National Association of Workforce Boards

USER GUIDE FOR MESSAGING

The following document provides insight and information about how best to use the messaging NAWB developed for use by NAWB staff and members. The guide includes three main sections:

1) Objective – description of the Guide and messaging
2) How to Use the Messaging – context and background
3) Glossary of Key Words – words we use in the messaging and what we mean by them

We hope this guide is of use to you and look forward to working with you to refine our community's messaging and improve understanding of workforce development in the future. Thank you.

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1) Objective - what this guide is and what we intend for this messaging

This guide provides a brief overview of how to use the thematic messaging RENEW**PR** developed for NAWB and its members.

We intend this messaging to be used as guidance for any/all individuals within a NAWB member organization charged with developing or determining public statements regarding that organization's relevance, positioning or perspective. For example, a completed messaging platform should be used to inform development of quotations for a press release, organization of main points in a public statement and/or direction and focus of a speech, op-ed or other organization-specific public statement.

When used correctly, message platforms support organizational and/or issue message discipline. When every member of an organization is using the same principles to describe, define and declare the organization's objectives, that organization's audiences develop a better understanding of the organization and are more likely to engage with and for the organization on an ongoing basis. When used as guidance for all public statements by an organization, message platforms can reduce self-inflicted communications problems that might otherwise arise from publicly expressed conflicting points of view from the same organization. In crisis situations, message platforms make it easier for spokespeople and communications planners to respond efficiently and effectively in high-pressure or time-sensitive situations.

2) How to Use the Messaging - context and background

A message is the common language used by an entity to describe and define its meaning, value and relevance to others. A message is generally developed through focused discussion and dialogue designed to identify key words and phrases that best describe the entity. The written expression of an entity's message is often described as a message platform.

Thematic messaging is generally a series of words or phrases that describe the value of an entity within the context of its environment. The platform is generally expressed in a PowerPoint or other graphic that includes the message theme, core message, message pillars and proof points.

For NAWB, we have developed two thematic messaging platforms. One platform is focused on activity: it includes four key words that describe what workforce development boards do (*guide, analyze, convene, communicate*). This platform might be useful in addressing questions about what WDBs do. The other platform is focused on value: it includes four key words that describe what workforce development boards contribute (*equity, access, efficiency, effectiveness*). This platform might be useful in addressing questions about why WDBs are important and what value they bring.

3) Glossary - key words we use and what we mean by them in messaging, including:

a) job seeker – a term we use to describe individuals looking for employment whether they are currently employed or not. We prefer this term for its clarity and ease of recognition among multiple audiences and for its inclusiveness of any and all people seeking employment. [Note: Some workforce development boards prefer the term "career seeker" as a means to highlight the role of lifelong learning and the opportunities that exist at every stage of a career whether an individual is actively seeking a job or not.]

b) employment market – a term we use to describe a local, state, regional, national or international environment in which companies and organizations and individuals are engaged in job placement activities.

c) learning provider – a term we use to describe an individual, organization or system that provides education, job training and/or skills training. We prefer this term for its inclusiveness of any and all people and/or organizations providing one or more of these types of services.

d) talent – a term we use to describe individuals or groups of individuals in the workforce. We prefer this term for its inclusiveness of a wide variety of workers and its applicability to individuals whether or not they are currently employed.

e) employers – a term we use to describe entities that hire workers to provide goods and services. We prefer this term for its simplicity and ease of recognition among multiple
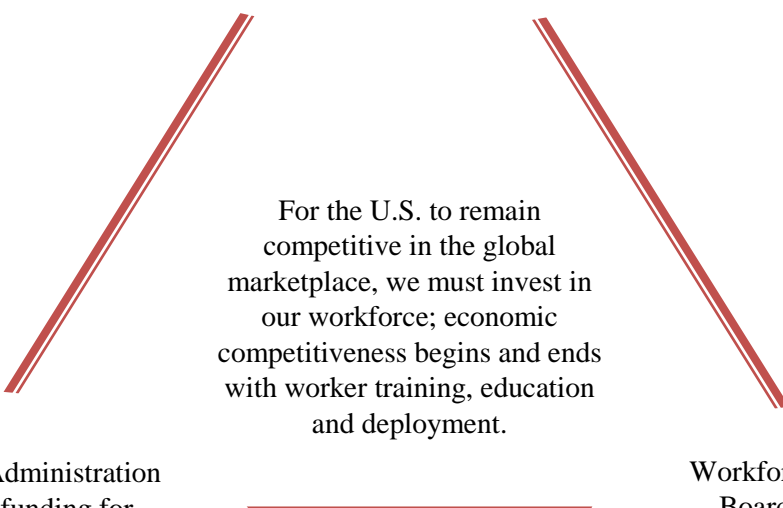
audiences. [Note: Some workforce development boards prefer the term "business" or "industry" instead.]

