Advance CTE Train the Trainer: *Empowering Students through Career Technical Education and Career Advising*

Module
Module 6: Effective Communication of CTE to Learners and Families

Expected Delivery
85-110 minutes

NOTE: Delivery timing can be customized throughout the activities and discussions selected below. Time of activity, content, slides or discussion is an estimate.

Tools
- [Surveys](#)
- [Worksheet](#)
- [Slide Deck](#)
  (*) = common slides across modules
  ! = We recommend adding 'break' slides to the slide deck as deemed appropriate

Overview

Section	Timing (minutes)
Introductory Activity and Community Agreements	20-25 minutes
Myth vs. Facts and Role of Counselors in Communicating CTE, Discussion 1	15-20 minutes
National Messaging Research and Discussion 2	20-25 minutes
Core Messages for Learners and Families and Activity 1	30-45 minutes
Reflection and Wrap-up	10 minutes

ADVANCE≫CTE
State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work

Materials

Virtual

- ☐ Slide deck with notes
- ☐ Laptop/Desktop computer
- ☐ Microphone/headset/phone
- ☐ Jamboard or Mentimeter or other annotation tool to engage attendees
- ☐ Optional (not provided by Advance CTE):
    - ☐ CEU sign up, if applicable
    - ☐ Sign in tool/attendance roster, if applicable
    - ☐ Follow up survey/session evaluation for facilitator, if applicable

In-Person

- ☐ Slide deck with notes
- ☐ Laptop/Desktop computer
- ☐ Projector
- ☐ Screen
- ☐ Sticky notes/Post-its
- ☐ Large chart paper
- ☐ Whiteboard
- ☐ Dry erase markers
- ☐ Writing utensils
- ☐ Optional (not provided by Advance CTE):
    - ☐ CEU sign up, if applicable
    - ☐ Sign in tool/attendance roster, if applicable
    - ☐ Follow up survey/session evaluation for facilitator, if applicable

Supplemental Links

- Handout Hub - this handout provides additional resources that can be highlighted as needed during this module
- Sample Community Agreement
- Link or QR Codes for Surveys (to add to slide deck if desired)

Pre Survey		Post Survey	

Engagement Icon Legend

For ease of facilitation and exercise tracking, icons are matched across the facilitation guide, worksheet and slide deck.

	Group Activity		Reflection and Consideration
	Video		Questions to ponder or discuss

Purpose

Educators, school counselors and staff play a key role in setting the narrative about Career Technical Education (CTE) that strongly influences families' perceptions of the value of CTE programs and ultimately program participation. Designing program recruitment with tested and equitable messages is central to developing equitable pathways to a diverse workforce.

However, key stakeholders in the CTE recruitment process often do not have the capacity to determine the best messages to reach learners and families or to design an intentional recruitment strategy. This session will share findings from research conducted by Advance CTE in 2020 on effective messages about Career Technical Education (CTE) drawn from focus groups and a national survey of 2,000 learners and parents/guardians.

Attendees will gain messages to use in CTE program recruitment, explore tools to implement the messages into daily work, and have a vulnerable space to ideate on recruitment improvements and to practice implementing tested messages.

Session Objectives

- Gain an understanding of current perceptions and barriers that limit learner and family interest and participation in CTE;
- Understand findings on perceptions of CTE based on nationally representative research;
- Gain effective and equitable messages and tools to communicate the value of CTE to secondary learners and families;
- Practice implementing these messages in oral and written recruitment practices.

Facilitation Guide

Introductory Exercise and Community Agreements
Time: 20-25 minutes

Section		Slide
Welcome and Pre-Survey Link* **Time: 3-5 minutes**		**1-3**
Key Messages and Context: ● Completion of this survey (and the post-survey at the conclusion of the module) helps support the importance and value of this training as well as serves to prove its effectiveness. Instructions: ● Encourage attendees to complete prior to the start of the workshop ● *Virtual:* Place link into chat and give a few moments of silence for attendees to complete ● *In-person:* Create a QR code for the survey to be taken with attendees personal devices and offer a few moments of silence to complete.		
Community Agreements* **Time: 3-5 minutes**		**4**
Key Messages and Context: ● We desire to have candid and potentially vulnerable conversations today. Community agreements strive for each attendee to feel comfortable sharing their story and supporting others in their work. ● This list was compiled to support virtual training environments. It is not an exhaustive list. Instructions: ● Use a state or local model to create a set of agreements to guide interaction and engagement during the session ● Ask for additions and changes, then ask each attendee to verbally confirm or use an affirmation tool on the platform to reach collective agreement.		
Ice Breaker & Introductions* **Time: 7-10 minutes**		**5**

