



Job Corps Employer Roundtable

Event Planning Tips and Timeline



Hosting an employer roundtable event is an excellent way to collaborate with employers, workforce development boards, labor unions, elected officials and more to discuss the local employment needs of your community and how programs like Job Corps can help address those needs. This type of event allows for open and honest dialogue between Job Corps and industry and community leaders to ensure Job Corps training programs are aligned with industry standards and are preparing graduates to meet local workforce demands. As you prepare to host an employer roundtable event, consider these tips and planning suggestions for event success.

- 1. Pick a date and time that will work well for employers and other workforce development leaders.** Check local calendars and other resources to avoid scheduling conflicts and overlapping/competing events.
- 2. Create a targeted invitation list.** For an employer roundtable event, consider adding to your invite list:
 - New and existing employers whose industries match those of your career training programs. Ask your staff for suggestions on which employers to invite.
 - Labor union representatives
 - Local workforce development leaders
 - Industry council members
 - Local elected officials
 - Work-based learning partners
 - American Job Center contacts
 - College partners
- 3. Develop your run of show.** Every event needs a timeline of events/agenda. Think through how much time you will need for your attendees to get the most out of the experience. Once you know how many hours you will need for the event, begin to break down each component into specific increments of time. The Employer Roundtable Program template is a great example of how your event can flow, but here are some recommended time frames for a two-hour event.
 - 11 a.m. – Guests arrive, register and network with each other and Job Corps students and staff
 - 11:30 a.m. – Program begins and guests find their assigned seats
 - 12 p.m. – Roundtable discussions begin
 - 1 p.m. – Guests depart

4. Determine the layout of your event, including table setup for each employer/organization. An employer roundtable is all about connecting with employers and community organizations. Every attendee will need an assigned table. Consider dividing the gym (or other designated space) by career pathway so all health care employers are seated together, construction employers are seated together, etc. Each table should also have designated center staff at each table to help facilitate the conversation with the discussion prompts that will be printed and placed in the center of each table. Career training instructors and CTT managers should be at the tables with the employers so they can engage in thoughtful discussions, and if workforce partners and/or elected officials attend the event, be sure to divide them among the tables as well. In terms of handouts for the tables—consider having TARs for the different training areas and/or overview descriptions of the skills students learn in their training in order to ask specific questions about the program’s curriculum.



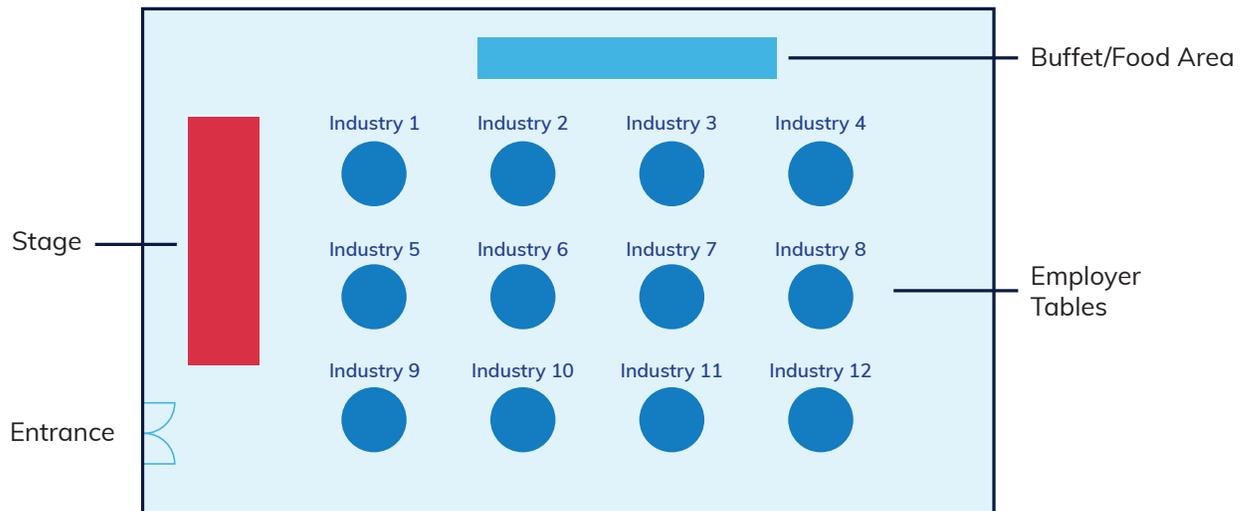
- 5. Plan a small welcome program.** Center directors, current employer partners, student leaders, successful graduates and/or workforce development leaders are potential speakers who can talk about the value of Job Corps’ training and the partnership opportunities that exist during a welcome program. Once you have your list of two or three identified speakers, you will need to assign speaking times to each person—five minutes per speaker is a good goal to aim for as you will want to keep the length of the entire program to 30 minutes or less. You will also need to make sure you have a stage with the proper lighting and AV capabilities.
- 6. Make the event convenient and attractive for attendees.** Make the event a breakfast or luncheon as food is always a great incentive—if your center has a Culinary Arts training area, this would be a wonderful way to show off their skills.
- 7. Capture attendees’ contact information.** Put a fishbowl or another item in the center of each table or at the registration table for attendees to drop in their business cards. This will help you build your employer network and database and maintain contact with local employers and organizations year-round.
- 8. Plan and execute logistical details in a timely manner.** See suggested timeline on the next page, along with an example floor plan and photos.

