**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Solving Industry Challenges Using Competency Models**

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*Transcript by*

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JON VEHLOW: Welcome to the webinar. My name is Jon Vehlow. I'm here if you need anything technically speaking. Hopefully you won't need to hear too much from me, but if you do have anything technical questions, please let us know in that chat window on the bottom left-hand side of your screen. That chat window is also where we'd like you to put your questions or comments at any time. Please go ahead and introduce yourself in that chat as well. Go ahead and type in that chat your name, the name of your organization, how many are joining you today, and if you're attending a group.

You'll also notice that we have a copy of today's presentation uploaded into the file share window. You may download that at any time throughout today's webinar. Also, a copy of today's presentation as well as a transcript recording and executive summary will be made available on WorkforceGPS in about two business days.

Additionally, to continue producing quality content we'll be sending out – (inaudible) – concerning today's events. Please take a few minutes to fill that out once the webinar concludes. We will also be sending out a follow-on survey in a month's time.

Again, if you haven't already done so, if you're just joining us, please introduce yourself in that welcome chat. Once again, we'll have that chat up during today's webinar where you can type in your questions or comments at any time. Welcome to "Solving Industry Challenges Using Competency Models, Competency Model Peer Learning" webinar, February 12, 2019.

Without further ado, I'd like to kick things off to our moderator today, Pam Frugoli, O\*NET/CareerOneStop/competency model team lead, U.S. Department of Labor for the ETA. Pam?

PAM FRUGOLI: Thank you. Welcome everyone and thank you for joining us. The U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration – (inaudible) – development and use of competency models as an essential tool for designing apprenticeships, curriculum, competency-based education, career pathways, and other uses, but it all starts with the process of convening industry partners.

Today we want to spend a little time providing an overview of the competency models and how they can be useful tools in your discussions with industries as you align training to demand in your region. We also want to share some great examples of how these models have been used successfully with business in different locations throughout the country. This webinar is the first in a series of peer calls about competency models, so this is the first step in launching a competency model peer learning group that will meet in a more business setting to share evidence-based practices.

I'm your moderator, Pam Frugoli, and also with us is Todd Cohen, Director of Strategic Initiatives at Maher & Maher who is our technical assistance provider on the competency model. In a second I'll be talking for a few minutes about what's what the competency models are and how they can be leveraged to align training to demand in your local area. Then Todd will facilitate a conversation with our two esteemed speakers today.

Firstly we'll hear from Alicia Uhde from Bismarck State College, and then from Jim Austin at the Ohio State University. Alicia Uhde is Department Chair for the National Energy Center of Excellence at Bismarck State College in North Dakota. That center trains students to be instrumentation and control technicians or renewable energy technicians and line workers among other fields. Under Alicia's leadership, the college formed the TREND consortium, or Training for Regional, Energy in North Dakota, and have trained thousands of students for in-demand careers there.

Jim Austin is Director of Assessment Services at the Ohio State University and he manages a 10-person unit engaged in a range of testing assessment projects. These projects involve developing and maintaining assessments for educational and business client organizations, including the Ohio Department of Education, associations involved in personnel certification, and business firms.

Next we're going to go to a poll question to let us know your current level of familiarity with competency models. Answer the poll question on the screen to let us know if you are an expert, if you're experienced but still learning, or perhaps you've heard of them before but haven't used them, or you may be thinking what is a competency model? In which case we will tell you.

I see we have so far the majority have heard of them but not used them so far, and then we have had good third that are experienced but still learning. That's great. You can keep answering even when we move on or – no, they can't. OK. Overall pretty good results, so let's go on to our agenda.

Here's how we will spend our time today. I'm going to give you a quick rundown on competency models, the what and the why; and then Alicia and Jim are going to talk to how they have used and built customized models and then use those to do other products through conversations with businesses in their states with some great results, as they'll describe to you. We're going to leave lots of time for questions and answers. Then at the end we have a call to action for you, so please stay tuned.

How are we defining competencies and what do we mean by competency models? As you can see on this slide, we have some formal definitions. A competency is the ability to apply knowledge, skills and abilities, KSAs, to perform work tasks in an industry or field. For example, if someone possesses a competency of critical and analytical thinking, that person is able to use logic reasoning and analysis to address problems in their work. Each of these competency models are convenient with organize and communicate that full set of competencies needed within a specific industry sector.

We have actually on the competency model clearinghouse site, which we'll – (inaudible) – at the end, we have 26 models in a wide variety of industry and – (inaudible) – that are prevalent in most of your states and regions, and you can see a number of those on the screen, includes water and wastewater, health information management, advanced manufacturing, retail, cyber security, and many more. In each of these areas, the models themselves, so not just the pyramid, there's a lot behind the pyramid that detail and enlarge on the competencies needed for workers in these industries.