f) <u>workforce system</u> – a term we use to describe a local, state, regional, national or international community of job seekers, learning providers and employers and the efforts of coordinating entities such as workforce development boards that seek to unite them.

g) <u>return on investment</u> (not the same as cost benefit analysis) – a term we use to describe the professional, financial or other specific benefits of an action or activity. This term can be used in a positive or negative context and is intended to refer to a tangible outcome.

NAWB Declarative Messaging Platform

Any decision to restrict or reduce
worker training funding will increase
the human and economic cost of
unemployment across the country.

For the U.S. to remain
competitive in the global
marketplace, we must invest in
our workforce; economic
competitiveness begins and ends
with worker training, education
and deployment.

Congressional and Administration
proposals that cut funding for
worker training initiatives will
hinder business and economic
growth.

Workforce Development
Boards are the most
efficient, effective
catalysts for job education,
training and deployment.

Supporting statements for each corner of the declarative statement triangle are outlined below.

Supporting Statement 2

- Youth unemployment is twice the national average: the 5.8 million youth age 16-24 who are not in school or working cost taxpayers $93 billion annually.
- As many as 22 million Americans can be considered underemployed, meaning that they are working in positions that do not utilize all of their skills; job training and apprenticeship programs can help to adjust that disparity. And every $1 the federal government spends on registered apprenticeships yields more than $50 in revenue, a return on investment of 5000%.
- The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce estimates the economy will create 55 million new job openings over the next decade, and 65 percent, or 37 million, of these new job vacancies will require some postsecondary education and training.

Supporting Statement 1

- In a 2014 study, 47% of US employers said the lack of technical competencies made it difficult to fill jobs. Only 22% of companies report they would hire someone who needs additional training in order to fill a role.
- There has been a 21% decline in the number of Americans who gained skills through employer-sponsored job training in the past five years.
- In 2013, proposed cuts to Washington state's job-training programs of $12.4 million were estimated to eliminate education and training for more than 36,000 people, with a projected impact in that state alone of 24,000 lost jobs.

Supporting Statement 3

- Workforce Development Boards provide a 1.5:1 to as much as a 3.5:1 return on investment in states nationwide.
- NAWB members provided assistance to more than 13 million people in the year ending December 31, 2015 and placed approximately 7.8 million of those people in jobs.
- According to a 2014 U.S. Department of Labor study, "Strong partnerships among the public workforce system, education providers, and employers in key sectors appear to be critical for improving employment and earnings outcomes for workers. "

The Message Theme is a one- or two-word description.

Message Theme

Core Message

The Core Message is the one-sentence summary of the theme. It should be the single most-important sentence you want the audience to remember for this theme.

Message Pillars

Message Pillars focus on more direct and specific messages that support the core message. Each Message Pillar could be expanded to a separate fact sheet.

Proof Points

•Proof points are the 3 to 5 most important facts that support the message pillar.

equity

Message Theme	
Core Message	Workforce development creates equal opportunity for all willing workers.

