent Rewire to help employers create an environment and culture where employees can safely provide input. • <u>Open Book Management</u>²⁹: Book by John Case describing the basic ideas, pioneering businesses, challenges, and tools for sharing business financials and decision making with all employees. • <u>KY Chamber Employee Voice Survey</u>³⁰: The Kentucky Chamber Workforce Center, a TPM partner, developed this survey in partnership with employer collaborative members to gather perspectives and input on key job quality considerations in critical equine related jobs.

27. <https://www.gallup.com/394373/indicator-employee-engagement.aspx>

28. <https://www.talentrewire.org/resources-and-tools/engaging-frontline-employee-voice/>

29. <https://www.amazon.com/Open-Book-Management-Coming-Business-Revolution/dp/0887308023>

30. <https://www.tpmacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/KY-Chamber-Employee-Voice-Survey.pdf>

Table 8: Management and Supervision Definition, Considerations, and Tools & Resources

<p>Management and Supervision: The culture established, modeled, and reinforced by the leadership and management teams. This includes the qualities, management competencies, and communication practices of individuals responsible for managing people and the quality of relationships employees have with direct supervisors. This may also include the level and quality of team-based models and shared leadership opportunities for all employees.</p>	
Job Quality Considerations	Job Quality Tools and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do leaders and people managers model our core values? • How do employees participate in continuous improvement processes? • How do employees describe our organizational culture? Are there differences depending on an employee’s background, role, or geography? • What training and support do we provide people-managers? • Are managers and supervisors incentivized and/or held accountable for employee satisfaction, retention, and internal promotion metrics? What is the quality of relationships between employees and their supervisors? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to Measure Company Culture³¹: Quick guide from the Academy to Innovate HR to establish starting points for measuring culture

31. <https://www.aihr.com/blog/how-to-measure-company-culture/>

Table 9: Benchmarking Job Quality Offerings and Their Impact on Pain Points

Benchmarking How do job quality offerings compare to competitors, employee expectations, and company aspirations?	Impact on Pain Points How does this feature impact job satisfaction, time to hire, turnover, or other TPM metrics?
<p>1 = significantly behind competitors, below employee expectations, and/or company aspirations</p> <p>2 = a little behind competitors, below employee expectations, and/or company aspirations</p> <p>3 = in-line with competitors, employee expectations, and/or company aspirations</p> <p>4 = ahead of most competitors, employee expectations, and/or company aspirations</p> <p>5 = national leader far exceeding competitors, exceeding employee expectations, and/or achieving company aspirational goals.</p>	<p>High: Significant impact on the talent metrics that matter most</p> <p>Medium: Some impact on the talent metrics that matter most</p> <p>Low: Minimal impact on the talent metrics that matter most</p>

Key Takeaways

Through conducting structured job analysis and using benchmarking tools, employers and employer collaboratives can identify how well each job quality feature is performing and understand its impact on talent challenges, ensuring decisions are grounded in real employee and candidate experiences.

2.9 Measuring the Impact of Job Quality Efforts Is Critical for Continuous Improvement and Continued Investment in the Effort

Measuring the impact of job quality efforts is essential because it allows organizations to understand what improvements are working, where gaps remain, and how investments in people translate into operational and financial outcomes. Without measurement, leaders risk relying on assumptions rather than evidence, making it difficult to refine strategies or justify continued investment. Tracking metrics such as turnover, absenteeism, employee engagement, productivity, and customer satisfaction provides a clear picture of initiatives, reinforcing that improving work conditions is not only beneficial for employees but also a smart, sustainable business strategy.

Employers and employer collaboratives can use the results from benchmarking and impact on pain points assessment to identify the right job quality features and leading and lagging measures to incorporate into their TPM dashboards.

Key Takeaways

By tracking clear metrics—such as turnover, absenteeism, engagement, and productivity—employers can refine strategies, make evidence-based decisions, and sustain long-term commitment to job quality improvements.

2.10 Recommended Actions for Employers

Employers should consider the following actions in working on job quality initiatives:

Engage in an internal assessment and/or reflection process. Reflect on the eight job quality features and how your critical jobs are designed. Discuss with colleagues how current job quality features for critical jobs stack up against competitors, employee and candidate needs and expectations, and any available industry benchmarks.

Questions to Consider:

- a. Are our jobs designed in a way to improve the talent and overall business metrics we value the most?
- b. How do our offerings compare with employee needs and expectations, industry standards, and other career tracks or work experiences that employees choose to pursue?
- c. Are employees experiencing these job quality features differently based on race, gender, age, position, location, and other factors? If so, what might be the root causes of these differences?

Consider your business goals and evaluate internal buy-in for job design changes that increase job quality. Gather stakeholders internally from HR, corporate social responsibility or social impact, and the executive team to align on potential job design changes that improve job quality.

Questions to Consider:

- a. What are major pain points in your talent pipeline (e.g., long time to hire, low retention rates, lack of diversity in candidate pool and/or workforce)?
- b. To what extent do you attribute these pain points to the job quality offerings within your job design?
- c. Would employees and candidates agree with your assessment? How might you get their input?
- d. Would managers and other key decision makers agree with your assessment? How might you get their input?
- e. How impactful would a job redesign effort be to improve one or more job quality features that candidates and employees are looking for?

Explore the local landscape of organizations, agencies, and initiatives working on job quality and set up discussions to learn more. Research public agencies, non-profit organizations, business associations, workforce development organizations, education institutions, labor organizations, and other stakeholders in your area that are working on job quality related issues. Shortlist those that appear best aligned to meet your needs and engage in initial dialogue to further explore partnership opportunities.

- a. Are there any existing national or local networks of organizations in your community?
- b. What are the range of organizations in the community that are focused on improving one or more of the eight job quality features for workers?
- c. Have you worked with these organizations before?
- d. If so, what was your experience like, and what do you hope will be different this time?
- e. If not, why not? Are there organizations you have not considered yet that could be helpful in achieving your goals?
- f. Are there any influencers in the community whose perspectives would be useful as you pursue outreach and/or who could connect you to resources or specific people?
- g. What level of control do we have in affecting change in job design for critical positions?