Key Messages and Context:
- Each ice breaker question in each module is unique to the topic being addressed.
- This guiding question has attendees reflect on what messages and stories resonate with them, and to realize that each person has lived experiences that impact their reaction to communications. Share with attendees that this guiding question is a great way to kick off this topic and conversation when delivering it to their peers and others in the future.

Instructions:
- An icebreaker question is included in each module. Feel free to use or edit to include your own.
- *Virtual*: have the introductions and answer to the icebreaker be put into chat OR an annotation tool like Mentimeter or Jamboard, etc. Show results on the screen for participants to review.
- *In-person*: Have everyone introduce themselves and answer the icebreaker out loud OR in a 'turn to your partner' style.

Learning Objectives* Time: 2 minutes	**6**

Key Messages and Context:
- The learning objectives are unique to each module. The time spent in this training experience will result in these objectives being obtained. We'll hold ourselves accountable for that.

Instructions:
- These are the generalized outcomes of the module content. It might be best to animate this list and go over each one prior to moving onto the next slide. If there are a few more local or state specific objectives, feel free to add them.

NOW, NEW, NEXT* Time: 2 minutes	**7**

Key Messages and Context:
- This is a theme of these modules. NOW is helping attendees reflect on what they already know. NEW is helping attendees reflect on what they have learned and NEXTis helping attendees think about action steps, planning for future ideas and implementing post-training.
- Have attendees refer to the worksheet. We will reference this page throughout our time together.
- NOW indicates a reflective moment around what is in place. NOW is an indicator of what you can quickly recite and would share in the metaphorical 'elevator' or 'sidewalk chat' or 'dinner party' or 'family reunion' or 'water cooler' etc.....[insert

ADVANCE≫CTE
State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work

whatever is most culturally relevant for you and/or the group here]
- NEW will be the space where something is pulled from today's information. An idea, an initiative, new program implementation. A-Ha's! New nuggets of knowledge. Big or small, the details that are NEW can live here for reference at the end and into the future.
- NEXT is used for looking to the future. What will you try? What will you implement? What will you take action on? What will you want to learn more about? Who else do you need with you to make it happen?

Instructions:
- Review the definitions for Now, New, Next.
- Inform attendees that we'll be pausing during NOW NEW NEXT slides that come up during our time together in these modules.
- Please point attendees to Page 2 of the worksheet for this module for the guiding questions/prompts each time NOW NEW NEXT comes up.

CTE Without Limits* Time: 2 minutes	8-9

Key Messages and Context:
- *CTE Without Limits:* Share the national vision for the future of CTE and how this module advances a future where each student can achieve success in college and the career of their choice without limits
- Inform attendees that this vision is foundational to the content we'll be exploring in this module. *CTE Without Limits* is organized into five principles (*= especially relevant to this module):
  - Principle 1: Each learner engages in a cohesive, flexible, and responsive career preparation ecosystem
  - Principle 2: Each learner feels welcome in, is supported by, and has the means to succeed in the career preparation ecosystem*
  - Principle 3: Each learner skillfully navigates their own career journey*
  - Principle 4: Each learner's skills are counted, valued, and portable
  - Principle 5: Each learner can access CTE without borders
- To enact this vision, together we will require:
  - All systems working in concert
  - A commitment to tearing down the barriers that limit opportunity
  - CTE to serve as the catalyst to make this vision a reality

Instructions:
- Share slides
- Inform attendees that this is why this module exists, why this series of modules exist and why we value them taking time out to invest in this content.

