

## **San Luis Obispo County Workforce Investment Board Business Council Glossary**

Career Pathways - A workforce development strategy used to support workers transition from education into and through the workforce. This strategy has been adopted in order to increase education, training, and learning opportunities for America's current and emerging workforce. A career pathways initiative consists of a partnership among educational institutions, workforce and economic development agencies, employers, labor groups, and social service providers. Career pathways are an integrated collection of programs and services intended to develop students' core academic, technical, and employability skills; provide them with continuous education, training; and place them in high-demand, high-opportunity jobs.

Clusters of Opportunity – concentrations of related industries that have shown sustainable growth in jobs, specialization, and wages for over a decade.

Customized Training - training designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (including a group of employers). It is conducted with a commitment by the employer to employ, or in the case of incumbent workers (already working for the employer), continue to employ, an individual on successful completion of the training. The employer pays no less than 50 percent of the cost of training.

Early Warning System (EWS) (as it relates to layoff aversion) - EWS is used to identify and track vulnerable firms and industrial sectors that might benefit from layoff aversion strategies. The EWS identifies firms at risk of closing or moving operations before actual decisions are made by the companies to shut down or move. It includes an early warning network and community partners along with other early warning indicators such as being able to identify immediate danger signs or long-term patterns. It can buy a community the time necessary to develop alternatives to plant closures and job losses. Monitoring industry economic health and activity is an essential component for successful layoff aversion strategies, and assists Boards in providing rapid response services earlier.

Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) - The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 requires that customers of One-Stop Centers must have access to a state approved list of eligible training providers. In most cases, WIA funds may not be spent on a training program unless they are on the Eligible Training Provider List, some exceptions allow for direct contracts with institutions of higher education. Following is the web site address to view the State of California's ETPL: <http://etpl.edd.ca.gov/wiaetplind.htm>.

Employment Training Panel (ETP) – The ETP provides funding to employers to assist in upgrading the skills of their workers through training that leads to good paying, long-term jobs to make businesses more productive and better able to continue to employ San Luis Obispo county residents. The ETP is a state agency funded entirely by California employers through a special payroll tax. The ETP is a funding agency, not a training agency. Businesses determine their own training needs and how to provide training. ETP staff is available to assist in applying for funds and other aspects of participation.

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) - Employed adults and dislocated workers may receive training services through the One-Stop system when certain conditions are met. These individuals must meet the eligibility requirements for adults or dislocated workers. To receive intensive services and, ultimately, training services, an employed individual must be determined by a Job Center operator to be in need of such services to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency.

Layoff Aversion - The prevention or minimization of unemployment, either for employees of companies that have announced layoffs, are struggling, or are looking to retool for new products or industries. A layoff is considered averted when an employee's job with an existing employer at risk of downsizing or closing has been saved; or an employee at risk of dislocation to a different job with the same employer or a new job with a different employer, has been transitioned with a minimal period of unemployment.

Rapid Response – Provides early intervention and determines strategies that can best assist businesses faced with closure or layoffs. Rapid Response examines potential alternatives for averting the closure/layoffs in consultation with state, local, and private sector economic development agencies. Key elements to Rapid Response include determining a plan of a timetable for the layoff, assessing the employment history and assistance needs of the workforce. Also to examining reemployment prospects for workers in the local community, identify available resources to meet the short and long-term assistance needs of the workers, and providing information and access to services.

The WIB is the lead agency for Rapid Response in SLO County and has established a Rapid Response contract for services with Goodwill Industries to assist employers and workers during a mass layoff or plant closing. Upon notification of a mass layoff, Goodwill pulls together a team of staff from its co-located One-Stop partners. This team disseminates information on the adult and dislocated worker services available under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act and through the EDD Job Service and Unemployment Insurance programs. If the dislocation is the result of foreign competition or foreign relocation, the dislocated worker may be eligible for assistance, income support, job search assistance/relocation, and/or training under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA).

Sectors - An industry or market sharing common characteristics such as the same or related product or services. Each sector has unique characteristics.

Sector Strategies - Sector strategies build partnerships between employers, training providers, community organizations, and other key stakeholders around specific industries to address the workforce needs of employers and the training, employment, and career advancement needs of workers. Sector strategies are a way of aligning economic development with workforce development. Key principles - data analysis, business engagement, and leveraging resources – facilitate the purposeful groupings of businesses and occupations into functional clusters across business and/or industries. Sector strategies enable workforce boards to become more efficient and effective by focusing on the needs of key industries that are driving economic growth in a region.

Skill Gap Analysis - A skills gap analysis is a process used to identify and assess the difference, or mismatch, between skill available in the local labor market supply and local employer demand. A skill gap analysis allows a local workforce area to determine if the current individuals in the workforce have the skills to meet future workforce needs. The process answers the question: Does the local labor force have the skills that employers demand?

Worker Adjustment Retraining Notice (WARN) - In 1989 the federal government enacted the WARN Act, requiring employers to notify employees of impending layoffs and plant closures in advance. In 2003, California specific WARN requirements became law and expanded upon requirements of the federal WARN. The WARN Act requires employers with 50 or more full-time employees to take certain actions if they are about to: close a facility or discontinue an operating unit that has 50 or more workers, lay off 50 to 499 workers, when the layoff constitutes 33% or more of the active workforce at a single site, or lay off 500 or more workers at any single site. Employers are required to give 60 days advance notice of any layoff. Failure to give such notice can result in an employer liability to pay laid-off employees the 60 days worth of back pay and benefits they would have been entitled to receive had notice been given.