WORKING PARTNERS

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Education + Industry

INITIATING INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS
Top strategies from the ATE community

#1: Establish personal contact with industry members
- Plan and schedule one-on-one visits to key employers and industry members
- Phone calls or snail mail may work best to get potential collaborators' attention; emails are easy to ignore.

#2: Make it clear "what's in it for them"
- Ask potential partners what they care about - better skilled workers, obtaining interns, increasing student success, giving back - and then clearly articulate the potential return for participation both personally and to their profession.

#3: Access the networks and connections of your existing partners
- Ask existing contacts to make referrals and introductions to others in industry who can support your program and its goals
- Attend industry events with existing partners to learn more about key players and companies

#4: Utilize personal and staff industry networks
- Leverage the industry contacts and connections of the program staff who have industry backgrounds to recruit new partners
- Enlist alumni as industry partners and harness their workplace connections to build industry relationships

#5: Provide program access and outreach
- Invite potential partners to campus to tour the facility, hear about the program, and interact with students and faculty
- Volunteer to do brief presentations to community groups such as the Chamber of Commerce or local workforce board and then follow up on industry member leads

The Working Partners Research Project seeks to discover, document, and disseminate the key factors and core practices associated with industry/college partnerships within the ATE community.

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#6: Invite potential partners to provide industry input
◆ Invite potential partners to curriculum review sessions so they can get a better understanding of the program goals and outcomes
◆ Conduct industry focus groups with non-partners from time to time to better understand needs and solicit new collaborations.

#7: Be active in professional associations, organizations and societies
◆ Join industry associations and societies, attend trade shows and seek out face-to-face discussions at industry conferences and events.
◆ Present at industry meetings and events to bring visibility and recruit new partners.

#8: Formalize the partnership
◆ Use contracts or written agreements to make clear the expectations for both sides of the partnership and to foster commitment and involvement.
◆ The Business and Industry Leadership Team (BILT) model creates a compact that ensures partners share program leadership equally between the program staff and industry members choosing to serve.

#9: Research companies, and individuals within companies
◆ Identify key personnel within companies who meet programmatic needs by first contacting and presenting to senior level management.
◆ Investigate your target in advance; this allows you to contact the industry partner with a clear plan and designation of needs.

#10: Allocate staff for building partnerships
◆ Hiring an Industry Outreach Coordinator, who goes to industry and finds new partners and donations, through our grant proved how important it is, so we have since obtained additional funds to sustain this position.

To learn more about the Working Partners Research Project and get access to our online Toolkit which features case studies, research data, and much more, visit
http://workingpartnersproject.org