

# Building Basic Skills: Solutions for Sector Partners

Webinar

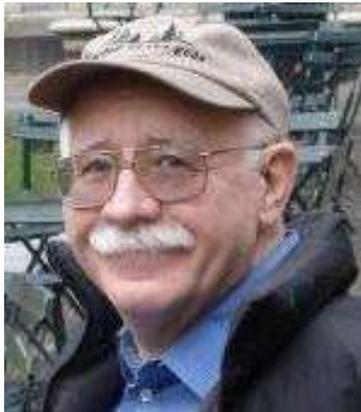
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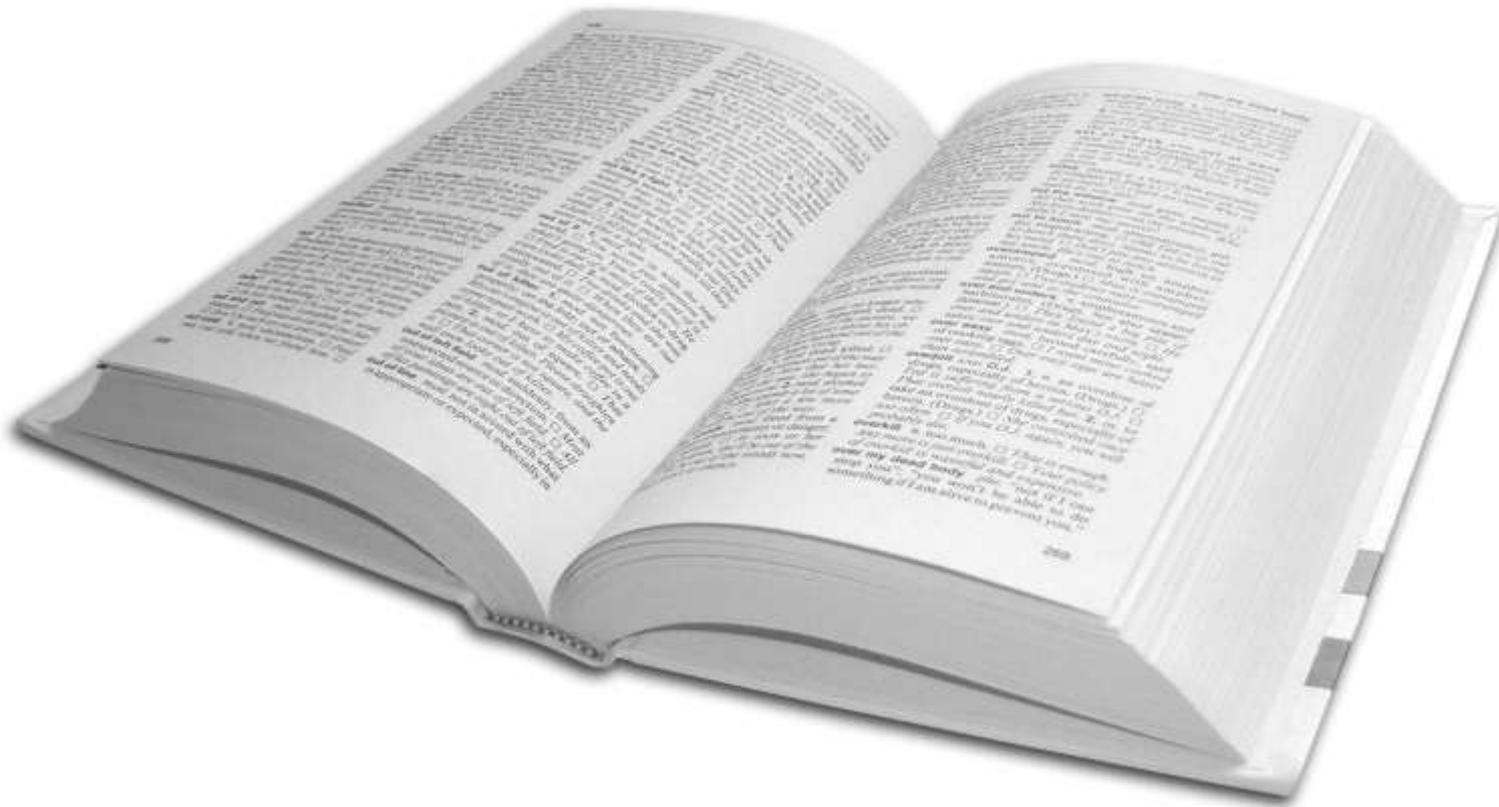


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# Sector initiatives:



Regional, industry-focused approaches to workforce and economic development that improve access to good jobs and/or increase job quality in ways that strengthen an industry's workforce.



