

Effectively Communicating Career Technical Education to Engage Every Learner: A Recruitment & Engagement Tool

Video Series

Section 7: Continuing the Work

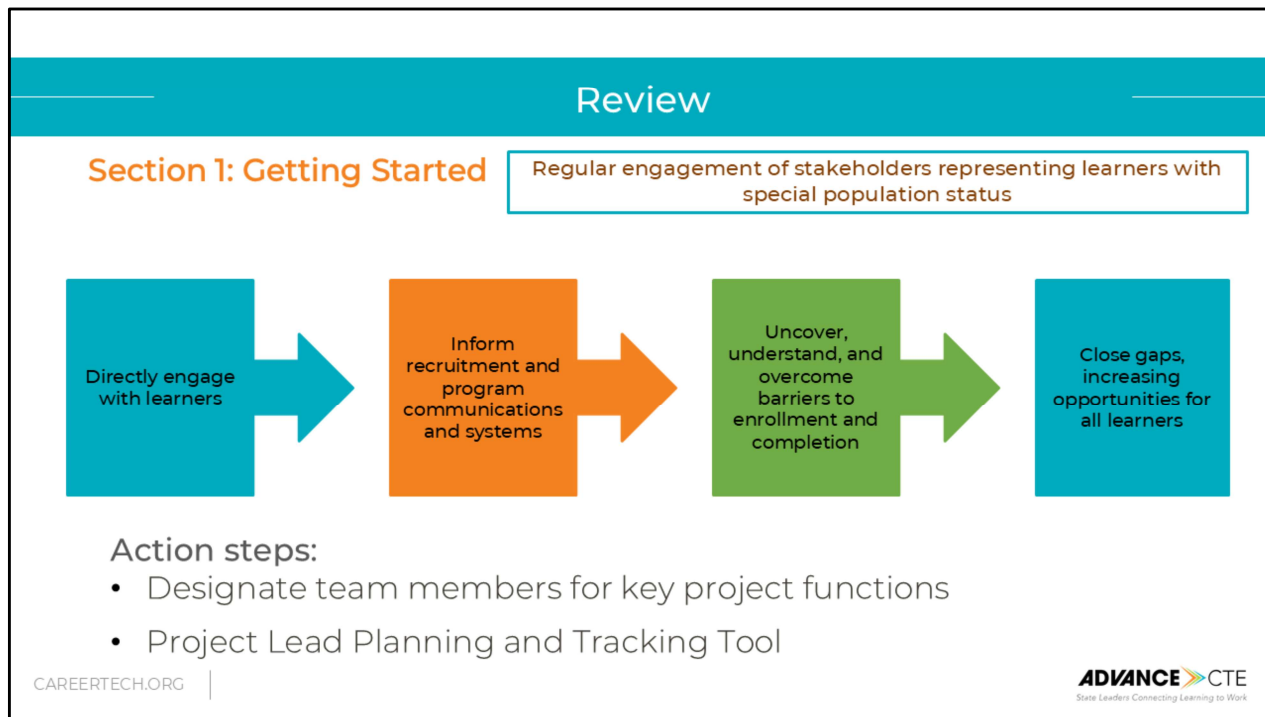


CAREERTECH.ORG

ADVANCE CTE
State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work

Welcome to the final section of the Effectively Communicating Career Technical Education to Engage Every Learner: A Recruitment & Engagement Tool, where we provide information on using the power of relationships, messaging, and effective communication practices to enhance recruitment systems and structures to ensure all learners have access to and can succeed in high-quality CTE programs.

In this final section, we will discuss sustaining and scaling the work. This video will provide knowledge and strategies that will be helpful as you complete Section 7 of the accompanying workbook.



Before we discuss sustaining and scaling the work, let’s recap what we have covered throughout the Effectively Communicating CTE to Engage Every Learner: A Recruitment & Engagement Tool series.

In Section 1, Getting Started, we set the stage for how this tool supports the work required by Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins V) and Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) to regularly engage with learners and to close gaps, ensuring that all learners, especially those from special populations, have access to and can succeed in high-quality CTE programs. We also provided an overview of how to use this tool including designating who will fulfill key project functions, determining the timeline and milestones with the Project Lead Planning and Tracking Tool.

Review

Section 2: Building Meaningful Relationships



Action steps:

- Dig into the data to determine the focus audience
- Assess current relationship actions
- Strategize for increased engagement and relationship building actions

In Section 2, Building Meaningful Relationships we discussed how building trust is at the center of effective communications efforts and requires intentional, sustained effort over time through engaging with and listening and connecting to the audience. The Building Meaningful Relationships Actions Assessment tool provided opportunities to dig into a current relationship with a chosen focus audience and reflect on potential actions to strengthen and build trust and the overall relationship. The increased trust and strengthened relationships you have built will help facilitate future and continued learner and community engagement, directly supporting Perkins V and CLNA requirements.