Myth vs. Facts and Role of Counselors in Communicating CTE
Time: 15-20 minutes

Section	Slide
School Counselors as Trusted CTE Messengers* Time: 2 minutes	**10**
Key Messages and Context: - This section reinforces that school counselors are the top trusted messengers for students and families when it comes to conveying information about CTE. Facilitators are welcome to use the following points as a script. - Advance CTE's national research released in 2021 supported by the Siemens Foundation found that school counselors continue to be a top go-to source for learners and families to learn about CTE. This module aims to empower counselors to understand the past and present of CTE and empower them to begin shifting perceptions of CTE in their school and community. - We will review more about the survey in this workshop, but the reason for the development of this specific training is because of this finding: We learned that school counselors and teachers are the most trusted source of information about CTE for families. This is a reminder that YOU are valuable! - Yet this and other research also showed that school counselors needed support in how to speak about CTE and career advising strategies. - Advance CTE and Siemens discussed strategies for activating school counselors to have an impact on as many counselors throughout the country as possible. The goal was to create an off-the-shelf training in partnership with ASCA and ACTE and guided by the input of an advisory committee. The advisory committee consisted of members of ASCA and ACTE as well as a few State CTE Directors, State Directors of School Counseling, and national experts in school counseling and career development. - The members had the opportunity to weigh in and make recommendations throughout the development of the training. The training was first completed in 2019 and updated in 2021, and now it has been provided to states to support our professional development. Instructions: - Share slides and provide background on workshop material.	
Our Role* Time: 2 minutes	**11**
Key Messages and Context: This slide reminds attendees on how counselors can leverage their role to champion CTE and empower learners.	

- As a consistent slide across modules, attendees can get familiar with the 'formula' as they enter into becoming a CTE Champion. We revisit this slide again towards the end of the module.
- Let attendees know the purpose of this formula is to help us think about what it takes for us to be a CTE Champion.
- When we help our learners get to know their own personal interests, aptitudes and aspirations, we match those with the competencies/skills needed/expected in the work environment and then add in where in the region or state/community the employment can be had and that gets us into the role of being a CTE champion - especially when we flavor this formula with an awareness of course scheduling, program options and inter/extra/intra curricular experience. Viola!

Instructions:
- Share slides

Past v Present: CTE is….	Time: 5 minutes	12-14

Key Messages and Context:
- This section of slides guide attendees through historical perspectives and acknowledgements of CTE's past and the high-quality foundation of its present.
- It is important to acknowledge CTE's history as not always serving learners, and how it is intentionally designed to do so today.
- When possible, it is most impactful when you are able to include a learner scenario or story from your state to accompany facts from the slides. Testimonial videos or documents can be supplemented in the presentation.

Instructions:
- Share slides. Give attendees time to digest information. Supplement with state or local data about learner achievement where possible.
- Slide 12: Emphasize that CTE has made enormous strides to move beyond its 'tracking' legacy that was seen as 'less than' and only for some learners to be a path that provides skills and high-quality education experiences that are designed for each learner to succeed.
- Slide 13: Highlight that CTE should not be seen as 'just an elective'. We love when CTE classes are the first thing to be scheduled!

  Provide context on National Career Clusters® Framework, pathways and alignment here if Module 3: Expanding and Elevating High-Quality Career Technical Education will not be presented.

	Emphasize that CTE should not be seen as college OR career, but college AND career as the vast majority of current and future jobs require some sort of postsecondary education. If applicable, provide specific examples of early postsecondary opportunities available at the local and state level and how credit is counted. ● Slide 14: Inform attendees that this can be an 'elevator pitch' of sorts for CTE created by Advance CTE that summarizes the facts from the preceding slides. Supplemental statistics could be added for extra 'punch'.	
?	***Discussion 1: Current Recruitment Practices*** **Time: 5-10 minutes**	**15–16**

Key Messages and Context:
- This discussion allows attendees to reflect on current recruitment practices before hearing national research on effective recruitment messages.
- This exercise covers the NOW of the NOW, NEW, NEXT theme.