Who has developed these models? Basically, the Department of Labor works with our team to help convene industry specialists and educators. Each competency model is driven by some of the leading national institute associations in the country, and you can see some of them here from various models.

They range from the Center for Energy Workforce Development to the National Association of Home Builders to CompTIA. They each participate in leading the development of these models and then they continue to work with us and postsecondary institutions around the country on keeping the models up-to-date and fresh, and letting people know about them and where to find them.

Let's break down the model for a moment, as we showed you earlier that pyramid image. All of the models are based on this sort of building blocks of our pyramid model. It's the way we display related competencies. The bottom three tiers are considered the foundational competencies and then in the yellow part in the middle we have the industry-related competencies.

Tier four represents sort of crosscutting industrywide competencies while tier five represents more specialized. The blue area at the top accounts for occupation-specific competencies. In the models that we post are the competency models – (inaudible) – they're not filled in the occupation-specific competencies because we refer to O\*NET occupational information database, and O\*NET online at that level. But it's also developed further in regional or global customization efforts.

This next slide just shows you the label for the various tiers. The foundational tier includes personal effectiveness, academic competencies, workplace competencies; and then you can see the industrywide and industry-sector technical competencies. Again, once you get to the models, though, there's information behind all that. There will be blocks within each tier and blocks – (inaudible).

Now, I would like to turn it over to Todd Cohen to facilitate the discussions with our speakers. Thank you. Take it away, Todd.

TODD COHEN: All right. Well, before I do, let me just do one more poll question. Jon, if you'd bring that up for a minute there. The first poll we just wanted to know your level of familiarity with the models.

Let's just get a sense, for those of you who are using them, how you're using them; build curriculum, vet credentials with your industry partners, design career pathways, it might be something other; and if it is other, we wouldn't mind if you'd write a little bit about that in the chat, so take a couple of seconds and tell us what you are using it for. Then for those of you who did say, well, I'm a beginner at this, then you can always pick that last one and say you're a beginner. But, let's just get a sense here.

A lot of work-based learning work. We've got a bunch of beginners, but also some curriculum and – we've got a good mix there. Thanks for the folks that are writing on the left – some mapping, good, that's great.

All right. Let's keep going here, Jon. I'm going to move to the next slide. Before I turn it over to the speakers, let me just say a little bit. I mean, we've learned about sort of what these models are, but let me just talk for a minute about how they get used because we've spoken to a lot of you and your colleagues, real practitioners out there, and what we keep hearing is that you're not always clear on how best to use these competency models, how to leverage them in your day-to-day work.

If your job is to bring industry together to design education and training programs as a community college professional, as a training provider, as a workforce system board staff member, as a business service rep, as an industry navigator – I think I've seen all these titles on the left-hand side today – if your job is to bring industry together to align training for their needs, then the competency models really are for you and they should be used as a starting point so that you don't have to approach industry with a blank sheet of paper asking who their hiring and what are do they need.

As you convene businesses to get some consensus, say, across a bunch of different manufacturing firms in your neck of the woods on their talent needs, by using the competency model you can have a much more advanced conversation. Work with your industry members and say this is what we know is needed in, say, the automation industry nationally. Is this true for your business? Is this true for us regionally? Where does it differ? Really, in our experience, businesses greatly appreciate you having done that kind of homework.

This session today and the rest of the sessions – remember Pam had said this is the launch. We're launching a series of calls; the rest are going to be more intimate than this. We'll really be focused on this issue: how do you make one of these models relevant to your labor market? How do you “customize” a competence model, how do you show it to employers, how much of these models do you show with employers, when would you show it to employers, where, what's the best setting to show it and work with employers on it? We really want to get to the nuts and bolts of this and that's what these calls are all about.

We're going to explore that now. I'm going to turn it over to Alicia. Remember, were going to have two presenters. They're going to tell their story. We're going to have lots of time for Q&A, so at any point you can queue up your questions on the left-hand side and we'll take them and stay tuned, as Pam mentioned, for the next call to action after that.

Alicia, I'm going to turn it over to you now.

ALICIA UHDE: Good afternoon. As mentioned, my name is Alicia Uhde and I'm a department chair within the National Energy Center of Excellence at Bismarck State College. Just before I get started, I just want to give you just a little bit of history about Bismarck and basically how that got us to where we are at today.

We are a community college in Bismarck, North Dakota. (Inaudible) – around 3,700 current students and that's both locally/statewide, and then we also have a national footprint that I'll show you later. In addition to anywhere from 7,000-plus continuing education students, so that would be more of your noncredit type of professional type training coursework. We offer associate degrees, certificate programs, and then we have one bachelor's degree which is in energy management. Then do a lot of customized training and apprenticeship programs within the institution itself.