Be mindful of best practices and common pitfalls as you explore potential partnerships and job quality changes. Review case studies of partnerships that have worked well (in your industry or others). Set up the internal systems necessary for success and prepare for effective conversations with potential partners.

Questions to Consider:

- a. Do you have buy-in at multiple levels of the company?
- b. Have you designated clear owners with accountability for success?

Questions for Potential Job Quality Partners?

- a. What are the metrics, job quality requirements, and/or goals related to job quality your agency or organization is focused on or held to?
- b. When have you successfully worked with employer partners in the past, and what were some of the best practices from this initiative?
- c. Who will be my point of contact for this partnership, and how often should we plan to communicate?

Key Takeaways

Effective job quality efforts start with honest internal reflection, strong leadership buy-in, and the right external partnerships. By assessing current job design, aligning stakeholders, and engaging community organizations that support job quality, employers can make informed, sustainable changes that strengthen their talent pipelines and improve outcomes for workers and the business.



U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Foundation



TPM Job Quality Resource Guide

Resource 3:

Leveraging TPM to Address Talent Pain Points Through Job Quality

This resource describes how TPM practitioners and employers can lead job design efforts to improve job quality in each of the eight job quality features for critical jobs. The resource includes case studies, definitions, reflection questions, tools, and examples for practitioners to take action, all within the context of TPM Strategy 1 - Organize for Employer Leadership and Collaboration, Strategy 3 - Align and Communicate Job Requirements, Strategy 5 - Build Talent Supply Chains, and Strategy 6 - Engage in Continuous Improvement and Resiliency Planning.

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3.1 TPM and Job Quality Overview

At its core, TPM is a systematic approach for getting employers to engage in collective action through a structured process of data collection and decision making. The result is authentically employer-led partnerships that unlock a dual bottom line (i.e., financially and socially), activating enhanced employer leadership and engagement in designing quality jobs that benefit their business, their workers, and their communities.

TPM is both a framework and a process. It is a framework in that it provides clear roles and direction for all stakeholders in the talent development ecosystem, with an emphasis on how employers need to get organized at scale. It provides a process for employers to repeatedly produce high-quality, primary source data about their workforce needs and challenges. TPM is the mechanism by which this information is shared with preferred and trusted partners, including workforce programs and agencies focused on increasing the job quality in their communities through talent solutions.

These solutions result in better outcomes for employers and workers, leading to an economy where more businesses, workers, and working families thrive.

Efforts that do not result in shared value typically lead to short-term engagements and one-off projects. In addition, employer engagement is made increasingly difficult by employer partnership fatigue. Frequently, the same employers are being asked to play different consultative roles as advisors not only for community-based organizations but also for traditional education and workforce partners, such as schools, colleges, and workforce boards.

Through TPM, employers are organized into a collaborative—hosted by an organization of their choosing—that can serve as the employer committee for one or more advisory groups and sector partnerships with which employer collaboratives choose to work. Host organizations are typically—but not exclusively—a business association like a chamber of commerce, sector association (e.g., a manufacturing partnership), or economic development organization.

Individual employers, especially larger employers, may choose to implement TPM by themselves. However, there are many advantages for employers to work together: higher visibility, shared expertise and peer learning, streamlined solutions, and greater scale (e.g., number of job openings) and leverage when working with partners. As a result, employers, especially small- to mid-size employers, may elect to be part of a collaborative. In our experience, even large firms see the benefits of working in collaboration with other employers rather than going it alone.

TPM is systematic in how it uses information to co-design talent pipelines that are consistent with career pathway models and in how it provides the context for coordinating complementary initiatives. By simplifying outreach and establishing better organization efforts, this approach can help local, regional, or statewide job quality initiatives overcome employer engagement challenges.

Once organized, employers are guided through a six-strategy process, which establishes a talent supply chain approach that allows for achieving a positive financial and social return on investment (ROI). The six strategies are described below:

Strategy 1: Organize for Employer Leadership and Collaboration—A group of employers form an employer collaborative around one or more shared pain points and determine the critical business functions and occupations they will work together to address. Shared pain points can include improving the qualifications of new job applicants, reducing onboarding and training costs, improving retention and career advancement opportunities, and increasing workforce diversity. Business functions can include workforce roles such as nursing, machining, and software development, which allows employers to focus on the core work requirements without getting caught up in the complexities of differing job titles.

Strategy 2: Project Critical Job Demand—The employer collaborative produces data on projected new and replacement positions for the targeted jobs based on their workforce planning activities and business assumptions. This information—primary source data—is specific to the collaborative; as a result, it will often stand in contrast to data pulled from government occupational projections or data produced by analyzing job postings.

Strategy 3: Align and Communicate Hiring Requirements—In addition to collecting data on new and replacement positions, the employer collaborative develops a shared language to describe required and preferred hiring requirements for its target business functions or occupations. As part of this process, the employers in the collaborative revisit their current hiring requirements and revise them to be more competency- and skill-based. They also make important decisions about proxies such as required or preferred credentials and experience that could be constraining their ability to tap into available talent pools.

Strategy 4: Analyze Talent Supply—The last part of the collaborative’s data collection efforts includes analyzing the current talent sourcing patterns of the employers and from where they could get talent in the future. For external pipelines, this strategy involves employers looking at the education, training, and credentialing source for those workers who either applied or were hired, so they know where their current workers come from. For internal pipelines, it can be used to identify how talent within a company can be upskilled to fill needed jobs. This strategy also encompasses analyzing the capacity of current talent sources in order to answer questions like, “Can my current talent sourcing partners meet our projected demand given our current utilization of those sources (i.e., the number or percentage hired or upskilled by the collaborative from those sources)?” It also offers an opportunity to examine demographic characteristics and determine if new partnerships with providers can support efforts to diversify the talent pipeline.

