

The UpSkilling Movement & What It Means To New England



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UpSkillAmerica

- An initiative of the Aspen Institute's Economic Opportunities Program
- An employer-led movement to expand opportunity for America's workers and help our economy and communities thrive by promoting training and advancement practices to help workers progress in their careers and move into better-paying jobs.

UpSkill America's Mission

- ◆ Recognize employers that provide expanded career opportunities for their workers
- ◆ Promote the adoption of business policies and practices that increase economic opportunity
- ◆ Highlight effective education and training partnerships

What Is UpSkilling?

- Education, training and development that prepares someone with the knowledge and skills they need to do more advanced work
 - Can include employed and unemployed people
 - Can include people preparing for a different job or doing their current job in a more complex way
 - Reskilling can be training someone with a new skill regardless of whether that skill is for a job that is a promotion/demotion

Ranges Of UpSkilling Program

- ◆ Pre-employment training and education
- ◆ High school completion/equivalency
- ◆ Apprenticeship
- ◆ Certification
- ◆ Incumbent worker training
- ◆ College degree

Factors Driving UpSkilling

- ◆ Shrinking labor pool
- ◆ Return on investment
- ◆ Changing skill needs
- ◆ Millennials/GenZ demand it
- ◆ Aging workforce requires it
- ◆ Good Corporate Citizenship
 - BRT: “...includes supporting them through training and education that helps develop new skills for a rapidly changing world.”

Factors Driving UpSkillling

- ◆ Desire to improve diversity and inclusion
- ◆ Changing demographics in the workforce (-25% white HS Grads)
- ◆ Underrepresented populations in occupations (IT& STEM)
- ◆ Underrepresented populations in supervisory roles
- ◆ Recognition of lack of opportunity for some to obtain education, learn some skills and create social capital networks

Not New, Just Different

- Tuition reimbursement/disbursement
- Fewer barriers (full/part-time, eligibility, claw backs)
- Flexible programs (online, video, competency based)
- Better integrated programs (completion tracked, tied to advancement)
- More supports (career counseling, coaching)
- More program variety (HS, certificates, college degrees)

Employee Training

◆ Walmart Academies

- 200 facilities where frontline hourly supervisors and assistant store managers receive hands-on training in retail fundamentals, leadership skills, and the specifics of how to run individual store departments
- The training is designed to help associates be successful in their careers and to meet the changing needs of customers
- Translates to up to 22 hours of college credit



Walmart Live Better U College Degree Program

- Associates can earn 22 credit hours for Walmart training
- Walmart covers tuition, books and fees
- Employees contribute \$1 a day toward tuition
- Degrees in Business or Supply Chain, Transportation and Logistics Management
- 14 technology degrees and certificates (cyber security, computer science, computer and network security and computing technology)
- Florida, Brandman and Bellevue Universities



Amazon

- ◆ \$700 M investment to upskill 100,000 workers by 2025
- ◆ Technical Academy equips non-technical workers with software engineering skills
- ◆ Associate2Tech trains fulfillment center assoc. for IT jobs
- ◆ Machine Learning U to develop skills of technical workers
- ◆ Career Choice associate degree/certificate program
- ◆ Registered apprenticeship program in technical fields
- ◆ AWS Training and Certification builds AWS Cloud skills



Disney Aspire Program

- Five year \$150 M investment
- 90,000 hourly employees eligible
- 300 academic paths at 11 different schools
- 200 degree and 80 certificate programs
- The company covers the cost of tuition, application fees, books, and materials
- 8,800 employees enrolled in the first year



Employers Are Seeking...

- Speed
 - Prior learning credit
 - Just in time learning
- Flexibility
 - Online
 - Competency-based
- Basic and advanced skills
 - HS, ESL, Digital literacy
 - Technical skills
 - Data management skills

Challenges To Successful UpSkilling Programs

- ◆ Inflexibility
 - Education vs training
 - Semester based model
 - Classroom focus
 - Long curriculum approval process
- ◆ Lack of digital access
- ◆ Employers unwilling to share cost/information/skills data
- ◆ Demands of life on low-wage workers

Elements Of Healthy UpSkilling Ecosystems

- Commitment of top leadership (Government, employer, education)
- Focus on understanding of employer skill needs
- Federal/State and employer investment in training
- Trusting relationships in leadership positions
- Close coordination of education, workforce and economic development
- Broad access to training programs for people in local communities
- Programs that lead to in-demand jobs at good wages

Elements Of Active Employer Engagement In UpSkilling Programs

- Commitment of company leadership
- Sharing data on skill needs
- Providing input into curriculum
- Employer donated equipment or training in real world work environment
- Frequent training review by employers and updating of curriculum
- Engagement of employers at the level closest to the work
- Employer investment in education and training
- Experienced company professionals serving as instructors
- Hiring of program graduates into jobs at good wages
- Internship and apprenticeship opportunities in the workplace
- Training providers and students visiting the workplace

Storylines To Follow

- ◆ Getting workers with the lowest skills upgraded
 - ESL, digital literacy, HS diplomas
- ◆ Upskilling for diversity and inclusion
- ◆ Elimination of degree requirements
- ◆ Technical skills
 - Boot camps/Trilogy/Continuing education
- ◆ High end skills upgrades
 - Amazon Machine Learning University

Questions For Consideration

- How do we turn students into lifelong learners?
- How do we get students with debt to continue learning?
- How can we connect students to continuing education departments?
- How do we achieve more effective employer engagement?
 - Deeper engagement & More employers engaged