What are Sector-Focused Career Centers?

Created in 2008, SFCCs serve both unemployed jobseekers and incumbent workers looking to advance in their careers, targeting industries offering:

- Competitive wages of at least $10 per hour;
- Schedules with at least 30 hours per week, and;
- Mid-wage goals for placement of jobseekers and promotion of incumbent workers to $15 per hour.

A dual-customer strategy targets both jobseekers and incumbent workers, creating a pipeline of highly qualified candidates while saving businesses time and money through more efficient hiring and increased productivity.
New York City SFCC Industries

Healthcare Career Center

To meet the needs of one of New York City’s fastest growing industries, CEO and SBS launched the Healthcare Career Center in 2009. The Center connects healthcare industry employers with qualified jobseekers while providing training to incumbent workers looking to advance their careers. Specifically, the Center prepares jobseekers for occupations including but not limited to: RN, LPN, Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), paramedic, EMT, direct care, and medical billing and coding positions. Compared to standard career center participants, Healthcare Career Center participants are 9.4 percent more likely to retain their jobs for at least one full year after placement, and earn nearly $7,381 more per year on average compared to standard career center participants.

Transportation & Manufacturing Career Center

The transportation industry provides thousands of jobs for entry and mid-level workers in New York City, as New York ranks first among U.S. cities in passenger miles flown, transit passenger miles and truck freight volume. To better meet these high demands, in 2011 the Workforce1 Transportation and Manufacturing Career Centers merged to create the Industrial and Transportation Career Center (ITC) located in Jamaica, Queens. The ITC matches jobseekers with positions in transportation, manufacturing, wholesale trade and construction; job placements include positions as baggage handlers, mechanics, drivers, dispatchers, machinists and customer service representatives. Workers are 14-16 percent more likely to retain their employment for one full year after completing the ITC program, compared to their counterparts at standard career centers; combined, these participants earn, on average, more than $5,000 more per year.

SFCCs Improve Employment rates

Sector Center participants overall are significantly more likely to work in each of the four quarters after program exit and work more consistently than matched standard career center participants. SFCC participants are 12 percentage points more likely to be employed in the year following the program, 19 percentage points more likely to be employed one year later, and they earn 50 percent more on average than regular career center participants.

Policy Implications

SFCC Participation and Labor Market Outcomes:

- Services such as job search support, counseling and training are associated with positive outcomes at SFCCs.
- Localities can invest in and expand sector-focused employment strategies with federal Workforce Investment Act funds.
- Hard skills training tied to employer demand leads to better outcomes, suggesting that the strategy merits further investment.

Moving Forward

The research and evaluation firm Westat will release a full report later this year, which suggests that SFCCs are more effective than traditional career centers for low-wage workers and should be expanded.

Sector-Focused Centers Research

Further reading on Sector-Focused Employment:

- Sector Snapshot: A Profile of Sector Initiatives 2010, Center for Community Economic Development
- Sector Strategies for Low-Income Workers: Lessons from the Field, The Aspen Institute