

ATTRIBUTES OF THE NEW BUSINESS-LED WORK-AND-LEARN MODELS

In today’s world, learning – through education, training or experience – and working can no longer be treated as independent, stand-alone domains. Our innovation-driven economy demands that individuals weave learning opportunities throughout their careers to upgrade their skills, acquire new competencies and apply them across multiple jobs and industries.

Work-and-learn models, such as apprenticeships, work-study, internships, etc. (as described below), successfully combine these two domains into creative hybrids that are led by business. Successful work-and-learn models can help employers better prepare individuals for the workplace. As a first step to expanding business-led work-and-learn models, the National Network is illustrating a continuum of models that businesses can implement from middle school or high school through mid-career to recruit, train, hire and advance employees.

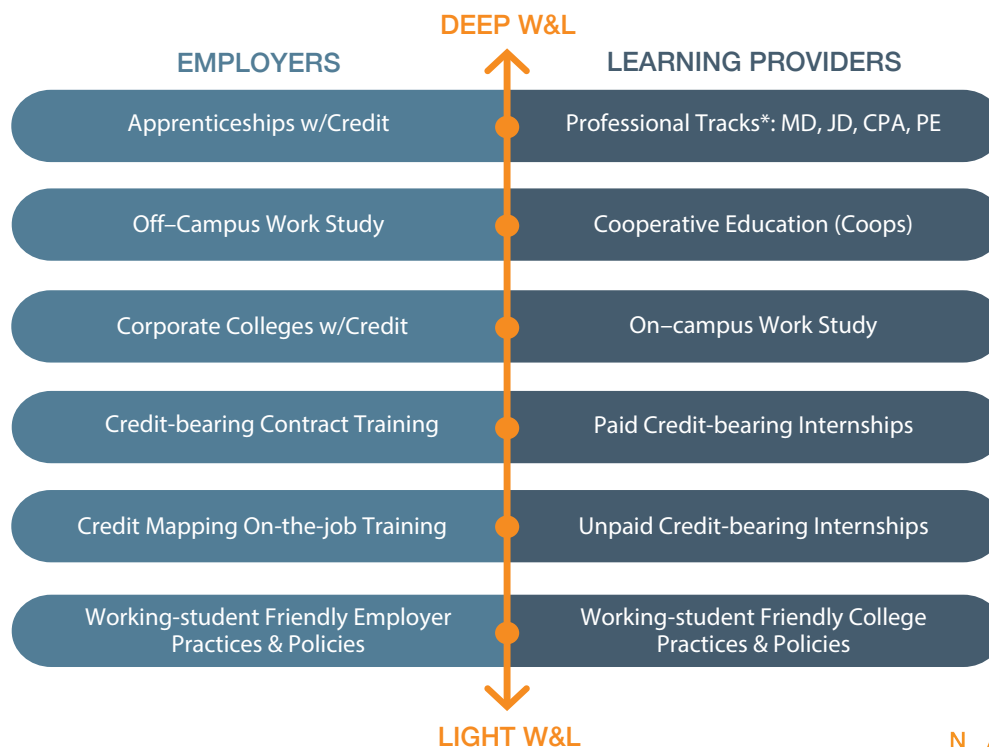
These models are displayed along a continuum below based on the depth of working and learning, and include a range of employer engagement options from low to high touch (career awareness to full-fledged apprenticeships). While the continuum outlines “traditional” work and learn opportunities, the National Network is working to expand the portfolio to include innovative or “non-traditional” models, such as competency-based apprenticeships, fast-track internships, e-mentorships and simulations.

Each model has a unique set of attributes that make them effective and blend academic, experiential, project-based and jobs-driven learning. Those attributes include:

- The model is not tied to any one institution or system; it is transferable and fundable from multiple sources
- The model incorporates competency-based learning progressions and is tied to industry recognized credentials
- The model includes assessments of what has been learned
- The model is integrated into the culture, credits and fabric of the “going to school” experience
- The model includes learning-working experiences that are tied to something of value to both the learner and the employer (credits, employer recognition, credentials, etc.)
- The model emphasizes mentorship and role modeling
- The model embeds fundamental “life skills” into the learning progression, for example, time management, communication, personal finance, etc.
- The work elements of the model reflect the regional/local economy
- The continuum includes technology-infused models, for example, simulations, e-mentorships, etc.
- The model can be supported or operationalized by a third party, including workforce investment boards, chambers of commerce, community colleges

The National Network is focused on expanding these types of business-led work-and-learn models by using the listed attributes of effective models to define a full scope of opportunities. It is also developing tools and guidebooks that will make it easier for employers to build, participate in and continually improve work-and-learn opportunities. The Continuum below is the first step in the process:

WORK & LEARN CONTINUUM: THE STARTING POINT



*MD-medical doctor; JD-juris doctor; CPA-certified public accountant; PE-professional engineer