Strategy 5: Build Talent Supply Chains—Using the primary source data organized by the collaborative through Strategies 2, 3, and 4—and the pain points arrived at in Strategy 1—the employers make decisions about the type of talent pipeline that is best suited

to their needs (i.e., upskill existing workers, focus on external hires, or both) and with whom they will work to co-design and implement their solution(s). The data are put into action and used to co-design a talent pipeline that can meet the projected needs of employers while delivering a quality education and training experience to learners that results in employment or career advancement opportunities. Strategy 5 also allows for back-and-forth discussion between the employer collaborative and its talent sourcing partners on matters such as the required and preferred competencies and credential requirements and which partner—including the employer—is responsible for addressing them.

Strategy 6: Engage in Continuous Improvement and Resiliency Planning—After implementing a solution with preferred and trusted partners, the employer collaborative collects and uses agreed-upon performance data to identify continuous improvement opportunities. This includes reviewing both leading indicators, such as enrollment and completion data, but also lagging indicators that are important to employers, such as improving the yield rate of qualified job applicants, reducing turnover, and enhancing upskilling options. Through TPM, both the employer collaborative and its talent pipeline partners are given a process to analyze the data, identify root causes, test solutions, and scale what works—all with an eye toward improving the ROI for employers and workers. TPM also uses resiliency planning to help employer collaboratives anticipate and respond to disruptions—such as shifts in labor supply, economic conditions, or industry demand—so that talent pipelines remain stable

As an end-to-end talent supply chain solution, TPM offers a framework to achieve employer job quality goals as they strive to become an employer of choice in their industry and community.

By embedding resiliency planning into the talent supply chain, TPM enables employer collaboratives to proactively anticipate disruptions—whether economic, technological, or workforce-related—and align their response strategies with job quality improvements that strengthen both business continuity and worker outcomes.

While TPM does not promote a single definition of what makes a “good job,” it can provide a framework and system for employers and their partner organizations to have productive conversations about how employers can design critical jobs to meet the needs and preferences of workers. TPM encourages employer collaboratives to include each of the eight job quality considerations as a major talent pipeline issue and to focus on designing jobs to increase talent attraction and retention metrics that matter most. Throughout the TPM framework and process, employers are challenged

to get clear on their recruitment, hiring, internal advancement, and retention priorities and discuss specific policy, practice, and investments to design better jobs for their businesses and workers.

The remaining sections in this resource guide provide a deeper dive into how TPM collaborative can integrate job quality discussions into TPM Strategies 1, 3, 5, and 6.

Key Takeaways

TPM provides a structured, data-driven system that helps employers work together to identify shared pain points, generate primary-source workforce insights, and co-design talent pipelines and job quality improvements.

3.2 Strategy 1: Organize for Employer Leadership and Collaboration

In TPM Strategy 1, a group of employers form an employer collaborative around one or more shared pain points and determine the critical business functions and occupations they will work together to address. Shared pain points can include improving the qualifications of new job applicants, reducing onboarding and training costs, improving retention and career advancement opportunities, and increasing workforce diversity.

While the full [TPM curriculum](#)¹ provides detailed guidance, definitions, and tools to set up and manage an employer-led TPM collaborative, below are specific opportunities to incorporate job quality into the initial organizing discussions.

3.2.1 Define What It Means to Design for Job Quality Within the TPM Process

Current and prospective employees consider work tasks, required competencies, pay, benefits, schedule, culture, growth opportunities, and other job features when making career decisions. These job features influence workers' decisions to apply for a job, levels of engagement on the job, when to pursue an advancement opportunity, and when to leave a job.

How jobs are designed impacts employee satisfaction, productivity, workplace diversity, time to hire, retention and turnover, and other key performance metrics that benefit both employers and workers. While worker preferences are not all the same (i.e., a good job for one worker may not be a good job for another), designing high quality jobs can address employer pain points by ensuring workers from different backgrounds:

- Apply for and accept offers for critical jobs
- Can be successful on the job
- Are sufficiently rewarded based on their goals and needs
- Report higher job satisfaction and stay with an employer for longer periods of time
- Experience greater rates of internal promotion

After determining the critical business functions and occupations (e.g., nursing, machining, software development, forklift operators) and defining the employer pain point (e.g., lengthy time to hire), collaboratives may benefit from a brief discussion with TPM employers about their perspectives and understanding of what candidate and workers in critical business functions need and want from their job. If possible, getting input directly from employees can be particularly insightful through informal discussions, anonymized exit or stay interview data, satisfaction surveys, or other means. In some cases, what leaders and managers think their employees want and need from their job can be different from what employees say they want or need.

While this may include higher pay, common themes may also include clear advancement opportunities, ability to have input on their schedules, mentorship, or other factors. This discussion can be relatively brief (e.g., 30–45 minutes) but can surface key themes and labor market dynamics that will be critical to understand through the TPM process.

1. <https://colab.tpmacademy.org/#/public-dashboard>

3.2.2 Explore Eight Job Quality Features Within Job Design

After this initial discussion, the TPM facilitator or convening organization can introduce the eight job quality features to consider in job design. These eight features were identified by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation based on national research and input from job design experts:

- **Earnings:** Compensation for work performed, including hourly wage or annual salary, commission, tips, bonus, or profit share.
- **Benefits:** Health insurance, paid leave, employee education benefits, retirement plans, childcare subsidies or support, and other benefits, including those that address barriers to work. This includes support accessing and maximizing benefits provided (e.g., financial wellness, career coaching).
- **Safety and Security:** Policies and practices to promote physical safety (precautions against disease or injury) as well as mental and emotional safety (e.g., training and clear policies for reporting, investigating, and addressing harassment or discrimination). This also includes psychosocial safety and the level of role stressors employees experience (e.g., extent employees feel safe to take risks, feel cared for by colleagues, are clear on what is expected, and extent work tasks create ongoing conflict with other colleagues, teams, or departments).
- **When and Where Work is Performed:** Employee input on work schedule and location (if applicable), predictable hours, advance notice of schedule changes, and compensation when using on-call scheduling.
- **How Work is Performed:** Use of skills, proper tools and technology to be productive, connection with co-workers, level of input, autonomy and control in the performance of duties, and extent employees feel their work tasks are significant, interesting, challenging, aligned to business objectives.
- **Learning, Development, and Advancement:** Pre-employment training partnerships, onboarding, technical skill training, cross-training, mentoring and coaching, sponsorship, upskilling opportunities such as apprenticeship or targeted degree programs, and structured promotion pathways.
- **Employee Voice and Engagement:** Valuing and acting upon employee input and engagement through surveys, stay interviews, employee resource groups, and meaningful task forces or improvement teams. In some cases, this may also include open-book management, broad employee ownership (e.g., through Employee Stock Ownership Plans, or ESOPs), participatory management (co-operative), and productive relationships with organized labor.
- **Management and Supervision:** The culture established, modeled, and reinforced by the leadership and management teams. This includes the qualities, management competencies, and communication practices of individuals responsible for managing people and the quality of relationships employees have with direct supervisors. This may also include the level and quality of team-based models and shared leadership opportunities for all employees.

These eight considerations can help incorporate job quality considerations into TPM collaborative discussions.

3.2.3 Review the Six Job Design Goals and How They Address Employer Pain Points

In the TPM Academy core curriculum, employers and employer collaboratives are prompted to reflect on their key pain points for proactively managing their talent supply chain. To expand on that discussion and to integrate job quality into the conversation, TPM collaboratives can include the importance of job design for critical jobs. Effective job design drives performance

as more workers from different backgrounds apply for critical jobs, can be successful on the job, are sufficiently rewarded based on their goals and needs, report higher job satisfaction, are internally promoted, and stay long term. Below are common job design goals and employer pain points that can help start the conversation.

Figure 3.1: Job Design Goal and Common Employer Pain Points

Job Design Goal	Common Employer Pain Points
Goal 1: Increase the number of qualified candidates that compete for open jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lengthy time to hire • Lack of diversity in candidate pool and workforce
Goal 2: Employees from different backgrounds can be successful on the job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low productivity and engagement • High rates of turnover • High cost of turnover
Goal 3: Employees are sufficiently rewarded with financial and non-financial incentives based on their goals and needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low rates of internal promotions • High rates of turnover • High cost of turnover
Goal 4: Increase the number of employees that report high job satisfaction and stay long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low rates of internal promotions • Low productivity and engagement • High rates of turnover • High cost of turnover
Goal 5: Higher rates of internal promotion from employees of different backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of diversity in more senior roles • Low rates of internal promotions • Low number of people in leadership/ senior management roles that have been promoted internally
Goal 6: Maximizing the value of existing talent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the current design of our jobs maximize the skills and talents of our employees?

3.2.4 Supporting Employer Reflection and Discussion on Job Quality Considerations for Critical Jobs

Understanding how current job quality offerings stack up relative to competitors, company values and aspirations, and employee expectations and priorities is critical when identifying where job design or redesign efforts may need to start. Consider the following questions:

- Are our jobs designed in a way to improve the talent and overall business metrics we value the most?
- Are employees experiencing these job quality features differently based on race, gender, age, position, location, and other factors? If so, what might be the root causes of these differences?
- How do our offerings compare with employee needs and expectations, industry standards, and other career tracks or work experiences that employees choose to pursue?
- How impactful would a job redesign effort be to improve one or more job quality features that candidates and employees are looking for?
- How well are we communicating key job quality features to internal employees, candidates, and learners from talent providers?
- What level of control do we have in affecting change in job design for critical positions?
- What level of organizational buy-in is there for meaningful job design changes that improve job quality?

Setting the table for meaningful employer discussions on these topics can be challenging. In Kentucky, the Kentucky Chamber Workforce center has been working since 2018 on a statewide movement to empower employers to lead workforce development in the region and have set the table and structure for incorporating these types of discussions into statewide planning efforts.

For years, the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce heard from its members that finding candidates with the right skills for their most critical jobs was becoming more and more challenging. This skills gap was damaging productivity, ballooning hiring costs and, in many cases, sacrificing economic growth opportunities as industry leaders couldn't find the workforce needed to fill their current vacancies (let alone those needed to expand). Building a workforce that meets employers' needs now, and in the future required direct input from employers on what critical positions they need to fill and what training or education is required to fill them. The state lacked a consistent method of bringing business, education, and workforce partners together to create and sustain the high-quality workforce needed for Kentucky's continued economic prosperity.

To date, Building Kentucky's Talent Pipeline has formed 28 industry collaboratives comprising more than 200 industry leaders working together to build stronger talent pipelines. Out of these 28, 13 collaboratives are now well into implementation and building pipelines (Strategy 5) including some of these unique solutions:

- Partnering with postsecondary health care leaders to modernize the clinical rotation model for a stronger pipeline of registered nurses.
- Connecting students with entry-level health care jobs that provide professional experience and financial support to increase the students' prospects of graduating as a registered nurse (RN).
- Collaborating with a community college to create a deck hand training program preparing job seekers for lucrative, high-demand careers in the maritime industry.
- Creating a new industry credential in the equine sector and hosting training workshops to recruit and train talent for critical jobs.¹

1. Source: Building Kentucky's Talent Pipeline US Chamber of Commerce Foundation. Full case study can be found [here](#).

Key Takeaways

Early reflection sets the foundation for targeted, high-impact job redesign efforts. By exploring the eight job quality features and aligning them with common talent challenges, collaboratives can design roles that improve hiring, retention, engagement, and advancement.

3.3 Strategy 3: Align and Communicate Job Requirements

In the TPM Academy core curriculum, Strategy 3 outlines how employer collaboratives can develop a shared language to describe required and preferred hiring requirements for their target business functions or occupation. As part of this process, the employers in the collaborative revisit their current hiring requirements and revise them to be more competency- and skill-based. They also make important decisions about proxies such as required or preferred credentials and experience that could be constraining their ability to tap into available talent pools.