At Bismarck we have an energy center in which it's our vision to be a worldwide leader in education and training for the energy industry, and that's what you're going to see me mostly focus on today. Within the energy division, here lists all of our programs and the years we started them and their delivery method. You'll see here we have 11 associate degrees and one bachelor's degree program.

We've been in this business since the early 70s and we really expanded our programs to cover multiple sectors from generation, transmission, distribution into refining as an alt oil and gas and renewables. The delivery method that you see, there on campus or online, that's based off of the demand of the program and also how can we meet the competencies that the students need to have when they graduate from the program. A prime example would be our line worker program is not online because we can't teach students how to clime poles online. That's where you see some of those differences.

I had mentioned earlier, obviously our focus is our local market – we're a community college – but with our business in the energy industry for so long, you can see we've expanded and have created a national footprint. These enrollments that you see here is just within our energy division in 2017. They're all credit-seeking students but they might have different career options in mind, which that will play into later on when I talk about career pathways.

They can be coming to us to earn a degree; they could be coming to us for special development, maybe a certification requirement, maybe a training program requirement in which our partners use our courses for training within the organization. The reason that these folks get enrolled is a variety of reasons and that basically was developed off of our partnerships and staying in tune with what our partners needed us to provide to them.

We at Bismarck, in 2012, received tech grants. It was really to address the workforce needs of North Dakota's energy industry in oil, gas, construction, transportation, and the utility sectors. This consortium is composed of five community college in which two are state and three are tribal. Our consortium work together to create new and enhanced education and training programs, student support systems, and create partnerships with industry and workforce systems.

In 2014, we were granted around four grants in which the focus really was to develop new and enhance curriculum and credentials to help students find jobs in the same sectors, but, really, enhancing and using that core competency model. What you'll see here, as Pam had showed earlier, is the baseline of Department of Labor's building block model. We basically customized our own core competency.

Within here you'll see that early baseline of the first two tiers are really similar to what she had. Then when you start at workplace competencies and work your way up industry competencies and technical competencies, that's where we basically customized and how she addressed the customization of that model.

As we customized this model, our industry professionals really engaged in basically defining those foundational knowledge and skills that they thought were critical to safe and effective employment in the industry. These are the minimal skill sets that would give students access to become employable in the competitive employee markets. Then as our programs are continuously evolving and industry needs are changing based on a number of factors in the market – the technology, the industry standards – this model needs to be revised and actually reflect those needs.

During program development enhancement, referring back to this competency model really was a good way to ensure that our program all kind of stay within these bounds. Industry, like they show continuously, will push us for more and more education and training they want, and then we want to be responsive to their needs. But at times, turning back to this core competency model, you see how it fits within our end goal and what we're driving to teach and train, make sure it fits within the model.

When you talk about these workplace and industry and technical competencies, how did we really identify those skill sets? I'll probably talk about it a little bit later too, but when you're industry partners need to be engaged – and I think one thing that folks maybe struggle with is the privacy of some of this information, bringing in – in our case, we were really, at Bismarck, our focus a lot was oil and gas, for example – it's a competitive market out there and bringing in those industry partners and getting them to realize that a lot of their baseline skill sets, that was really public information because it was probably posted on their job opening announcements, is similar across the board.

Having them remove that barrier and that wall that they have a lot of commonality and they are not sharing really any trade secrets to help us define these core skill sets, I really think that was our breakthrough moment in which we could really come together and come up with this list and then define our programs based off of that.

From this, the next slide in these core competencies, they really work together. Sometimes, as both speakers said earlier, when do you show this and how do you use that, and I think the focus will be to get more in-depth with that, but sometimes this can be overwhelming. Now, this information on your competencies that you want those skill sets for their employees to know, they really fall in within career pathways. I almost feel like at Bismarck we use this document a lot more. They really go hand-in-hand. Basically, from those core competencies we develop career pathways.

Here you'll see we have, in our particular focus, we have four areas that were designed based on the programs that we've already had established or that we were building within our center based on the new needs that oil and gas had in our area. Not only was this tool used for industry to see what core skill set are we trying to address and where does it fit within this career pathway, it also gave students, basically a model, a picture, of where they can go and where they want to take themselves.

Some students fit within maybe that just career exploration certificate stage and they personally don't have a need or interest to go to those next levels so they stay within that area; others want to expand. So not only from an industry perspective using it to help them align their positions with where they go, but also even from the students perspective of where are my options and, ultimately, what's my end goal; where do I want to go to?

You'll see within our career pathway we have our programs listed, listing positions, listing wage/salary information, but at the bottom you'll also see industry credentials. I think that right there just shows you the engagement with industry that these were credentials that our students basically earned during different pathway levels while they're enrolled here that were recognized by industry.

That goes for that mapping and even back to the previous industry competencies that they identified that they wanted or a technical competency that they wanted, and how we map that into a particular program and then fell within that career pathway. That was where two of the collaboration with industry, that's how we were able to develop that.