**INSTITUTO DEL PROGRESO LATINO**

Our mission is to contribute to the fullest development of Latino immigrants and their families through education, training and employment that fosters full participation in the changing United States society while preserving cultural identity and dignity.



## Participant Needs Assessment: Healthcare

**In Chicago, Latinos (25% of the population)\* are virtually invisible at the LPN or RN level (less than 2%\*). Primary reasons behind this number are low literacy levels, low English proficiency, and personal and family employment barriers.**

**\*Source: Current Population Survey, 2000**



## **Employer Needs Assessment: Manufacturing**

**“30,000 Unfilled Manufacturing Jobs in Illinois....” that was the headline in Crain’s Chicago Business a few weeks ago.**

**“There is a talent pool that could help fill the pipeline (for skilled workers); ...but they lack adequate English language skills.” (National Association of Manufacturing)**

**60% of Chicago’s workforce in manufacturing is Latino, yet thousands are laid-off, or stuck in a low-wage unskilled position for this reason.**

# Ways to address basic skills gaps:

## Less effective

Basic skills training that is:

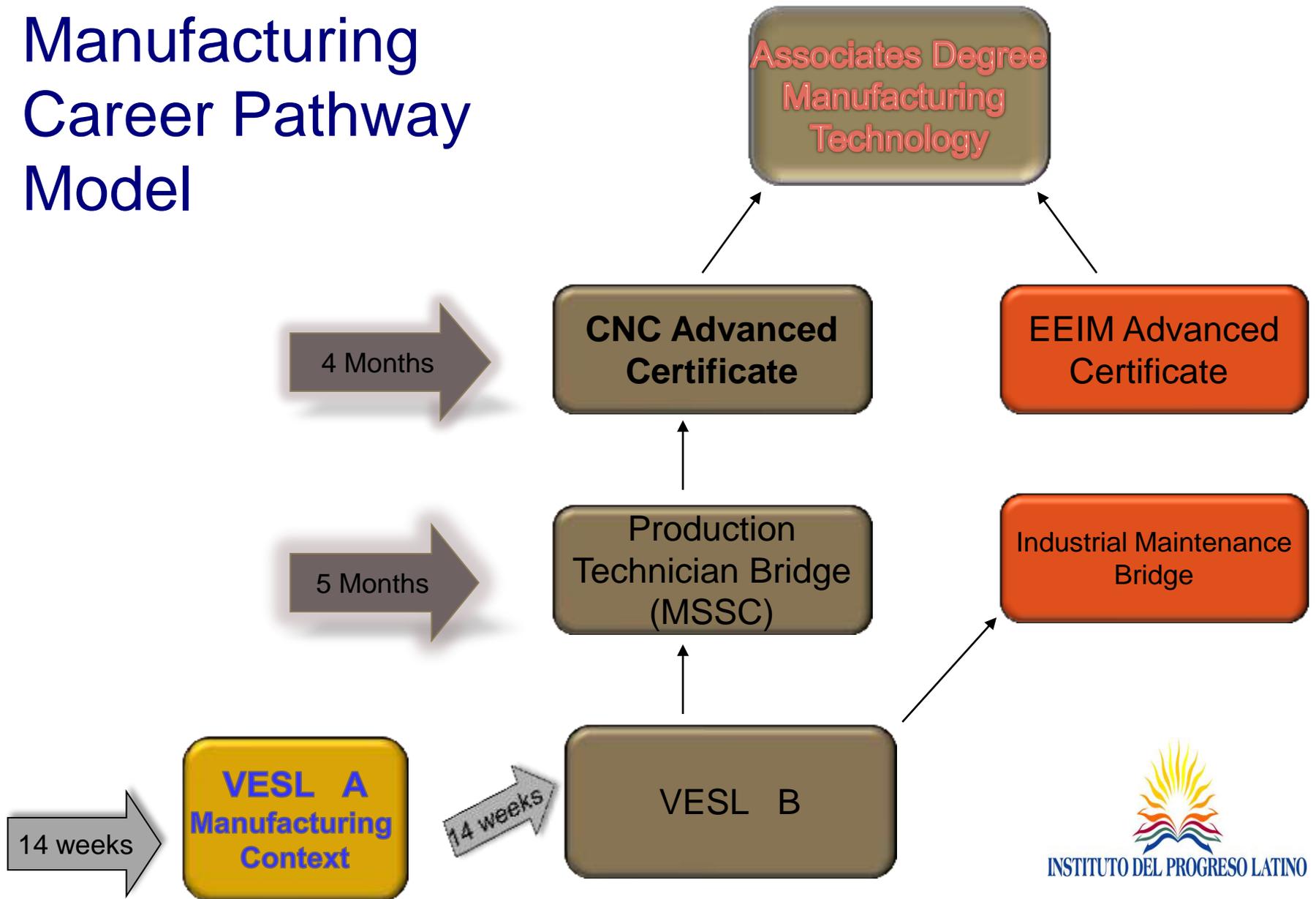
- Low-intensity
- Not linked to career goals
- Not linked to or offered in parallel with career training
- Generic, not contextualized