Time	Task
2 months before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with instructors and staff to create an invite list for employers, workforce boards, elected officials, and industry and community leaders. • Reach out to a few potential speakers who could speak at the event (e.g., employer partners, workforce development leaders, supportive elected officials and/or successful alumni). • Identify vendors, research printing, AV, staging and giveaway item order deadlines. Print items could be invitations, handouts for the career training tables, event programs, nametags and materials from the Job Corps Materials Marketplace—JCMarketplace.com. Giveaway items could consist of pens, stickers, coffee mugs, water bottles, bags, etc. • Send save-the-date. (A template is available in the Employer Roundtable Toolkit. E-mail jobcorpsmaterials@mpf.com to request a customized save-the-date e-flier.)
1 month before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send event invitation via e-mail or, if preferred, physical mail. (E-mail jobcorpsmaterials@mpf.com for a customized invitation.) • After invitation is out, follow up with calls and e-mails to solicit RSVPs. • Order key items for event, like tables, tablecloths, chairs, staging and AV equipment. • Order printed materials available on JCMarketplace.com, like your center brochure, the employer brochures and fliers to share with employers in attendance. E-mail jobcorpsmaterials@mpf.com for other items, like outdoor directional signage, nametag templates, and step and repeat banners. • Order any small giveaway/swag materials. • Place catering orders for breakfast or lunch, or if your center offers Culinary Arts training, showcase your students' skills by enlisting them to make and provide the food. • Create a run of show with timestamps for transitions during your event. Include times for short program with speaker(s), breakout discussions and program closing. • After receiving OPA approval for pre- and post-event media outreach for your event, send a media advisory out to your local online, print, radio and television news stations. (A templated advisory is available in the Employer Roundtable Toolkit. If you need help creating a media list, let your regional MP&F contact know.)
2–3 weeks before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare brief remarks and speaker introductions for your center director or center representative. • Make sure everyone involved in setup knows where which industry tables will go, where certain participants will sit, where food and refreshments will go, how people will enter and leave the event space, what the timing for each part of the event will be.
1 week before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resend media advisory to local media as a reminder. (Template is in Employer Roundtable Toolkit.) • Begin preparing the campus for the event. This may include landscaping and cleaning of all spaces that will be visible to attendees. • Draft a post-event release (like the example in the toolkit) that can be sent with photos and approved speaker quotes from the event. • Request a post-event survey link via the JCMarketplace.com contact form or print the Post-Event Survey. • Send a follow-up e-mail or make personal calls to invitees who haven't yet RSVP'd.
2 days before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send out driving directions and parking instructions to RSVP'd guests and invited media, along with any other helpful logistical details. • Set up event space with any informational sheets and signage.

Time	Task
1 day before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place welcome and directional signage outside. Print and review talking points for program. Do a program and AV run-through.
Day of event!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a great event and take lots of photos and videos! Be sure to collect feedback via either the printed Post-Event Survey or the digital post-event survey (available by request via the JCMarketplace.com contact form). Share event recaps, including quotes from speakers, photos and videos, with local media unable to attend. (Use the media release template in the Employer Roundtable Toolkit.) Share photos and recaps with your local employer partners, center supporters and the Job Corps social media team at jcdigital@mpf.com.
Day after	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send the post-event survey along with thank you note via e-mail to event attendees. Track your survey responses via the responses' link. Set up follow-up calls and meetings with employers and workforce development partners who want to discuss ways they can partner with you and/or learn more about your career training programs.

Event Layout

There are many ways you can set up your space to hold an Employer Roundtable event. Here's an example of a possible floor layout.



Have a great event! Be sure to check out the other materials in this toolkit, and if you have any questions about the materials, reach out to jobcorpsmaterials@mpf.com.