During this strategy, employers and TPM collaboratives also have an opportunity to discuss and develop sharing language to benchmark job quality offerings and assess the impact current offerings are having on key talent pain points.

3.3.1 Benchmarking and Assessing Impact of Job Quality on Talent Pain Points

In the TPM Academy Strategy 3 core curriculum, we discussed how employers and employer collaboratives can conduct a job analysis to identify the key competencies, credentials, and other hiring requirements for critical positions. To incorporate job quality discussions into this phase, employers can assess how each of the eight job quality features measure up as part of that job analysis.

TPM collaboratives can use the below simple benchmarking and impact assessment rubric to evaluate where job quality efforts may be most critical to address their talent pain points.

Benchmarking: How do job quality offerings compare to competitors, employee expectations, and company aspirations?

1 = significantly behind competitors, below employee expectations, and/or company aspirations

2 = a little behind competitors, below employee expectations, and/or company aspirations

3 = in-line with competitors, employee expectations, and/or company aspirations

4 = ahead of most competitors, employee expectations, and/or company aspirations

5 = national leader far exceeding competitors, exceeding employee expectations, and/or achieving company aspirational goals.

Impact on Pain Points: How does this feature impact job satisfaction, time to hire, turnover or other TPM metrics?

High: Significant impact on the talent metrics that matter most

Medium: Some impact on the talent metrics that matter most

Low: Minimal impact on the talent metrics that matter most

For each critical job, employers or employer collaboratives reflect on where they believe they stand on each of the eight job quality features defined above using the table below.

Figure 3.2: Benchmarking Job Quality Features for Critical Roles

Job Quality Feature	Critical Job #1 (Insert Title)	
	Benchmarking (Scale of 1–5)	Impact on Pain Points (High, Medium, Low)
Earnings		
Benefits		
Safety and Security		
When and Where Work is Performed		
How Work is Performed		
Learning, Development, and Advancement		
Employee Voice and Engagement		
Management and Supervision		

3.3.2 Setting Job Quality Priorities

By completing the table above, employers and employer collaboratives can identify job quality priorities that have the highest likelihood of improving the TPM metrics that matter most to them (e.g., job satisfaction, time to hire, turnover). For example, job quality features that score a one (1) or two (2) in the benchmarking column and have a high impact on pain points (e.g., 1, High) are likely good focus areas for job redesign efforts. Job quality features assessed with medium to high benchmarking scores and a low impact on key pain points may not be priority areas (e.g., 3, Low).

When setting these priorities, the following considerations are critical to move forward:

- **Employee perspectives:** It is critically important that sufficient, genuine perspectives of employees are included in the analysis above. Omitting these viewpoints, or assuming it is known based on conventional wisdom or limited knowledge of what current employee and candidates value most can lead to misprioritization, blind spots when implementing changes, and decreased impact on key measures.
- **Informed by business operating context:** During this process, it is important to recognize that not all businesses are in a position to make changes to all eight job quality features, especially those that impact cash flow. For example, small businesses and/or businesses in industries with low operating margins may not be able to increase starting wages (earnings) immediately and may want to focus on high-impact changes that do not impact cash flow, such as scheduling practices (when and where work is performed).

3.3.3 Job Quality Priorities at Quest Diagnostics

As Quest executives were continuing to assess their challenges with attrition at the call center operations, Scott Jeffers, VP of Lab Operations and Operational Excellence and Michelle Ricardo, Senior HR Director, flew to Lenexa, Kansas, to see the operations.

Ultimately, Quest identified the highest priority job quality features that needed to be addressed related to Earnings, Learning, Development and Advancement, Management and Supervision, and When and Where Work Was Performed.

“It wasn’t clear what the need was when we went there,” Jeffers recalled. “We just knew that the costs were out of control and the metrics were not heading in the right direction. Attrition was clearly not good. Before their visit, they asked the call center managers, the HR staff, and the directors of both NCS locations to list what they needed to improve performance. When that group listed close to 40 items during the welcome meeting, Jeffers challenged them to identify the top issues that had to be solved immediately. Ricardo facilitated a dialogue that helped the group narrow the list down to four issues.

Implement step-based pay to recognize people’s growing skills and knowledge. Pay was a big reason why people left Quest. A common phrase heard from those who left was, “I can do this a lot easier someplace else where they don’t ask as much from us.”

Create a career-path strategy to motivate people to keep improving their skills.

Develop supervisors to address problems in how they treat employees and how they handle workforce planning, hiring and the reps’ career paths.

Develop a workforce planning strategy, as some regions were overstaffed and others understaffed.¹

1. Source: Quest Diagnostics Case Study (MIT Sloan School of Management)

Key Takeaways

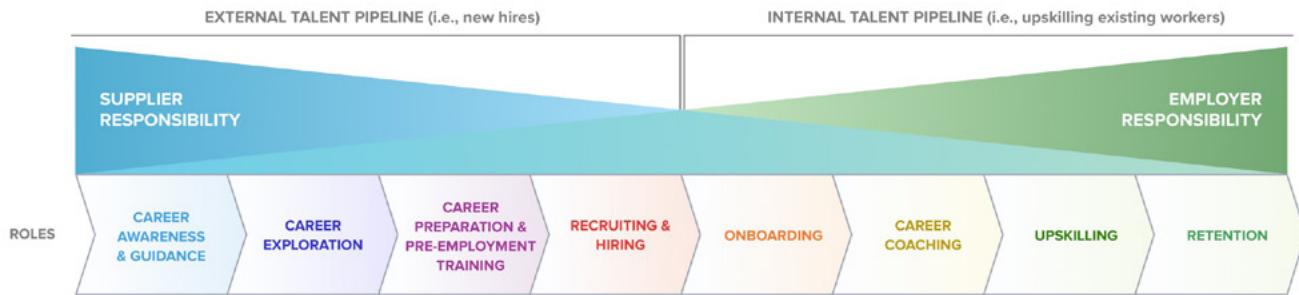
Benchmarking job quality features and assessing their impact on key talent pain points helps employers identify where job design changes will be most meaningful.