Just to talk some about programming and how it fits within the career pathways, program demand based on state and local markets using labor statistics, working with our workforce systems, talking to industry partners, we were basically able to identify the occupations that you see listed here that had the potential for growth and/or a lot of what we've seen is just enhancement within current programs that we have based on new technical skill sets that employees are required to know. That's just advances in technology.

Then one other thing that really came out of this is the pathways in regards to which industry they can become employed in. One thing that I would really encourage you to keep in mind is what is really your industry sector. I've talked about we're in the national energy center of excellence, that's where our core competency is. That's where a lot of our base came from.

When we sat down and actually looked at the skill sets that we identified, back to our model here, we found, for example, in our operations and maintenance programs that these students could work at food processing facilities; they could work at hospitals. So that sector expands, which allows, if you're coming from an education standpoint, allows you to bring more folks in, get more feedback, additional placement opportunities for your students. It expands the potential demand or need for that program.

Then each of the programs that you see on that career pathway – that image that I have there – sit within that core competency and that was, like I said, identifying the most common job skills or tasks that employers are basically expecting our graduates or completers to have.

When we developed these, on this previous page here – thinking to yourself and when you start coming up with those competencies – is in theory or is it practical hands-on; is it going to require labs or is it just the knowledge of; do they want exposure or proficiency in it; does the outcome have a need that needs to be aligned with industry standard or an apprenticeship standard? Those are questions that you would ask yourself when you look at these core competencies and how you're going to meet them that really start engaging the industry in that conversation.

I've talked a lot about partnership engagement. This is probably my favorite thing to talk about just because we would never be where we are at today without our partners. Your engagement with them is really going to drive that core competency model of those pathways and, ultimately, what your end goal is; in our case, at a community college, to train folks and get them placed in the industry.

So asking yourself who are your stakeholders; have you addressed all possible sectors, as I mentioned before, energy versus the hospital? What is the size of your partners; is your partner small, medium, large, and do you have them all at your table with you? What positions do you have sitting on your table with your stakeholders?

There's often, I think it's just kind of a standard that we a lot of times go to the head honcho, the top execs, and on our committees you'll see that that's not who's sitting at our table. It's your technical supervisors, it's your trainers, it's the folks that actually work with the people that you are training.

Then, in regards to meetings, folks dread meetings, especially when they're unproductive, and having an agenda that's engaging and on-task with your project's goal – often impossible – we have requested priority meeting in which they can complete a worksheet, review technical curriculum, not only to gain feedback from them, because that's why we have another partner, but also to begin engaging them in that conversation so when they come it doesn't take the first hour or two hours to get them into the conversation, we can basically hit the ground running.

Then those questions, those leading questions: what type of questions can you ask your employers to really make them think and show them the benefit that you can provide to them? When is an employee skilled enough to be hired at your organization? What are the skill sets that you expect that you're going to interview this employee on? It's questions like that that really engage them. They're open-ended questions, it's not a yes or no, it makes them engage in the conversation.

Networking at these meetings, the ability to get them to work together - -I mean, depending on what industry you're in, maybe it's not as competitive. In our case, it is fairly competitive, but I think they've realized that that relationship building and time for networking, so there's – typically if possible, we always try to have time. At the end of the meeting they have time to just network with themselves, ask each other questions. It might not really have much to do with our projects at that point in time, but it's just their time to network.

Terminology, I think this is a big one – academic versus industry. In education we often use academic work, like objectives, credit hours, faculty workload, and that doesn't mean much to folks in the industry. So listen to them. What keywords are they using? (Inaudible) – them to your terminology that you use in academia and use their words when you're talking with them. I think that makes a big, big difference. We always try to tell ourselves to remove ourselves from the academic world and put ourselves in their shoes.

Then engagement, just really never stops. Even with outreach activities, just how else can you get them excited? If they're that engaged in your projects, they want to go out and sell it; they want to go out and market. Maybe they have other partners that they think could help us at the table – graduates, placement – come into the classroom and encourage your students why they should be so excited with this program, why they should be taking it so seriously, and the opportunities that they have. Any way that you could engage your employers and your partners, it's just going to benefit you more. There's so much you can learn and get from that.

Just to close out, just a few key points. Like I've said, partnerships, I really feel drives your success, those industry folks around your table, that stakeholder engagement: how can you continuously keep them engaged? Minimum so many meetings, maybe per year, but we don't just have meetings to have meetings: you have to prepare prior, have a plan that makes it worth their time.

Then back to focusing on those common skill sets and how does it fit within that competency that they identified, and to make sure that we're staying on track because if the end result, the student or participant is your focus and so what can we do, based off the length of the program, the amount of time that we have, what can we realistically do to give them at the end a very good project? Then just commit to continuous program development.

