

# Tips for Building an Effective Advisory Board

## Getting the Right People at the Table

There are several types of organizations you'll want participating on your advisory board. These include representatives from the following:

- ◇ The largest, most established employers in the region
- ◇ Small, fast-growing employers
- ◇ Post-secondary programs
- ◇ Business coalition such as the chamber or a workforce development board

You'll want to make sure your board includes an executive with management experience who can chair the board and people who have specific skill sets you'll need, such as marketing skills if you're planning to promote your program.



## Making an Impact

One of the most common challenges with advisory boards is a fear of asking business partners to take a leadership role in the program. If you want an active and effective board, take the following steps:

- ◇ **Select effective leadership** - The board should be chaired by an experienced business leader, not the head of the program
- ◇ **Make expectations clear** - When inviting people to serve on your board, let them know exactly what's expected of them
- ◇ **Set goals** - Each year your board should sit down and decide what it wants to do, setting specific and measurable goals and assigning responsibility for leading each task
- ◇ **Track progress** - Once you've set goals, keep people accountable by asking them to report on progress at each board meeting
- ◇ **Run an effective meeting** - Have an agenda and make sure you stick to your schedule

## Taking a Hands-on Role

Offering industry information and guidance is valuable, but there's no substitute for taking a hands-on role in the program. Consider supporting the program's work in the following ways:



- ◇ Asking employees to participate in the program as mentors, guest speakers, mock interviewers, competition judges, and volunteers for major projects
- ◇ Encourage site visits to your facility or job site
- ◇ Provide internship, apprenticeship, and job shadow opportunities
- ◇ Donate materials and equipment
- ◇ Provide instructors with current industry resources (trade magazines, access to vendor information, including in employee training)

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To learn more about advisory boards and all other CTE topics, visit:

[www.ACTEOnline.org](http://www.ACTEOnline.org)

## If you want a stronger workforce pipeline...

Career and technical education (CTE) programs exist to help students prepare for the workforce. But if program leaders and teachers don't have strong industry connections, how can they know what employers need, and how can they find the real-world opportunities that students need to explore their fields?

That's where advisory boards come in.

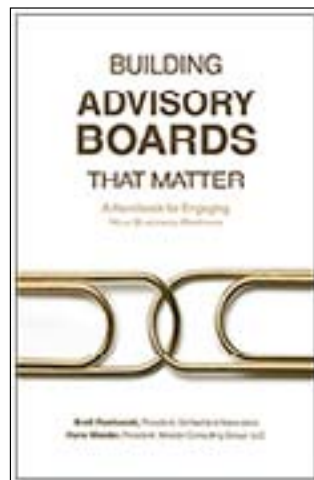
It is hard to build a strong and effective CTE program without having a strong and effective advisory board. The advisory board serves as a gateway to the business community, providing a way for business leaders to learn more about a program's work and how it relates to their needs, just as it serves as a way for educators to learn more about employers' needs so they can better prepare their students.

A well-run advisory board:

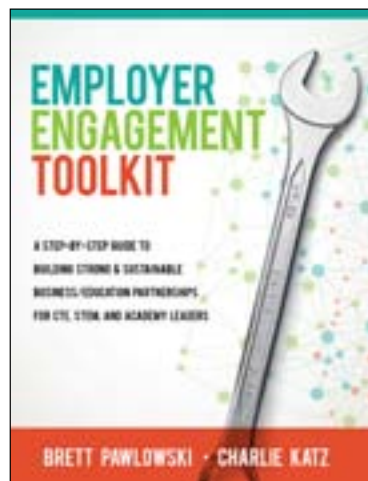
- ◇ Helps educators understand what types of job opportunities exist with local employers and what kinds of knowledge and skills applicants need to succeed
- ◇ Helps educators stay current on industry practices so they share current information with students
- ◇ Connects students to work-based learning opportunities, giving them a direct link to employers and their future professions

Look inside to find some tips on supporting your local CTE program's advisory board.

## Available from ShopACTE:



Building Advisory Boards That Matter  
Brett Pawlowski • Hans Meeder



Employer Engagement Toolkit  
Brett Pawlowski • Charlie Katz



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