

Demand Planning Exercise: Instructions and Prompts

Objective: To establish a **process** for conducting a demand-planning inquiry for labor market alignment, applying different perspectives and priorities to a specific scenario.

Instructions: President Keen and Dr. Sorrells are considering acting on a new nationwide priority to protect public health. You will be divided into groups. Each group will have a distinct analytical objective in assessing the opportunity. What process will your group follow to arrive at its recommendations to the President and Dr. Sorrells?

Your task is to determine a sequence of actions that will inform your recommendation. You have 20 minutes to plan the sequence of actions. Your process should be grounded in sound data collection and should include triangulation of data from different sources (both quantitative and qualitative). Each group should **designate a facilitator and a note taker**. The note taker or their designee will report back to the larger group on the process you propose to assess the opportunity.

Review the scenario below, related to the need for contact tracers in greater Fayetteville and the surrounding rural communities. Then, respond to the analytical objective assigned to your group.

Opportunity Scenario

Contact tracing as a public health and social service

During the past several months, the health care industry (and the entire economy) has been dramatically impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Beyond front-line nurses, nursing aides, medical technicians, and other direct service careers, national public health officials have called for employing hundreds of thousands of contact tracers to help monitor the community spread of the novel coronavirus, provide counseling to those testing positive, and guide those who may have contact with infected individuals. Federal and state agencies have proposed public health guidance and funding packages for cities and counties that can quickly train and employ contact tracers. City and county governments across the state have begun to announce that they are hiring community health workers for this purpose.

If time allows, an additional wrinkle to consider: Several billion in federal grants were just approved to expand the availability of contract tracers. Industry associations with ready-to-launch training programs are eligible to apply for the grant monies. Should FTCC go after those funds? Which organizations might FTCC partner with to evaluate the opportunity and seek funding?

Analytical Objectives and Prompts

The leadership team will be divided into **three groups**, each aligned to a distinct analytical objective that would help the College determine whether this scenario represents a viable opportunity. Some groups will focus on validating employer demand, others on whether this offers a career pathway opportunity for students, especially engaged with the College's transfer programs, and others on whether the College is well positioned to offer training. Each group's facilitator may use the prompts provided to guide discussion but need not limit the conversation to these prompts. The prompts are just a starting point to get your team thinking and working together.

In your role as advisory committee members, what additional information would your group need before determining how the college should respond to this imminent need? Your response should be guided by one of the three analytical objectives described in the text boxes below.

Analytical Objective 1: Validate employer demand. This group must ensure that there are viable short- and long-term employment prospects for people with relevant contact tracer knowledge, skills and experience.

Prompts:

- What data will tell us about the short-term and long-term prospects for this occupation?
- How will you learn about the outlook for this (type of) job, now and once the pandemic subsides?
- How will you determine what are the required skills for contact tracers?
- How will you learn about the knowledge, skills and credentials that people will need to succeed in these roles?
- Do you need to know if those skills can be transferred to other jobs once the crisis abates in the next year or two?
- How will you determine what is the "right size" for this program to serve Cumberland County and the surrounding region?
- Will there be opportunities to work with large groups of employers and which groups might those be?
- What information would you like to have from employers and how will you get that information?
- What might lead you to decide that employer demand does *not* warrant further inquiry?

Analytical Objective 2: Evaluate this opportunity for students in transfer programs. This group will ensure that transfer students benefit from this opportunity as part of their long-term career goals.

Prompts:

- Are there students that are seeking this type of employment opportunity or are there students that would benefit from exposure to this work experience?
- What existing FTCC programs develop knowledge, skills and abilities relevant to this opportunity?
- What do you want to know about employment options in order to determine if this is a viable opportunity for transfer students?
- How will you assess student interest?
- What would a successful direct-to-employment route look like? How would you establish whether students could work and continue their education?
- What might lead you to conclude this occupation does *not* represent a good opportunity for general education students?

Analytical Objective 3: Determine whether the college is well-equipped to address this opportunity.

Prompts:

- What expertise can the college bring to this subject area?
- With which internal and external organizations should the College work to assess this opportunity and the skills needed for these new jobs?
- How will you determine whether relevant education and training opportunities are available?
- Would you consider if new programs could be developed from existing curricula? (e.g., which related programs does the college already offer and how might they be ‘tweaked’ or is a new program necessary?)
- How soon will other colleges develop programs, and will you compete with them for students? Will your students compete with their students for job opportunities? (e.g., what other schools/organizations in the state, especially in proximate counties, provide relevant programs or training for this occupation? Which are the most directly competitive with this opportunity?
- What types of health risks, if any, do these jobs entail? How similar or different are they to those encountered by other “front-line” medical professions? How should students be counseled about these risks?
- What might lead you to conclude that the college is *not* well-equipped to address this opportunity?