Some of these programs, like you'll see here, developed since 1970, that program is never done. There're continuous meetings with those advisory committees. All of these programs have advisory communities. They meet a minimum of two times a year, a lot of them more than that. We're continuously engaged. The industry is changing and we have to be abreast of what those changes are and make sure we're meeting those needs. The job is really never done.

When you're developing programs, to keep in mind, what is the baseline of information that you already have, right; what's already out there for you and how can you build from that?

With that, I just really striving on going back to working with those partners and really making sure everybody sees the importance of those core competencies that your graduates or your completers will have when they finish the training programs that you've designed and developed.

MR. COHEN: Thanks, Alicia. That's some great stuff. Before we switch to Jim, maybe just one quick question. You talked here about this breakthrough moment when your industry partners sort of realized they do have some common foundational competencies that they could put forward together. Do you have a sense of, like, how long did that take for that breakthrough moment to happen, was that one meeting, was that several meetings, was that several months, was that years?

MS. UHDE: Yeah. That's a good question. It was probably several meetings. I think that what we've learned from that is if you have a program that has, let's say, first off has some industry standards, like a line worker program, or has – Department of Labor basically has some standards – and you can use that as a baseline of here's already a standard developed, now how do you fit within the standard or how are you using this standard within your organization? I feel like that conversation can go a little quicker.

In oil and gas, in particular, on their operation set, they don't have those industry standards. It's been a lot of best of the trades and we don't want to sell those or share those, that information, and so that took longer for us to really break through. I think at times it definitely is not just those group-group meetings, it's one-on-one calls, talking to those partners; just asking those leading questions or does your employee need to know this XYZ skill? Yeah, they do. Well, so do these other three companies say the same thing, and it's not breakthrough information. They know how to do a certain skill set that's an everyday skill set that that employee needs to know.

So when there's not something out there defined that your partners are probably following that the Department of Labor has already established, I think those conversations you need to have some patience because it takes a little longer.

MR. COHEN: Great. Thanks, Alicia. All right. Jim, so different situation, we're talking healthcare now. Jim, why don't you tell us your story?

JAMES AUSTIN: Thank you, Todd. It's nice to be here. I work at the Center on Education and Training for Employment. We do a lot of workforce development and community-oriented work.

The DACUM Institute has been operated here since about 1978. This is a project on direct service work and the overview workforce development in healthcare sectors with the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services and other agencies, some CMS center for Medicare/Medicaid services' federal funding. We work cross four sectors and many settings. These are kind of entry-level positions – home health aide, developmental disabilities, direct support professional, skilled nursing facilities – and we also did have mental health as one of those sectors because many of the issues do end up involving both physical and mental health.

The project team balanced and navigated strategic and tactical levels. Think of this as with the help of stakeholders and practitioners, traversing these different levels. The long-term care supports and services competency model was used early in the process to organize and then to guide development of the sector, occupational competencies. These core competencies we developed, I'll speak more about them shortly. We're a platform for training and testing. Think back and forth between the national clearinghouse level and then state and local workforce development.

We developed a health and human service lattice. One of the early project participants from the Ohio Department of Aging put this together. Our focus is in this core direct service competency level, the lowest yellow, but since this is somewhat of an entry-level position in healthcare, people can move into the specialties, and then on up through the educational and training spectrum.

Here is that model. Notice one of the points that I would make is they're often tweaking these models. Last year I flew by and they added the national institute for occupational safety and health workplace, health and safety, to tier 3, so the model is to always check back because the content is under continuous improvement.

Some of the project phases in 2010 and '11, we did a literature review and synthesis, kind of an academic level. We did a business information session where we convened stakeholders. We had a large group with breakouts, tried to do some swat analysis in those breakouts, and then returned to the large group. We also wrote up a summary report for that. Although I don't show it here, we had a research summit where we presented to practitioners, stakeholders, and those engaged. The results of our research – this was another case where the competency model was very helpful.

In 2011 and '12, we convened four DACUM panels, one for each of those sectors. This is where incumbent workers – and DACUM prefers to have expert workers if possible, that is a point that is sometimes difficult to do because the best workers are ones that the organization may not want to relief for a day or two – we followed up those four separate DACUM panels with a consolidation or a synthesis, so what we ended up was sector-based charts for each of the four areas and a core chart. We did validation through online surveys. We asked for frequency and importance ratings. These are valuable, as I said, for both training emphasis and test development.

We also had knowledge and skill lists that were informed by the DACUM process, plus what we were able to generate from O\*NET and the competency model. We created some test blueprints for the core and for one of the sectors, home health aide.

In 2012 and '13 we convened multiple item writing groups. Our practice is to write multiple-choice test questions and then to have been validated by practitioners and other stakeholders. We do establish a pass/fail cutoff for the item bank. We also worked with performance tasks. We generated about 26 to 30 of those and those were viewed as either perform, do it, or as more of a constructed response, so talk about how you would do it. We did alignment and crosswalk of our material to competency standards from national organizations and some regulations. That led to item and performance bank with the metadata judgments and all of that, and to these crosswalk tables.

