

Training Provider Directory

The Training Provider Directory is a new internet-based service that will match job seekers with appropriate training programs to promote skills building and career advancement. This directory, which is the first comprehensive listing of NYC training programs, will also include participant ratings and completion rates so that consumers can assess program quality.

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Number Served per year¹</i>	<i>CEO Budget (City FY 08)</i>	<i>Total Budget² (City FY 08)</i>
The Department of Small Business Services	January 2008	3500	\$810,040	\$10,807,523

Problem Statement

Wide variation exists in the ability of training providers to: (1) place customers in employment and (2) place customers in employment related to the training. Due to a lack of an accountability system, providers charge non-market prices to City agencies and are not subject to monitoring for quality or effective practices. As a result, customers do not have reliable data on which to make informed training decisions.³

Research and Evidence

A study of the funds spent on training in four occupations showed evidence that NYC may not be paying the market price for job training. In 2005, the NYC Workforce Investment Act (WIA) system provided \$2.5 million worth of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for home health aides, security guards, and bus and truck drivers. Although many training providers charged NYC \$2,500 for these courses, secret shopper calls, interviews with employers and training providers about their training costs, and research on curriculum requirements established that the market price of training in these occupations is often much less. Using this research, the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) is working to align the value of ITAs with market prices for job training within a specific occupation.⁴

By restructuring and coordinating the workforce development services of training providers, SBS will be able to standardize training grants as well as the curricula of training providers. As a result, jobseekers will be able to make more informed choices about job training.

Program Description

The core components of the ITA Provider Coordination initiative include the creation of an internet based training provider directory. This directory will include jobseeker feedback, curricula surveys and research. There will also be interagency coordination in an effort to streamline the services provided by this initiative.

The vision of this project is to create an accountable and transparent training provider system for the provision of local occupational skills training. The system would prevent training provider abuses, improve the quality and focus of training related placements, and set and maintain standards of quality beyond State policies. Customers would be empowered with information about training providers through information similar to other consumer resource guides, such as the popular Zagat guides. The

directory will be populated with customer feedback, and enhanced search options. The guide will detail the quality and outcomes associated with any provider receiving funding through a city agency, and it will include occupation-specific information regarding requirements, licensing, and training curricula.

Target Population

The initiative targets the unemployed and working poor city-wide ages 18 and over who are WIA-registered participants in Workforce career centers. In addition, those receiving TANF are also eligible to participate.⁵

Expected Outcomes

Short-Term:

Correct & Complete Data Collection

- Providers access the website to effectively market training programs to appropriate jobseeker clients
- Customers make informed provider choices through accurate comparison shopping

Enhanced User Experience

- Increased ease of engagement with system for training providers
- Ease of interface/use for jobseeker customers
- Customers make informed provider choices through accurate comparison shopping
- Professionalization of user interface for agencies
- Agencies share data

Long-Term:

Correct & Complete Data Collection

- Increased completion and placement rates for all users
- Providers use and are monitored for industry-approved curricula

Enhanced User Experience

- Transparency with respect to accountability measures

Accountability and Transparency

- City-wide standards for training providers that receive government funding
- Training-relevant employment placements
- Ensure that training providers are paid market-rate and non-variable prices for equivalent trainings
- Customer feedback as a mechanism for monitoring training experience and curriculum relevance
- Training curricula informed by industry/business feedback and matched to employer demand

Leverage City Investment to Move NYC Provider Field Through Policy

- Provide technical assistance to small businesses and CBOs that run training programs
- Provide a comprehensive assessment of all courses in NY relevant to employment with government funding or without
- Agencies cooperate on administration, evaluation and monitoring of training providers and hold providers to one standard

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¹ This number is an estimate, based on prior usage of training grants.

² The total budget includes federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds.

³ New York City Department of Small Business Services. "ITA Pricing Project: Final Memo." August 6, 2006.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Depending on TANF-related work requirements, participation may be varied.