Instructions:
- Slide 15: Direct attendees to Page 1 of their worksheet to take notes under NOW. Review the NOW, NEW, NEXT themes.
- **Discussion 1** (Slide 16): Choose some or all of the questions to discuss for 5 minutes. More advanced audiences may resonate more with the second and third questions, whereas beginner audiences should focus on the first question.
- Emphasize with attendees that it is okay if they don't know the answers to these questions, and that these can be questions to go back and ask a CTE instructor or administrator.
- *Virtual:* Deliver discussion through five minute breakout rooms and share-outs; Jamboard or other annotation tool; or group discussion coming off mute if attendees are engaged.
- *In-Person*: Deliver activity through large group discussion; think, pair, share; or small group discussions.

National Messaging Research and Discussion 2
Time: 20-25 minutes

Section	Slides
National Messaging Research Findings **Time: 15 minutes**	**17-28**

Key Messages and Context:
- This section of slides shares research conducted by Advance CTE in 2017 and again in November 2020 on CTE perceptions and message testing to determine how to better research secondary learners and families.
- This research filled a gap for the field as no recent research existed on what messages about CTE were effective to compel secondary learners and families to consider and enroll in CTE. At the time of this research, many states were experiencing years of fairly stagnant enrollment levels.
- In doing this research, Advance aimed to provide effective, ready-made messages to instructors, counselors, and other CTE stakeholders to achieve equitable CTE program enrollment.
- These findings and messaging are meant to empower attendees with ready-made talking points and messages to share with families, learners and stakeholders about the promise and value of CTE. This is not meant to create more work!
- Additional context and details can be found in the presentation notes.

Instructions:
- This is a lot of information. Allow attendees time to process and ask questions, particularly at the end of the slide series and before Discussion 2.
- Slide 18: Emphasize with attendees that these messages have been tested multiple times both at the national level and through state-level focus groups.
- Slide 19: This slide provides level-setting for common terms from the research and what they mean. Emphasize that these messages apply to secondary learners and families only, and that there is research conducted by the Aspen Institute about effective messaging for various postsecondary learner populations.
- Slide 20: This is one of the most encouraging findings of the research. The percentage of current learners and families satisfied with their education dropped only two percentage points compared to the pre-pandemic round of research.
- Slide 21: Invite attendees to look at an overview of the research findings on Page 3 of the worksheet.

  Families in CTE were more satisfied with nearly every indicator tested, from the quality of the teachers to opportunities for internships, demonstrating that CTE is a viable option for all learners, not only those looking for CTE-specific program elements.
- Slide 22: Emphasize that families both in and not in CTE want the hallmarks of CTE as part of their education. Opportunities for advanced classes follows closely behind, showing that high-quality education and skills-based education is not an either/or situation.
- Slide 23: Advance CTE tested three messages during its most recent round of research, and Prepare for the Real World was the most effective. This was also the most effective message in the first round of research that tested seven messages

that included more financially focused messages.

These boxes show the description of the message that was shared in focus groups and the survey.
- Slide 24: These are the three messages tested. While all three had a positive perception, when asked to give a 1-2-3 ranking there was a clear winner. Emphasize that Prepare for the Real World was also a top benefit for CTE in addition to being a top message.
- Slide 25: Emphasize that what is most encouraging is that this message was the top message across race, income and participation in and out of CTE so you can feel confident in using this message for all learner audiences.
- Slide 26: In addition to top messages, the research also asked about families and learners top preferred outcomes for CTE. While Prepare for the Real World was #1, finding a career passion followed closely at #2. This benefit resonated across participation, race and income.

    Emphasize that this finding means messaging CTE can't just be about how much money you make. It must communicate how in-demand careers are meaningful and learners can make a difference.

    If there is time, ask attendees to stop for a moment and think about if this passion message was the first thing they thought of when they think of CTE. If not, do employers think this way? What about policymakers?
- Slide 27: While this research shows CTE has the benefits that families and learners desire, there is still a lack of awareness about these programs.
- Slide 28: This slide provides national data points that indicate learners are looking for an enhanced education experience to help prepare them for college and careers. CTE can be that experience.

?	***Discussion 2: Reflections on National Messaging Research*** **Time: 5-10 minutes**	**29-30**

Key Context and Considerations:
- This discussion gives attendees time to connect the research with what they already know and what they already do or don't do to connect learners and families to CTE.
- This discussion covers the NEW theme of the NOW, NEW, NEXT theme.