From 2014 on there was training development and delivery. They started with print, face-to-face, and then moved to online just so they could get that developed for ease of delivery. Post-training we were able to do a field test of both the multiple-choice items and the practical performance items. We worked on implementation planning, sustainability plan for costing, and also wrote a final report.

The competencies were –

MR. COHEN: Hey, Jim, real quick, can you just explain real quick what DACUM is? Somebody had asked.

MR. AUSTIN: DACUM is short for Developing a Curriculum. It's an expert worker committee-based task analysis process and we always tend to follow it up with a verification survey where we try and get people to look over the shoulder. The folks work together with a facilitator. They develop a chart consisting of duties, tasks, knowledge and skill lists, concerns, trends, and the like, and, recently, abbreviations and acronyms have been added. Thank you, Todd.

Home health, developmental disabilities, behavioral health, and nursing homes, skilled nursing facilities where the sector's most common competencies were core, 61 across developmental disabilities, home health, and nursing home with a physical health focus. A subset of the competencies, 36, were also common to behavioral health with that mental health focus. These support a DSW career pathway with a core plus one specialization.

Comparison of the DSW core to other standards – I'm not going to extensively go through this, but we did find that a lot of agency requirements were not as relevant to the person.

That test question bank, we wrote 217 knowledge or multiple-choice questions and 123 additional questions for home health. The performances, as I said, we ended up using only the task model of do it. Partners two- and four-year colleges, private and public, i.e. county or community organizations, helped to identify potential training providers, such as high school, career technical education, private sector, and adult basic or workforce programs. We developed that content and it was delivered. D&S Diversified, which does the state-tested nurse aide license testing in Ohio, was our partner. We evaluated the psychometrics of this item bank, the reliability, item statistics, and some of those things.

We finalized the tasks for the core competencies and home health. That means dropping a few of the items that did not perform well, engaged those training entities, field-tested the process. Training was to follow up with online modules and the test forms were then ready for deployment. My lessons and suggestions, following on and piggybacking on what Alicia said, was convening an engagement, continuous engagement can be difficult, but they're crucial.

We found that keeping communication lines open, having stakeholder summits to keep people informed, we found that it was helpful to evaluate both the process and the output. Again, practitioners and trainers define the tasks and then the O\*NET knowledge and skill lists can help cue people to think of intermediate rather than broad level knowledge and skills.

Another point is to consider the National Science Foundation ATE sites for some sectors. For this healthcare area, which is entry-level and features moderate skills, I'm afraid it's lower pay and high turnover. It's not quite as relevant, but the ATE community college sites are very good for middle skill jobs that provide a good working wage without necessarily going to college.

That's basically all I have. Thank you.

MR. COHEN: Thanks, Jim. Great stuff. Obviously a different industry, different type of educational institutions, so different processes, but – (inaudible) – into play in both.

Let's do some Q&A here. Folks have already posted some questions. Now is also a good time to keep posting those. Let me go to the first one that was posed. Actually, what I'm going to do, I'm going to pose this in two ways: one, to Pam, if you're still – to bring you back in here – and then I think, Alicia, I'll turn to you. But, so somebody has asked the key to these conversations is having valid industry experts in the room. I guess, Pam, if you have a minute, could you just share a little bit more about how that happens at the national level, maybe give us one of the examples of how the 26 are developed? Then, Alicia, I'm going to ask you – you've already alluded to this a little bit – but how you decided which industry folks were in the room to have a conversation you needed to have about real competency. Pam, can you just take that first part?

MS. FRUGOLI: Yes. I think the issue is the level you're working at. If your – (inaudible) – on model for the entire nation, so it's much more efficient for us to deal with a national industry association, which is what we do, because, like for example, when we're doing the – (inaudible) – support and services model, we can convene a whole lot of nursing homes, one from each state even, right?

But when you're doing this then at the state or local level, you can actually work directly with employers or sometimes there's a state branch of the association, things like that. So you really could refine it based on what you're doing it for. But at the national level we do it with national associations for the industry.

MS. UHDE: Yeah. I guess to add onto that, one thing is to separate – what do I want to say – policy and procedure versus a competency, right. Some people really get into – I mean, in our industry there're some safety things that play in the role, but, I mean, there are different ways you can maybe have the same competency.

But the procedure that you do, it might be unique to a specific company, and from an education or training standpoint you need to try to remove yourself from those site-specific procedures and move to more higher-level competency skill sets.

MR. COHEN: Great point. Jim, somebody from Ohio would love to connect with you, so if you are willing to maybe put your contact information in the chat box; Jon, is this what he would do within the chat box?

MR. AUSTIN: Sure. No problem.