## More effective

Sector initiatives are using:

- Bridge and career pathway programs
- Integrated learning
- Supplemental learning
- Work-based learning
- Accelerated learning
- Pipeline programs

# Manufacturing Career Pathway Model





# Common threads:

Basic skills instruction that is:

- Focused on “Technical Foundations” – grads are “trainable”, and able to adjust to/learn new technology
- Contextualized – with materials drawn from both the technical course and the work-place
- Integrated – with both the technical course and between basic skill courses
- Supported – participants receive a variety of services to support their success



## Essential Elements in Developing Contextualized Curricula

- **General Context:** no content or context in particular. Concept used in most traditional ESL classes.
- **Macro Context:** focus on a sector such as manufacturing, health, automobile, insurance, hospitality, without concentrating on a particular profession within the sector.
- **Micro Context:** focus on a particular profession within an industry or sector; for example in the health sector the micro context focus is on either allied healthcare, nursing, medical techs or medical administration.



## Process to Contextualize Curriculum

- ESL (skills) instructor develops outline of expected competencies of students at the end of the class (term).
- Technical (context) instructor develops an outline of the context knowledge expected by the student at the end of the class (term).
- Skills and context instructors meet to develop class activities and learning techniques. Context is aligned based on student basic skill levels.
- Both instructors agree on assessment tools, activities, and resources needed. (Project-based assessment, traditional instruments.)
- Curriculum outline is submitted to industry advisory council for feedback on required basic and technical skills, as well as advice on assessment activities that confirm the presence of competencies needed by employers.
- Skills and context instructors meet periodically and as needed to adjust activities and learning techniques.

## What we have learned....

- 1) Quality of instruction makes a huge difference.
- 2) A comfortable, non-threatening learning environment is a big help.
- 3) Ability to attain GED (Spanish or English) is important.
- 4) Recognize and value student's prior experience. Treat adults as adults... with respect.



## Promoting Instructor Effectiveness

- 1) Professional development – front-loaded, sustained over time, active hands-on engagement, collaborative and reflective.
- 2) Create climate for collaboration – listening, regular feedback, frequent and short visits to classrooms.
- 3) Instructors need to see themselves as more than just instructors – e.g. involved in developing curriculum, standards, use of data for improvements, opportunities for networking/learning from others.

# What can you do?

- Workforce agencies: you need a strategy
- Training providers: contextualize, integrate, support
- Employers: partner with training institutions
- Funders: recognize that it takes time, money, and a village
- Policy-makers: implement supportive policies

# Selected Resources

- [Adult Career Pathways Training and Support Center](#)
- [How to Build Bridge Programs That Fit into a Career Pathway](#), Instituto del Progreso Latino
- [Learning in Context: Preparing Latino Workers for Careers and Continuing Education](#), NCLR
- [Farther, Faster: Six Promising Programs Show How Career Pathways Bridges Help Basic Skills Students Earn Credentials That Matter](#), CLASP
- [Jobs to Careers](#), Jobs for the Future
- [Breaking Through](#), Jobs for the Future
- [I-BEST Resources](#), Highline Community College

**THANK YOU**

GRACIAS  
ARIGATO  
SHUKURIA  
JUSPAXAR  
DANKSCHEEN  
TASHAKKUR ATU  
YAQHANYELAY  
SUKSAMA  
EKHMET  
MEHRBANI  
PALDIES  
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