3.4 Strategy 5: Build Talent Supply Chains

In the TPM Academy core curriculum, Strategy 5: Build Talent Supply Chains, outlines how to co-design value stream maps with employer-led partnership teams, including employer collaborative members and education and training providers.

Value stream maps outline talent pipeline roles, outcomes, performance measures, and incentives for all partners involved. Incorporating job quality considerations when developing these maps can help drive performance. Below are some considerations at each stage of the talent pipeline. Ultimately, the goal of thinking about job quality at each stage of the value stream map is to create a diverse, thriving talent supply chain where employees stay with companies long term, grow, and take part in shared value creation.

Figure 3.3: Value Stream Map²



2. ©U.S. Chamber Foundation TPM Academy Curriculum® 2019, TheTalentSupplyChain.org

Figure 3.4: Incorporating Job Quality into TPM Value Stream Map Roles

Value Stream Map Roles	Considerations to Incorporate and Communicate Job Quality
Career Awareness & Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can talent providers help learners and job seekers identify the job quality features that matter most to them based on their situation, preferences, goals and life stage (e.g., living expenses, schedule, strengths, interests, and values)? • How can talent providers give feedback to employers on what job quality features their learners are looking for?
Career Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role can preferred talent providers play in communicating with learners the job quality features of employers (note, this can vary by industry)? • How can providers and employers partner on career days, tours, job shadows, and other opportunities to discuss job quality offerings and priorities with learners?
Career Preparation and Pre-Employment Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can employers and talent providers incorporate and communicate job quality offerings during apprenticeship programs, internships, and vocational training programs (e.g., provide stipends or schedule accommodations).
Recruiting and Hiring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can employers emphasize job quality features of their positions that matter most to employees in job postings? • How do employers build broader “onramps” into the organization through internships, fellowships, and/or apprenticeships?
Onboarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can employers incorporate and communicate job design features to new employees upon hire?
Career Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role can talent providers, nonprofits, and other providers play in mentorship and coaching employees after hire?
Upskilling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might the employer or employer collaborative offer additional career growth and upskilling opportunities for existing employees? • Could our existing preferred talent providers have a role?
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are key job quality features regularly assessed, invested in, and communicated to existing employees? • How are we incorporating employee input into this process?

One example of an employer taking a new approach to recruiting and hiring based on key job quality features comes from the YWCA Kalamazoo (Michigan). In 2019, when the YWCA began planning to open Michigan's first comprehensive 24-hour childcare center—The Dreamery—in the diverse, historical neighborhood of Edison, it faced significant staffing hurdles related to recruiting and hiring. While the neighborhood clearly needed higher quality jobs and more childcare options, YWCA Kalamazoo questioned the feasibility of hiring and maintaining the necessary workforce of 15 Early Learning Professionals (ELPs) to operate the center.

YWCA Kalamazoo partnered with the Kalamazoo Literacy Council (KLC), a community-based organization with extensive roots in Edison, to build a career pathway initiative helping Edison residents launch ECE careers at The Dreamery. The initiative leveraged the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Talent Pipeline Management® (TPM) framework to provide a structure for the initiative, increase the number of employers participating, and scale to additional neighborhoods.

A strength of the initiative is that participants can start work immediately as an ELP, receive on-the-job training, and participate in apprenticeships. They begin in entry-level positions, receive formal training from Southwest Child Care Resources, achieve their Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate, and enroll in a Department of Labor ECE Registered Apprenticeship program, which enables eligibility for promotion.

Since its successful launch in Edison, the Edison ECE Career Pathway has been scaled to two other priority neighborhoods targeted by Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo.¹

1. Source: Career Pathway Initiative Creates Alignment Around Prosperity; Early Childhood Education Public-Private Partnership in Kalamazoo, Michigan. US Chamber of Commerce Foundation. Full case study can be found [here](#).

3.4.1 Job Quality and the TPM Performance Dashboard

Strategy 5 of the TPM Academy core curriculum walks through how employers and employer collaboratives can develop their own TPM dashboards to track key measures that address employer pain points in the talent pipeline. Below are examples of some of the leading and lagging measures that could be incorporated into a job design effort as part of a TPM planning process:

Figure 3.5: Examples of Leading and Lagging Measures in Job Design

	Job Design Leading Measures	Employer Pain Point Lagging Measures
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of candidates from feeder schools applying to related work-based learning opportunities • Number of candidates from talent providers applying to critical jobs • Percentage of applicants for work-based learning and job opportunities from priority populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average number of days between initial job posting and hire • Percentage of hires from priority populations • Cost per hire
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee satisfaction • Exit and stay interview qualitative data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of workers upskilled and promoted into critical jobs after defined period of time • Impact of vacancies on incumbent employees (burnout, etc.) • Average annual turnover • Annual cost of turnover • Average cost of unplanned overtime

Employers and employer collaboratives can use the above examples to discuss their own priorities, goals, and key performance indicators (or KPIs) to measure the success of their efforts to address talent pain points through job quality. The measures that are ultimately used should:

- **Actionable:** Choose measures for which the collaborative members can take action to improve performance on key employer pain points. For example, while increasing earnings may be a top priority based on the benchmark and impact assessment for an individual employer, they may not be able to make that change in the next 12 months based on their current cash flow.
- **Aligned:** Leading measures should be connected with lagging measures that address employer pain points while supporting the goals of talent providers.
- **Promote shared value:** Job design measures should add value to all partners, including workers, service providers, communities, and public and private investors in talent development, such as the government.
- **Practical and cost effective:** Collecting and reporting data on measures is agreeable and reasonable for employers in the collaborative.