MR. VEHLOW: Yes. I shared with that person your e-mail address already as well, Jim, so – if that's OK – but if you want, yes.

MR. COHEN: Great.

MR. VEHLOW: You can download the big PowerPoint as well with our presenters' information. It's the file share window at the bottom left-hand side of your screen. You just click today's PPT and click download file. It's going to have all the presenters' contact information as well, if you want to reach out to them.

MR. COHEN: Great. All right. Let me ask this of both of you. Going back to your industry conversations – and, Jim, I'll start with you – you had these business information sessions. You had practitioners in there, you had trainers in there, you had industry in there. Do you recall a time maybe where there was a disagreement of the type of competencies that maybe were needed in demand, and was there a resolution? How did you resolve that, I guess, as the convener?

MR. AUSTIN: Well, Todd, I would say that occupational identification meant that people from the four sectors – that is practitioners, not to mention their supervisors and directors and HR folks – did need to do some of the same things that Alicia was talking about between academia and industry, so making sure that the terms were understood.

But we did rely on the synthesis model where we selected the practitioners that we thought had engaged the best in each of the separate DACUM workshops to do the consolidation. These were judgments that the workshop leader or facilitator would make about people that didn't challenge unnecessarily but were assertive. That was the way we handled that.

Then following up on the analyses and the synthesis, we did do the survey to get the, again, practitioners, trainers, and educators out in the workplace. So we felt pretty solid there. Thank you.

MR. COHEN: Great. Alicia, let me ask you the same. I kind of feel like I know your answer, but when there was some disagreement between industry and the educators, how did that play out?

MS. UHDE: Yeah. I think we're pretty fortunate there wasn't a lot, but I think it basically comes back down to that terminology and just really an understanding and going back to that core competency model because I think the disagreement typically was getting too far into the leads.

But it does happen. Obviously it does at times happen and so I think more often than not we probably go with, overall, what we're getting support from just because you have so many partners and you might not make everybody exactly happy, but what is the core group thinking. Then we have to move forward. Then you can get feedback on that, right. If there's a certain competency or task or a disagreement about something, that's where that engagement – now there'd be a follow up.

This past semester, this is how we addressed this topic and this was the result, right, and bring that conversation back to – the industry sees it as value to them because your responsive to the questions that they just asked or the skills that they thought you should or shouldn't teach and here was the result and this is what we're finding, right; or maybe that would be in the satisfaction survey later on that you do with your industry partners.

Maybe that skill set that you felt like you shouldn't teach comes out on surveys that your students don't have the skill set and we really need it, right, so now we've been told that a couple of times and we probably need to make an adjustment.

So find ways that you can – don't let that decision be made and then quick hide it underneath the rug. Like, now that's a surface for additional topics, whether it's have a future meeting, add a survey, however that might fit in with that piece.

MR. COHEN: Yeah. I mean, I've heard you say too, I mean, industry is encouraged in your meeting for the most part. You guys remain flexible.

MS. UHDE: Yes. I think too, I mean, in our industry maybe it's a little different than some, but – no, I wouldn't say most, it is – but, I mean, our folks are on the table. We have a minimum requirement too for our faculty of how long they have worked in the industry and requirements for them to stay engaged in the industry, right; so that's keywords, not folks that worked for a year or have minimal experience or they just have a Masters or their PhD in a field that's related. Our faculty were those technicians that we're training and so they also have some real core experience that they can in tune and line with what industry is asking or not asking about something.

MR. COHEN: Yeah. Great. Pam, let me ask you, somebody asked the question of whether the use of competency models is sort of required, by federal policy at least. I guess maybe what are your thoughts on just how you envision or how you've seen these things, what your vision is for how these would be used?

MS. FRUGOLI: They are not required, but one of the things that we try to do here at the Employment and Technical Administration is provide technical assistance to help workforce development system in order to help people develop curriculums that will meet employers' needs.

We provide these as a starting point because we feel like it's much easier to engage with employers if you go in knowing something about what their competency needs are. You start with the national model and say this is what we know; how do you add to it or modify it? But it gives you a good entrée to not just go to them with a blank piece of paper and say tell me what you need because then they're going to say we don't have time.

We do, like when we have competitive grants, we often put information on competency models in those funding opportunity announcements. The fact that you're aware of them can be helpful in more ways than one.

MR. COHEN: Yes. Great. All right. Well, we've got a lot of questions coming in. We're not going to have time to get all of them. I want to hit one or two more. There're a number of questions on the career path, essentially how these models translate to career pathways and student job seeker facing resources.

Alicia, I guess let me turn back to you since you showed the career pathway model. You talked about, I believe, the connection between your building blocks model and your career pathways. I think it sounds like the career pathways model is now a student and job seeker facing tool. Are there assessments or are there career navigators then that are using that information to help guide and drive students and job seekers into the right places?

