Lessons from a High Profile Youth Workforce Initiative
Agenda

- Overview of Mayor’s Youth Jobs+
- About the Evaluation
- Lessons Learned
- Questions
Overview of Mayor’s Youth Jobs+

- Citywide youth workforce initiative that connected youth ages 16-24 to employment and training opportunities.
- Started in 2012 under the leadership of former Mayor Edwin Lee.
- Core partnership between United Way Bay Area, Office of the Mayor, school district and city departments.
- Also included various youth-serving organizations and employers throughout the city.
About the Evaluation

• United Way Bay Area commissioned Public Profit to conduct the evaluation.
• Sought to understand changes in the initiative over last 7 years and draw lessons from success and challenges.
• Developed recommendations for multi-stakeholder youth workforce efforts.
• Informed by a modified version of FSG’s Collective Impact Framework.
Collective Impact Framework

Common Agenda

Strong Leadership, Governance & Communication

Shared Measurement

Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Backbone Support

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.
Common Agenda
Common Agenda

• Partners agreed that former Mayor Edwin Lee played a key role in rallying stakeholders.
• Differing perspectives about the overall goal of the initiative and whom it should serve.
• Little consensus about the target employers and target populations of youth.
Common Agenda Recommendations

• The Mayor’s Office can serve as a key rallying point for any citywide youth workforce development initiative.
• Initiative partners should reach a consensus on who exactly the initiative is meant to serve and what type of employer partnerships are being sought.
Strong Leadership, Governance & Communication
Strong Leadership, Governance & Communication

- Partners agreed that the right organizations were on board.
- Leadership of the initiative as a whole emerged as a key challenge (e.g. decision making).
- Partners unclear about their own roles and roles of others.
Leadership, Governance & Communication Recommendations

• Initiatives should have unambiguous leadership and a clear decision-making structure.
• Roles and responsibilities of each partner organization should be clearly defined.
• Initiatives should have separate platforms for leadership and operational discussions.
Shared Measurement
Shared Measurement

• Limited consensus about how the impact of the initiative should be measured.
• Data collection challenges (e.g. determining overall number of youth served).
Shared Measurement Recommendations

- Initiative partners should select a small set of meaningful measures to track progress and measure impact.
- Initiatives should leverage existing data management infrastructure in partner organizations to track youth participation and outcomes.
Mutually Reinforcing Activities
Mutually Reinforcing Activities

• Doorway strategy and flagship events were clear successes.
• Opportunities for better integration of outreach and marketing strategies.
• Mayor played key role in rallying employer support.
• Conflicts of interest remained a challenge for employer engagement.
Mutually Reinforcing Activities Recommendations

- Initiatives should consider holding career fairs and doing community-based outreach to reach youth.
- Initiative partners should consolidate available opportunities for employers.
Backbone Support
Backbone Support

- UWBA was recognized for their role in events, marketing, and Doorway strategy implementation.
- UWBA was thrust unexpectedly into a leadership role and partners questioned these responsibilities were appropriate for UWBA to take on.
- UWBA staff transitions contributed to challenges in relationship management.
Backbone Support Recommendations

• From the FSG collective impact framework:
  • Backbone organizations normally play a facilitative role (they do not tend to be the agenda-setters).
  • Backbone organizations help gather input from and support the work of initiative stakeholders.
• Initiatives should clearly define the role of the intermediary/backbone organization and establish its decision-making power.
Additional Recommendations

• Think about evaluation and long term impact up front.
• Use the collective impact model to pilot new projects and innovations. Create the room for this upfront.
• Call out challenges in leadership to the group and mitigate them as a group.
• Cultivate champions in the public sector and also plan for leadership transitions within the public sector.
Thank You!

Larry Berry
United Way Bay Area
Director, K12
Lberry@uwba.org

Roshni Wadhwani
Public Profit
Research Associate
Roshni@publicprofit.net