Instructions:
- Slide 29: Direct attendees to Page 2 of their worksheet to take notes under NEW. Review the NOW, NEW, NEXT themes.

ADVANCE≫CTE
State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work

- **Discussion 2** (Slide 30): Discuss these questions for 5 minutes. Encourage attendees to take notes on Page 6 of the worksheet.
- Emphasize with attendees that it is okay if they realize their messaging doesn't align or they don't share a lot with learners about CTE - that is the purpose of this learning!
- *Virtual:* Deliver discussion through minute breakout rooms and share-outs; Jamboard or other annotation tool; or group discussion coming off mute if attendees are engaged.
- *In-Person*: Deliver activity through large group discussion; think, pair, share; or small group discussions.

Core Messages for Learners and Families
Time: 30-45 minutes

Section	Slides
Core Messages and Messaging Resources Time: 10-15 minutes	**31-38**

Key Messages and Context:
- This section of slides provides tangible messages and resources for attendees to put the national research into action.
- It also provides opportunities for attendees to practice crafting and using these messages in a safe space with their peers.

Instructions:
- Slide 32: This slide is a reminder that these messages aren't impactful just by themselves, but are effective when accompanied by meaningful relationships and accessible, equitable resources and outreach.

    Emphasize again that the goal is to build these messages into existing work to make it more effective.
- Slide 33: This slide provides a common communications tool that attendees can use for any communication or conversation they are planning to use with learners and families. This tool allows conversations about CTE to remain learner-centered on outcomes rather than on just the programs themselves.
- Slide 34: Again, this is another tool that is easy to print out and use as a checklist when preparing tools or conversations with learners and families.

    Let attendees know these tools can be found on Advance CTE's website, which will be shared in an upcoming slide.
- Slide 35: This builds on the previous slide by providing examples of phrases and

words that should be used.

- Slide 36: This builds on Slide 34 by providing examples of words and phrases NOT to use. Avoid words that sound jargony or overly complex for learners.

  Additionally, CTE should not be treated as an 'other' experience that is better than high school, but rather a value add.
- Slide 37: If time, visit the website and walk through the section of resources for attendees. Let attendees know that some of the key words and core messages can be found on Page 4 of the worksheet.
- Slide 38: This is the CTE 101 Video that is mentioned as one of the resources. If time, show the video as an example of how effective messages are used as a build-up to the next activity.

	Slides 39-40
Activity 1: Practice Communicating CTE to Learners and Families **Time: 20-30 minutes**	

Key Messages and Context:
- This activity is meant to provide a vulnerable and safe space for attendees to practice the messages provided and consider how to improve their oral and written communication of CTE to secondary learners and families.
- Prior to conducting the activity, it is recommended that you provide some reminders about equitable communication, including the concepts of implicit bias, micromessages and assumption and impact. These concepts can be found in Module 5: Understanding Implicit Bias & Impact on Career Advisement and Decision-Making. This allows for this activity to disrupt rather than perpetuate existing practices that may exclude learners from being reached through current recruitment practices.

Instructions:
- Slide 39: Remind attendees that this message triangle was shared earlier in the presentation, and ask them to write down the key three messages.

  Then, ask them to revisit the NOW discussion from the beginning of the workshop, and ask them to keep in mind a current tool or practice they would change based on knowledge gained today.
- **Activity 1** (Slide 40): Choose one or two of the four activities listed on the slide for attendees to conduct for the activity. Consider which activities will most challenge attendees, as well as comments that have been made during the NOW and NEW sections of the module.

  Ask attendees to pick a specific learner/family audience to center their activity on,

preferably one that is historically marginalized from participating in CTE programs. Ask attendees to reflect individually for several messages on key messages, design and dissemination of the chosen activity.