MS. UHDE: Right. Yes. That's a big piece of our success is we have career navigators that are in – our career navigators are located within our academic programming here and so that's a set up that's somewhat different than a lot of colleges have.

Our career navigators are working hand-in-hand with our faculty and our department chairs that oversee these programs and they also have that engagement with industry and know those particular industry needs, if there are any that align those students to go where they should go and how they're best fit. They're really engaged in that career exploration: where do you want to go with your goals in mind.

A lot of your main 18- to 24-year-olds come in the door. They might not really know. They might be coming to you for a number of different reasons, so being able to sit down and navigate with them the options, what are their strengths and what are they looking to do, is crucial and critical to the programming. So that's how we have that set up.

Regarding to the model itself or the credentialing, I don't know how much that's a forward-facing document as our pathways is for our students. Those core competencies, that might get a little too – it's just maybe a little too technical academia for students, especially at the certificate and associate degree level, but the career pathways is definitely more of a student driven document.

MR. COHEN: Great, Alicia. Jim, let me come back to you for the last word. Any career assessments or things that you've seen at OSU that have been tied to work that's been done in your project on the healthcare side? Do you see a connection there?

MR. AUSTIN: Yes. Maybe not with that program, but O\*NET does have a very nice suite of career assessments. They are not to be used for employee hiring, but just for career counseling. They have the interest profiler and the work importance profiler. They are available in both paper/pencil format and online, or, excuse me, computer-based.

The interest one is based on Holland's hexagon and the work importance ask what people value at work – autonomy, security, features like that – and that's derived from the theory of work adjustment at University of Minnesota. Then they also have an ability profiler, which can give people a good sense of their cognitive abilities, so two non-cognitive and one cognitive ability, but, remember, only for career counseling and not for hiring.

MR. COHEN: Yes. Perfect, Jim. Thanks. Well, let me move along. We really appreciate Alicia, Jim, Pam. I mean, this was really good stuff. We scratched the surface essentially, but I think we did move the needle on this a little bit and great questions, all. Really appreciate your time.

We did say there was a call to action, so let me just tee that up and then I'm going to turn it over to Pam for the last word. But, as we mentioned, we're going to have a series of these conversations. Our intention is to do these in more intimate settings where everybody would be unmuted potentially and we could just have a back-and-forth conversation. It's hard to do that with 300-plus people, but we are interested in trying to figure out how we can do that.

What we're asking you all is to go to this link – and we'll e-mail this link out too, but you can copy it here. I think we're going to put it in the chat room as well. All it is, is it's a self – (inaudible) – you want to. You put your name in and essentially sign up, and then we will send you information about the future calls. That'll give us a good population to work with. In those boxes you could tell us which specific topics or when it comes to competency models that you want to talk to.

So if you would take a moment now or take a moment right after this, it'll take you less than five minutes to complete, probably two minutes to complete. But stay tuned for future calls. We're going to tackle some big questions. These will come I think every other month – April, June, so forth, so on – but how do you use competency models to initiate apprenticeship work; how do you convene industry in rural areas when you've got fewer industry representatives; what does refreshing a competency model actually look like; how is that process different than initiating it?

Then we've got other – great stuff from Bismarck today and the Ohio State, but we'll have others from Wisconsin, Atlanta, Seattle, and Missouri, and all different types of industries. Our intention is to really provide you the full spectrum of models and industries and how this all comes together. I would also say stay tuned, please, for a tool coming your way. It's called customizing competency models.

It'll basically take us through all this information that we learned today, almost in an interactive training effort. If you really want to get up to speed quickly on how to convene industry using the competency models as leverage, then this will be ready for your team. We'll let you know how that goes.

Pam, let me turn it over to you for the last few words.

MS. FRUGOLI: OK. Thank you so much. We have over 300 people on the webinar today, so I just want to thank you all for coming. I want to say that this is the competency level clearinghouse site and on the next slide is the link to it: careeronestop.org/competencymodel. It's a site sponsored by the Department of Labor and we're just very happily with all the information and all the questions today and we look forward to working with you in the future. Thank you.

MR. VEHLOW: All right. Thanks, Pam. I just want to say to all of our participants today, thanks for joining us. I really want to just give a big thank you to all the presenters as well. If you can stay on for just a minute longer to provide us with some feedback. You will see a few feedback windows. Let us know what you thought of today's webinar. There's a slew of polls, so please answer them – six polls. Also, a feedback window and additional topics of what you'd like to hear in future webinars.

But just a reminder, a recording of today's webinar, as well as a transcript and executive summary will be made available on Workforce GPS in about two business days. Also, to better connect with your Workforce GPS colleagues, please take a few minutes and sign up for the member directory on Workforce GPS. That link is located in the feedback window.

Again, we want to thank everyone for joining us today. With that, have a wonderful rest of your day, everyone.

(END)