3.4.2 Incorporating Job Design Measures into TPM Scorecards

Employer-led partnerships should identify one or more job design leading and lagging measures to incorporate into an existing scorecard in a way that clearly links leading job design metrics to employer pain points. TPM collaboratives can walk through the following questions:

- Do new measures related to job quality clearly connect with priority employer pain points?
- Are there any measures that conflict with the goals or requirements of talent providers?
- Do all partners clearly see how a specific focus or investment in one or more job quality features can influence a leading or lagging measure?
- Is data available? Is it possible and legal to collect and share data to track performance on this measure?
- Do employers have concerns sharing baseline and performance data outside of their own companies?

3.4.3 Designing and Delivering Incentives to Drive Performance

There are three types of incentives driving performance in the TPM process. First, there are financial and non-financial incentives employers provide to individual employees or business units in a company. Second, employers can provide incentives to talent providers. Third, public systems can offer subsidies, recognition, and other incentives to providers and employers. Increasingly, governments are focused on incentivizing

employers to focus on one or more job quality features through public procurement, wage and training subsidy programs, monitoring and enforcement, and other local, state, federal tax and policy measures.

For example, almost all public workforce development boards require employers to pay wages above the minimum wage to receive Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I funds through its On-the-Job training program.

In 2016, the Travis County (TX) purchasing offices adopted the Better Builder Certification that defines job quality standards for public construction projects. Over \$12 billion of public construction projects are tied to these requirements, as well as incentives to fast-track licensing and permitting processes for private developers that commit to these standards. This has improved job quality standards for over 40,000 Texas construction workers.

3.4.4 Measuring and Communicating Job Quality Success and Return on Investment

It is a significant achievement to redesign a critical job to increase job quality in a way that creates shared value for workers and businesses. Finding ways to communicate these successes to the right audiences can help employers in the community be viewed as an employer of choice.

Strategy 5: Build Talent Supply Chains in the TPM Academy core curriculum provides instruction and sample equations for employers and employer-led partnerships to calculate the ROI of their TPM activities. Building on this foundation, companies can include job quality investments and their impacts into their TPM ROI calculations.

When redesigning a job to improve job quality—and in TPM more generally—ROI may not always be positive right away. Employers making investments in earnings, for example, incur increased costs immediately, where the benefits related to reduced turnover, reduced time to hire, increased staff and customer loyalty and tenure pay off over time.

Key Takeaways

Selecting effective TPM job quality measures requires choosing metrics that employers can act on, align with key talent pain points, create shared value for all partners, and remain practical to collect.

3.5 Strategy 6: Engage in Continuous Improvement and Resiliency Planning

After implementing a solution with preferred and trusted partners, the employer collaborates and uses agreed-upon performance data to identify continuous improvement opportunities. This includes reviewing both leading indicators, such as enrollment and completion data, but also lagging indicators that are important to employers, such as improving the yield

rate of qualified job applicants, reducing turnover, and enhancing upskilling options. Through TPM, both the employer collaborative and its talent pipeline partners are given a process to analyze the data, identify root causes, test solutions, and scale what works—all with an eye toward improving the ROI for employers and workers.

3.5.1 Improving Job Design through Continuous Improvement

Like supply chain management, employers and employer collaboratives focused on increasing TPM performance are taking a proactive, continuous improvement approach to their talent pipeline. This is also true of job redesign efforts within TPM focused on increasing job quality.

The TPM Academy core curriculum focuses on the Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control (DMAIC process), but there are continuous improvement tools and processes within Lean Six Sigma or the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) methodology that are applicable as well. This section outlines how these processes can be used to help improve job quality over time.

3.5.2 Analyzing Root Causes

In this stage, collaborative members should ask why the measures identified in the improvement opportunities are happening. Within job design, it is tempting for employers to quickly accept conventional wisdom about a problem (e.g., “people don’t want to work anymore” or “all that matters to people is money”). Within job design and job quality, it is critical to include employee and candidate perspectives in this process to inform planning and test assumptions. Use data from employee focus groups and engagement surveys, exit/stay interviews, and feedback from talent providers.

Questions to Consider:

- Are our jobs designed in a way that may contribute to poor performance on the metrics we value the most?
- How do our offerings compare with competitors, as well as with other career tracks or work experiences these learners may pursue?
- How impactful would a job redesign effort be to improve one or more job quality features that candidates and employees are looking for?
- How well are we communicating key job quality features of our job design to our internal employees, candidates, and learners from talent providers?
- What level of control do we have in affecting this change within the timing and scope of the initiative?

3.5.3 Developing and Testing Solutions

After identifying job design improvement opportunities and analyzing root causes, improvement teams should identify potential job quality improvements and/or methods of communicating job quality features to internal and external talent.

Questions to Consider:

- What is the universe of potential solutions? Be wary of anchoring on conventional wisdom, stereotypes, or broadly applied practices.
- How have employee and candidate perspectives informed these solutions?
- What do existing employees in critical jobs think about these solutions?
- Should this root cause and potential solutions be addressed at the employer level or at the employer collaborative level (some can happen at both levels)? What evidence do I have that a solution will address my target measures for improvement, and on what timeframe?
- Do I have the necessary buy-in, financial resources, and expertise to test this solution? Because job design changes impact an entire organization, this must include all key stakeholders (executives, HR, supervisors/managers, employees).

Figure 3.6: Examples of Job Quality Solutions for Single Employers and Employer Collaboratives

Employer Context	Job Quality Improvement
Single Employer	<p>Earnings: Conducting a pay analysis and deciding to increase base wages for one or more positions.</p> <p>When and Where Work is Performed: Move to a hybrid work environment.</p> <p>Benefits: Developing a student loan repayment assistance program for employees of one company.</p>
Employer Collaborative	<p>Benefits: Partnering to identify a workplace childcare provider and subsidy administer.</p> <p>Learning and Development: Participating in multi-employer apprenticeships that provide the work-based learning and credentials for internal employees to promote from feeder positions to critical jobs.</p> <p>Benefits: Developing a student loan repayment assistance program for all learners from preferred talent providers who work for an employer of the collaborative, with uniform and agreed upon terms, policy, and servicing infrastructure.</p>

At this stage, you are ready to bring your job quality changes to life. Piloting changes on a small scale is the best way to test the solutions you identified, identify and work through operational risks and challenges, and evaluate whether the job redesign is having the desired impacts on the pain points that matter most to the employer or employer collaborative.