- *Virtual:* Conduct this activity in breakout rooms for at least 10 minutes. Each group can create one product together using Canva, PowerPoint or an annotation tool, or provide feedback on material created during the individual reflection time. Allow adequate time for sharing out.
    - ○ OPTION: This could also be a 'homework' assignment post-module to encourage a deep dive into doing an inventory of words/images on websites or handouts that can be edited to support the outcomes of this module, or for a team to compose elevator speeches that inevitably help equip stakeholders with effective messaging.
- *In-person*: Divide the room into small groups for at least 10 minutes. Invite attendees to create their product on a large piece of paper to allow for a gallery walk. If choosing the elevator pitch, invite each group to present following the group time.
    - ○ OPTION: This could also be a 'homework' assignment post-module to encourage a deep dive into doing an inventory of words/images on websites or handouts that can be edited to support the outcomes of this module, or for a team to compose elevator speeches that inevitably help equip stakeholders with effective messaging.
- When sharing out, remind attendees to call in rather than call out any feedback, but to be radically candid as this may be one of the few settings attendees are able to practice these messages.

Reflection and Wrap-up
Time: 10 minutes

Section	Slides
NOW, NEW, NEXT * Time: 5 minutes	**41**
Key Messages and Context: - This section allows attendees to apply third components of the NOW, NEW, NEXT theme to help them plan next steps beyond this workshop. - Use the worksheet to help attendees follow along and take notes. Instructions: - Slide 41: Ask attendees to return to Page 2 of the worksheet and recap the NOW, NEW, NEXT concept. - Then, have attendees make notes under the NEXT section. - Slide 41: Ask attendees to write a one sentence commitment for their NEXT based	

ADVANCE >> CTE
State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work

on the activity that was just conducted. If time, ask attendees to share their next out loud, in the chat or via an annotation tool. ● Encourage attendees who may not have participated much yet to share. Make it clear that there is no 'blaming' here and everyone will be starting in a different place in using these tools and information.	

Final Resources and Wrap-up Time: 3-5 minutes	**42-44**
Key Messages and Context: ● This is a place to share any final messages and resources. Instructions: ● Remind attendees about the Handout Hub and Advance CTE Learning that Works Resource Center links. ● Refer attendees to the Collective Commitment phrase in the Module Workbook. Encourage attendees to pick one person from the workshop to stay in touch with as an accountability measure ● Add the Post Survey link into the chat or show the QR code on screen for attendees to take a quiet moment to complete. Pause and offer silence for a few moments to make sure this gets completed. ● Conclude with content on the last slide re: your contact information (optional) CEUs (if applicable). ● Convey a feeling of CONGRATS for attendees dedicating time and talent to this module.	

Facilitation Tools and Tips

Virtual
- ★ Chat box
- ★ Virtual platform emojis
- ★ Annotation tools such as Jamboard, Mentimeter, PollEverywhere, Zoom Polls, etc...
- ★ Worksheet responses and note taking
- ★ Voicing guiding prompts that encourage off-mute responses or chat box interactions

In-Person
- ★ Icebreaker interaction (face to face)
- ★ Round robin introductions
- ★ Individual reflection and note taking
- ★ Small group discussion and note taking

★ Worksheet completion
★ Sticky note compilation of ideas, strategies, take-aways and more

Facilitation & Participant Engagement Tips
- Read the audience and gauge level of enthusiasm, notice possible questions arising before they even get asked
- Emphasize key messages with shifts in vocal tone and tempo
- Make your passion for CTE contagious!
- Be patient with any technical difficulties, glitches and flow with the notes/script
- Trust yourself. You got this!
- Take a breath. Let the information sit with participants
- Count to five slowly once putting a question out to participants so to await their responses
- Have attendees put in an emoji every once in a while during virtual formats so to capture their interactive level and gauge their feelings in the training thus far
- Useful resource: https://virtualspeech.com/blog/effective-ways-use-pauses-in-speech

Equity/Inclusion Recommendations
- ❖ Be cognizant of gender, race and ethnic representation used in videos, images, examples given.
- ❖ Remain diligent in checking in with your own implicit biases
- ❖ Be intentional in centering learners rather than systems when talking about outcomes
- ❖ Practice replacing 'All' with 'Each or Every' (ex: Each student can/will/may…..Every School Counselor can/may….)
- ❖ Remember - careers don't have a gender!
- ❖ Honor the use of culturally respectful ice breaker questions and metaphors/analogies. Avoid cliches that can be considered offensive or stereotypical.
- ❖ When showing videos, please turn on Closed Captioning (in person and virtual)

**Training Suggestion: Combine this Module with Module 1: Shifting Perceptions of CTE for aligned professional development.