Review

Section 3: Changing the Narrative with Asset-Based Framing

Contributions & Aspirations

Problem

Solution

Action steps:

- Practice asset-based framing with given examples
- Use asset-based framing to reframe common statements about the focus audience

In Section 3, Changing the Narrative with Asset-Based Framing, we discussed how asset-based framing can help to ensure program communications and messages are not unintentionally reinforcing or creating stigma or bias around CTE programming or specific populations. We focused on identifying the contributions and aspirations of the audience, the systemic obstacle or problem, and potential solutions for overcoming the systemic obstacle or the CAPS.

In the Reframing Deficit-Based Thinking to Asset-Based Activity you practiced asset-based framing with the given examples to reframe deficit-based statements into asset-based. After getting to know your audience, you were encouraged to revisit asset-based framing and apply what you have learned about barriers and obstacles to participating and achieving success in CTE to reframe any commonly used, deficit-based statements that may be used by CTE collaborators to help reduce stigma and bias.

Review

Section 4: Getting to Know Your Audience



What Matters



Current Perceptions



Barriers



How to Communicate

Action steps:

- Complete the Getting to Know Your Audience Engagement Strategy and Audience Assessments
- Conduct direct engagement with the focus audience
- Update the Audience Assessment as needed to accurately reflect what you learned through direct engagement

In Section 4, Getting to Know Your Audience we discussed the importance of direct engagement with a focus audience to better understand what matters to them, their current perceptions of CTE, any barriers there may be in their receiving or connecting with the information, and their communication preferences. The Getting to Know Your Audience Engagement Strategy and Audience Assessments asked you to reflect on what you currently know about the chosen focus audience with a consideration for how you know this information. After completing the activity, you are directed to then engage with the focus audience to get to know them, and then update the tool based on what you learned.

Review

Section 5: Maximizing Effective Communications

“What’s in it for me?”

Meet Them Where They Are

Adjust Your Approach

Action steps:

- Complete the Communications Audit Tool
- Assess how your current communications efforts align with the preferences of the focus audience.

In Section 5, Maximizing Effective Communications we discussed the three core tenets of effective communication – answering “what’s in it for me?” for the focus audience; meeting them where they are with their communications preferences as well as with any support to mitigate any challenges to connecting with the communication; and adjusting your approach through direct learner feedback as well as analyzing both short and long term data sources. The accompanying Communications Audit Tool provided an opportunity to evaluate your current communications channels and forms while also assessing how they align with the preferences of the focus audience.

Review

Section 6: Developing, Tailoring, and Testing Messages



Action steps:

- Develop and evaluate messages
- Tailor messages to the focus audience
- Test messages through direct engagement with the focus audience
- Future planning for dissemination and future testing of messages

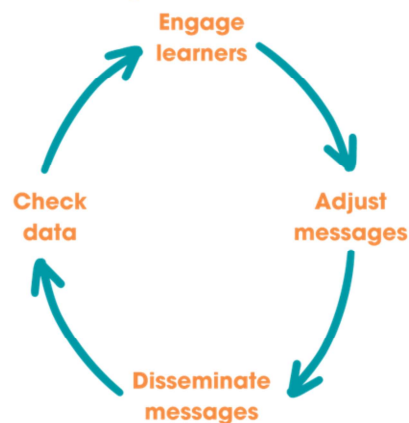
And finally, in Section 6 Developing, Tailoring, and Testing Messages we discussed building a messaging triangle with core messages and supporting statements to serve as the foundation for communications; tailoring those messages to best meet the needs of the focus audience; and testing the messages to increase efficacy and impact. The accompanying three part section of the workbook walks you through creating, tailoring, and testing your messages to be the most effective in connecting with your focus audience.

Next Steps to Continue the Work

Disseminate and test messages

Message

- Social media
- Print materials
- Digital materials
- Multiple languages



SECTION 7
CONTINUING THE WORK

Continue engagement, message review, short and long-term data, sustain and scale

6+ months

“What’s in it for me?”

Meet Them Where They Are

Adjust Your Approach

To continue moving this work forward, it is time to begin disseminating the messages you have created with learner and community input. If you have not done so already, tailor your messages to the formats and channels your focus audience prefers. This might mean your messages are disseminated across multiple channels in a variety of formats. For example, a single message may be used in social media posts, a brochure, flyers, on your website, in a short promotional video, and may be translated into multiple languages. Once you start to disseminate the messages, it will be important to track the performance of the messages with the short and long-term data sources that you identified as part of Section 6 of the Effectively Communicating CTE to Engage Every Learner workbook.

Remember that the testing phase of messages is just part of the cyclical nature of audience focused communications. Continued direct engagement with the focus audience, paired with the data you will collect on the performance of your messaging and communications efforts, will lead to additional fine tuning and updates of the messages and communication. Being open to the cyclical nature of this process will help ensure that your communications stay relevant to your focus audience as their needs and preferences continue to change.

