

# Business leaders need investments in work-based learning to train the 21st century workforce

Nearly two-thirds (62%) of small and mid-sized business leaders say it is difficult to find skilled workers. And our federal policies don't adequately support businesses with filling middle-skill job openings or empower workers ready to take their career to the next level. New national polling shows that small and mid-sized business owners — the engines of local economies — support policy solutions that would expand investments in work-based learning and in students and workers who need support as they earn critical skills. The vast majority — 79% — of these business leaders also support new, public investments in these policies.

## Support apprenticeship and work-based learning



**63%**

**WANT INCREASED  
FUNDING TO EXPAND  
APPRENTICESHIPS**

**Problem:** Many businesses lack the resources to develop work-based learning programs on their own or capacity to support the success of workers in these programs.

**What business leaders want:** 63% say increased government funding to expand apprenticeship programs for young people and adults would help their business.

**What Congress can do:** Increase federal investment in workforce, education and apprenticeship programs to meet business demand and worker need.

## Help businesses partner with workforce and education providers



**77%**

**WANT INVESTMENTS  
IN PARTNERSHIPS**

**Problem:** Businesses partner with community colleges and the workforce development system to provide high-quality training. But there is no dedicated federal support to sustain these partnerships.

**What business leaders want:** 77% say it would help to create closer links between education providers and businesses to train people for the jobs for which businesses are hiring.

**What Congress can do:** The PARTNERS Act invests in local, robust, industry-driven partnerships to scale work-based learning.

## Help workers succeed in work-based learning programs



**64%**  
**WANT SUPPORT  
SERVICES FOR  
WORKER TRAINING**

**Problem:** Many workers struggle to succeed in training without supports like career counseling, childcare, or transportation. Difficulties navigating career and education decisions, childcare expenses and transportation challenges often prevent workers from being able to succeed in training programs.

**What business leaders want:** 64% say increased government funding for support services to help people finish skills training programs will help their business.

**What Congress can do:** The BUILDS Act would fund supports like childcare, pre-employment training, transportation, and career counseling that help workers access – and succeed in – work-based learning programs.

## Empower businesses to invest in workers most in need of skills training



**74%**  
**WANT TAX INCENTIVES  
FOR SKILLS TRAINING**

**Problem:** Millions of jobs remain open because workers don't have an opportunity to develop necessary skills, but tax policy isn't currently structured to empower businesses to invest in workers who need it the most.

**What business leaders want:** 74% say their business would benefit from tax incentives provided to employers who invest in skills training for their workers.

**What Congress can do:** The Work Opportunity Tax Credit should be amended to provide targeted tax incentives for businesses investing in work-based learning for workers most in need of training opportunities.

*On behalf of National Skills Coalition, ALG Research conducted a national online survey of 405 business leaders from small (under 100 employees) and medium (101–499 employees) companies, February 25 – March 5, 2019.*



**Business Leaders United**  
for Workforce Partnerships

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

[info@businessleadersunited.org](mailto:info@businessleadersunited.org)

 @BLU4WP