Message Pillars	Training and education programs help people get jobs and keep jobs.	Skills training and education ensure the workforce is competitive.	By focusing on gaps in the labor pool, both among workers and employers, workforce development enables equal opportunity.
Proof Points	•Proof points on impact with anecdotes and examples.	•Proof points on ways this happens with anecdotes and examples.	•Proof points on opportunity with anecdotes and examples.

access

Message Theme	
Core Message	Workforce development fosters economic mobility by increasing access to the job market for skilled workers.
Message Pillars	Workforce development programs focus on connecting workers and the workforce. / Workforce development meets the talent development needs of the underemployed. / Workforce development reduces unemployment.
Proof Points	•Proof points on the ways WD enables access including anecdotes and examples. / •Proof points on the ways WD programs help the underemployed and fill in the gaps not met by on the job training. / •Proof points on impacts of workforce development on unemployment.

efficiency

Message Theme	
Core Message	Workforce development addresses labor market challenges for job seekers and employers by preparing and connecting them.

Message Pillars	Workforce development programs leverage business and community resources that might not otherwise be combined.	Workforce development programs unite separate efforts that might otherwise be duplicative.	WDBs serve as an information and program clearinghouse providing a one-stop shop for information and resources.
Proof Points	•Proof points on efficiencies from combining efforts and engaging disparate partners, etc.	•Proof points on efficiencies gained from one resource for multiple stakeholders with the same objective.	•Proof points on power of having all information in one place, etc.

effectiveness

Message Theme

Core Message

Workforce development has a high return on investment: funding for these programs returns to communities nationwide in salaries, taxes, and new investment.

Message Pillars

Workforce Development Boards provide a 1.5:1 to as much as a 3.5:1 return on investment in states nationwide.	NAWB members provided assistance to more than 13 million people in the year ending December 31, 2015 and placed approximately 7.8 million of those people in jobs.	Strong partnerships among the public workforce system, education providers, and employers in key sectors improve earnings outcomes for workers.

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guide

Core Message

Workforce Development Boards are the regional leaders of the nation's system that balances workforce supply and demand.

Message Pillars

WDBs enable business leaders to share and apply best practices to real world recruiting and placement challenges.	WDBs develop and conduct programs to prepare the existing and future workforce for the regional economy.	WDBs direct the regional systems that help job seekers build careers and help employers create economic growth.

Proof Points

•Proof points on best practices.	•For example, Career Source Brevard in Florida runs the Biz Launch Program, a networking, support and skill building group for those going into business or those considering it. To date, over 9,000 people have participated, representing 210 new companies started with more than 220 employees hired.	•Proof points on direction

analyze

Message Theme	
Core Message	Workforce Development Boards understand local markets and provide region-specific context for job seekers and employers.

Message Pillars	WDBs represent the breadth of each labor market and can evaluate the landscape, identify gaps and find resources and partners to bridge them.	WDBs leverage the expertise and experience of the business community to identify a path forward for job creation.	WDBs monitor and track regional employment issues and provide actionable insight to policymakers and employers.
Proof Points	•Proof points on membership, ability to see landscape and identification of gaps.	•Proof points on business community expertise and the ways it helps WDBs provide insight.	•Proof points on ways intelligence gathering and sharing helps inform economic development regionally.

convene

Core Message

Workforce Development Boards bring job seekers, employers and learning providers together to match available talent with current and emerging positions.

Message Pillars

WDBs are the hub of workforce intelligence for business, education and economic leaders in their regions.	WDBs unite business, economic and political leaders to shape the direction of workforce investment.	WDBs represent the business community broadly and can bring disparate communities together to evaluate and address common problems.

Proof Points

•Proof points on how WDBs gather, share and distill data, insight and information for the benefit of all of their stakeholders.	•Proof points on results, including anecdotes and other examples.	•Proof points on what WDBs do to bring groups together and what that looks like, including anecdotes and examples.

communicate

Message Theme	
Core Message	Workforce Development Boards give voice to the employment market and speak for the unique needs of job seekers *and* employers.
Message Pillars	WDBs advocate for policies, funding and other resources necessary to boost employment. / WDBs share insight on trends, forecast needs and build support for solutions. / WDBs highlight regional employment challenges and spotlight policies and practices to address them.
Proof Points	•Proof points on how they do this with anecdotes, examples. / •Proof points on what they do with anecdotes and examples. / •Proof points on how they speak to regional needs and what that means/impact with anecdotes/examples. •Need to find an example of where a board comments on an economic development project because the workforce won't be there.