Staying relevant to your focus audience means that you are continuing to answer the “what’s in it for me” while meeting the audience where they are and in ways that they prefer. This is how communications can shape opinion and behavior change over time, positively impacting learner and community perceptions of CTE, learner participation, and even completion of CTE

programs. Staying relevant to your focus audience is vital to increased recruitment and retention.

The anticipated minimum time required to complete Section 7 is approximately 6 plus months though it may take you more or less time. On the next few slides, we will discuss more ideas for scaling the work.

Sustaining and Scaling the Work

SECTION 1

PROJECT LEAD PLANNING AND TRACKING TOOL CONTINUED

Activity	Est Time: 2 Months	Start Date	End Date	Who Is Responsible	Status	Notes/Lessons Learned
Getting to Know Your Audience	VIDEO 4					
	SECTION 4 workbook (preengagement)					
	Directly engage with the audience (survey, focus groups, advisory group)					
	SECTION 4 workbook (postengagement)					
Maximizing Effective Communications	VIDEO 5					
	SECTION 5 workbook					
	Continue direct engagement with the audience (survey, focus groups, advisory group)					
Developing, Tailoring, and Testing Messages	Est Time: 2 Months	Start Date	End Date	Who Is Responsible	Status	Notes/Lessons Learned
	VIDEO 6					
	SECTION 6 workbook					
	Directly engage with the audience for feedback on messages					
Update messages						
Disseminate messages						
Continuing the Work	Est Time: 6+ months	Start Date	End Date	Who Is Responsible	Status	Notes/Lessons Learned
	VIDEO 7					
	SECTION 7 workbook					
	Test messages					
Evaluate data						
Directly engage with the audience						

SECTION 7 CONTINUING THE WORK

Objectives

- Gain an understanding of sustaining and scaling this work in Video 7: *Continuing the Work*.
- Determine the next steps for sustaining and scaling this work.

Preparation

Watch Video 7: *Continuing the Work* and download the video transcript.

Reflection and Next Steps

REFLECTION

Based on the outcomes and lessons learned through this work, what routines do you want to build to sustain and deepen engagement with the focus audience? With additional audiences from the focus population?

Effectively Communicating Career Technical Education to Engage Every Learner CAREERTECH.ORG

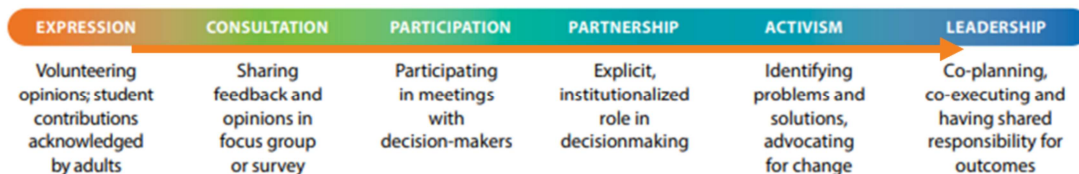
Effectively Communicating Career Technical Education to Engage Every Learner CAREERTECH.ORG

ADVANCE CTE
State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work

The systems and relationships you have begun to build throughout this process will further enhance the quality of the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) and make the stakeholder engagement with those representing learners from special populations required by Perkins, easier and more effective. Using the Project Lead Planning and Tracking Tool to compile the lessons you have learned throughout this process, you have created a blueprint that can be reused and applied to engage with and learn from additional groups who remain or become underrepresented in your CTE enrollment and/or completion rates. The reflection questions in Section 7 will help you to clearly identify the routines that you want to build to sustain and deepen engagement with the focus audience and any potential funding sources that will help you sustain and scale this work.

Sustaining and Scaling the Work

- Expanding learner engagement to decisionmaking



- Increasing the number of learners engaged
- Expanding engagement to additional audiences
- Sharing knowledge of what you have learned
- Revisiting this tool with a new focus population

CAREERTECH.ORG

ADVANCE CTE
State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work

Expanding learner engagement into decisionmaking is one way to scale this work, some additional suggestions include:

- Increasing the number of learners you engage in surveys, focus groups, or in an advisory council
- Expanding engagement to additional audiences like career advising professionals, educators, or community members utilizing the tools in Section 2 and the processes you have established through this work.
- Sharing knowledge of what you have learned about learners and families through direct engagement with other CTE collaborators and stakeholders. This could happen through professional development, a digital or print publication, or other means. Utilize your Communications Audit in Section 5 to help you maximize knowledge sharing.
- Revisiting this tool with a new focus population, with learners from that population as the focus audience, to increase the impact of this work across additional learner populations.