Figure 3.7: Examples of Testing Job Quality Improvements

Job Quality Features	Example Test
Earnings	Increasing work-based learning wages for one summer
Benefits	Design and try out an infant workplace policy in partnership with one expecting parent to encourage and support their return from parental leave.
Safety and Security	Try out new PPE equipment and add an air conditioner in the workstation for a subset of employees that have expressed concerns about heat exhaustion for one quarter.
When and Where Work is Performed	Institute a “9/80” work schedule with eight 9-hour days, one 8-hour day, and one day off in a 2-week period for a subset of critical employees for one quarter.
How Work is Performed	Test a new technology tool recommended by an employee-led improvement team for a subset of employees.
Learning, Development and Advancement	Develop an internal mentoring and sponsorship program for 12 months for a specific subset of opportunity population employees.
Employee Voice and Engagement	Identify an employee-led improvement team to identify one specific element of “how work is performed” and suggest fixes.
Management and Supervision	Incorporate new manager training focused on supportive coaching and assess changes in employee satisfaction over a 6-month period.

Key Questions After the Test Include:

- Was the job redesign test implemented as intended?
- Did the job quality change have the desired impact?
- Were other contributing factors accounted for or controlled?
- Does the solution need to be tested again?
- Do you recommend this job redesign be scaled?

3.5.4 Implementing Proven Solutions

After communicating the results of the tests and securing buy-in from critical stakeholders, it is time to plan for scaling the solution across a larger talent pipeline. Scale in this case might mean:

- Extending the program or policy from a time-limited test (e.g., one quarter) to a long-term job quality feature of one specific company.
- Scaling from one location to multiple locations within a company
- Scaling from one individual employee or business unit to all employees in critical jobs or across a specific company.
- Scaling from one company to additional companies in the collaborative

Questions to Consider:

- Have all stakeholders been informed of the pilot results (including workers)?
- Is there consensus on scaling the job redesign?
- Are there any barriers or potential unintended consequences of scaling the redesign that may not have been present in the pilot?
- Do we have the expertise, bandwidth, and training to scale the solution?
- How are we communicating job quality investments to internal employees and candidates?

3.5.5 Job Design and TPM Resilience Planning

There will be constant changes in the world, economy, and labor market, all that impact how companies and employees prioritize and pursue job quality features within job design. A few major disruptions that impact job design could be:

- Cost of living and housing increases can outpace pay increases, increasing the number of your employees who are not paid a living wage.
- A job quality “best-practice” today may be required by local, state, or federal law a year from now, changing the playing field for employers looking to be an “Employer of Choice” (e.g., stable scheduling ordinances).

- An aging local workforce and a new generation of workers may value different job quality features than previous generations, requiring unanticipated job redesign to attract and retain talent.
- A global pandemic or natural disaster can quickly change how employees and society think about safety in the workplace (e.g., Covid-19)
- An employee market can quickly become a hiring manager’s market in an economic downturn, eroding commitment and internal buy-in for investments in job quality across an individual employer or employer collaborative.

Strategy 6: Engage in Continuous Improvement in the TPM Academy core curriculum provides an outline for how to assess, measure, and mitigate risk from such disruptions that can be applied to job quality initiatives within a TPM collaborative.



Key Takeaways

Continuous improvement is essential to sustaining job quality gains. By regularly analyzing performance data, identifying root causes, piloting solutions, and scaling what works, TPM collaboratives can adapt job design to changing conditions, strengthen talent outcomes, and maintain long-term ROI for both employers and workers.

3.6 Recommended Actions to Use TPM to Improve Job Quality and Make Measurable Impacts on Employer Talent Pain Points

TPM practitioners and their employer partners should take the following actions:

Is TPM Right for You? TPM is a useful framework to build mutual understanding and a shared language between TPM practitioners, employers, and partner organizations focused on increasing or supporting job quality in their community. It can be used to establish new partnerships or to enhance existing ones (e.g., sector partnerships or advisory boards). It provides a structured process for getting employers organized and having them produce consistent and granular information about their workforce needs. It also provides them with tools to partner more effectively in designing, delivering, and improving job design to increase the likelihood that candidates and workers report satisfaction with their job.

Work with business associations and economic and workforce development agencies to explore implementation of TPM within the state or local community.

Questions to Consider:

- a. As a workforce, education, or nonprofit agency focused on job quality, what is your current employer engagement strategy? If it is an advisory board, what is the role employers are expected to play, and what professional role do participants represent?
- b. As an employer, have you been or are you currently involved in a partnership with organizations working on or focused on job quality and what was that experience like?
- c. Would TPM be a useful framework to promote mutual understanding and shared language between organizations focused on job quality and employers? If so, in what ways?
- d. How, if at all, is TPM different from what strategies you may have used in the past or are currently using?
- e. Can TPM be a useful organizing framework for education, workforce, and nonprofit organizations working on job quality issues to better understand employer needs and priorities related to job quality?
- f. Is TPM right for you?
- g. If so, what additional information do you need to start your TPM journey, and would you benefit from organizing a TPM Orientation or participating in a TPM Academy?

Utilize TPM Best Practices and Tools. Use TPM best practices and tools to improve job quality incentives, requirements or support services that achieve a ROI for workers, employers, and partners.

Questions to Consider:

- a. What ways can TPM be used to address your job quality priorities?
- b. Can TPM be helpful in identifying which of the eight job quality considerations should be a priority for an employer or employer collaborative job quality initiative?
- c. In what ways can TPM be used to benchmark and measure the success of job design or redesign efforts?
- d. Does TPM offer anything new in terms of thinking about performance management, ROI, and continuous improvement, and is that useful or relevant to you and your organization



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