Sustaining and Scaling the Work

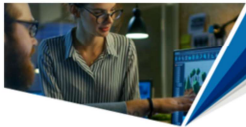


CAREERTECH.ORG

ADVANCE CTE
State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work

At the core of this work has been the meaningful engagement with learners to better understand their needs and preferences. While this tool has focused on tailoring messages to those needs and preferences, you have also likely uncovered some hidden barriers to learner participation or completion along the way. It is vital to use what you have learned to begin to adjust program structures and systems to help overcome any barriers that were uncovered. To most effectively get to the root cause of the barriers, it is important to build upon and expand learner engagement beyond surveys and focus groups, and to create opportunities for them to be part of the decisionmaking around CTE programs and structures.

Sustaining and Scaling the Work



WITH LEARNERS, NOT FOR LEARNERS:

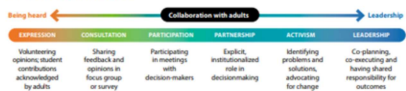
A TOOLKIT FOR ELEVATING
LEARNER VOICE IN CTE

ADVANCE CTE

ASSOCIATION FOR
CAREER & TECHNICAL
EDUCATION



TYPES OF STUDENT VOICE



Adapted version of Tschall and Hakala's "The Spectrum of Student Voice Oriented Activity" and Witvo and Gross' "Paradigm of student voice" as published in *Elevating Student Voice in Education in High Schools*. Catherine Brown and Kelly Miller.

Source: This graph is adapted from Eric Tschall and Michael J. Hakala, "Motivation, Engagement, and Student Voice: Student Jobs for the Future, 2012, David L. Miller and Robert de Grom, "Increasing Student Voice in High School Reform: Building Partnerships, Improving Outcomes" *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 37(16) (2009): 123-143.

Each level of learner engagement has its opportunities and limitations.¹⁴ For instance, a broad set of learners can be engaged on the expressive end of the spectrum through such methods as surveys, but that engagement may be more surface level and less authentic. On the other end of the spectrum, learners in leadership roles can foster systemic change, but this level of engagement requires a small group of learners investing a great deal of time and energy.

WHY IS LEARNER VOICE IMPORTANT?

Without Limits: A Shared Vision for the Future of Career Technical Education, developed by Advance CTE and supported by the Association for Career and Technical Education and another 40-plus national organizations, puts forth a bold vision for a cohesive, flexible and responsive career preparation ecosystem.¹⁵ The second principle in *Without Limits* focuses specifically on ensuring that each learner feels welcome in, is supported by and has the means to succeed in the career preparation ecosystem. This principle calls on states and institutions to leverage existing and design new opportunities to engage learners, families and key community partners to share their unique experiences with the CTE system to inform and improve upon programs and supports.

CTE learners are the most important stakeholders in any CTE program. They are the experts in their own education and career pathways, and they are the ones who must live with the impacts of decisions that are all too frequently made without their input.

The consequences of the education system's failure to elevate learner voice are particularly apparent when looking at the access and performance gaps for special and historically marginalized populations, both within CTE and in education more generally. In addition, research has documented that students' engagement in their education declines over time,

from an enthusiastic majority of elementary school learners to only one-third of high school learners self-reporting that they are engaged in learning.¹⁶

This failure to engage learners is holistic, spanning classroom practices; a welcoming campus environment; and decisions about the policies, programs and services available to support learners. For example, only 62 percent of states report having clear feedback loops in place to gather ongoing input about their CTE systems and programs from learners, families and community members.¹⁷ This situation must change for CTE to truly reflect learners' needs.

What could continued and deepened learner engagement look like? Advance CTE has done a significant amount of work on this topic through the learner voice cohort and technical assistance. *With Learners, Not For Learners: A toolkit for elevating learner voice in CTE* is a great next step in deepening learner engagement and helping to move learners from expressive engagement like surveys and focus groups to leadership where they are co-creating systems and are an integral part of decisionmaking. You can easily access *With Learners, Not for Learners: A toolkit for elevating learner voice in CTE* in the Advance CTE resource center and it is linked in Section 7 of the workbook.

ADVANCE CTE

State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work

The Effectively Communicating Career Technical Education to Engage Every Learner: A Recruitment and Engagement Tool has been made possible thanks to the generous support of the Siemens Foundation.

To view CTE messaging research conducted by Advance CTE and sponsored by Siemens Foundation, please visit <https://careertech.org/what-we-do/case-making-communications/engage-families-learners/> or scan the code.



CAREERTECH.ORG |

ADVANCE  CTE
State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work

This concludes the Section 7 video of the Effectively Communicating Career Technical Education to Engage Every Learner: A Recruitment and Engagement Tool video series. For more information on the CTE messaging research conducted by Advance CTE with learners and families and sponsored by Siemens Foundation, please visit careertech.org/what-we-do/case-making-communications/engage-families-learners or scan the code.