

OUR RESEARCH - EXPANDED

OUR PROBLEM STATEMENT — When looking at the opportunity to positively influence the workforce galaxy of Greater Phoenix, our team asked the question, “How are people supposed to use the workforce system if they don't know it exists?” There are a large amount of incredible organizations engaged in education and workforce development locally, yet they are all orbiting around one another, missing opportunities for collaboration or engagement with the very people they stand to serve. These organizations are all doing great work- building regionalized tools and training programs, providing upskilling and reskilling programming, and helping users access key items they need to live their day-to-day lives. Our group decided that helping people navigate the workforce was the area in which we wanted to impact the Greater Phoenix workforce galaxy.

In our first survey we asked, “Which factors do you think cause confusion as individuals attempt to navigate workforce systems and programs?” Our findings were that:

- 41.5% surveys came back most job seekers are unaware of services and how to engage in systems in general
- 32.9% of job seekers were unaware that they qualified for services and programs
- 26.6% were possibly aware of services and programs but did not see how they may benefit

Our first step was to narrow down the navigation user to a group where we could cast the widest net and reach the most people at one time, showcasing all the opportunities in the Greater Phoenix workforce galaxy. We landed on youth at the high school level, where knowledge and understanding of the workforce now could set the foundation for their lives and empower them to use the workforce at any stage of their career.

We want to make clear that as we look at how all these organizations converge in our galaxy, our goal is not to change or influence any individual organization. Rather, the goal of our team is to launch these organizations forward by ensuring that youth, and those serving them, are keenly aware of all opportunities and resources for them at every stage of their lives.

In a recent survey that our CoLab Group 1, AKA Fireball XL5 conducted, we came back with solid information that confirmed our challenge, if you give the user clear pathways for advancement this will lead to solid outcomes. In our second survey we reached out only to youth job seekers who were receiving services from a vendor, and only asked one question: “Do you feel prepared to enter the workforce, were you given the tools you will need to set you up to succeed?” Our findings were that:

- 79.6% responded, YES
- 20.4% responded, NO

On Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – Our team is very aware of how the workforce system can get in the way of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI). DEI will benefit from accessible employment options and improved navigation. These steps will aid in increasing pathways of awareness of programming which are regularly designed to address inequities, curbing injustice and increase participation across underserved audiences.

We believe that we must have a growth mindset – Open to learning and ready to listen to Arizona's bright young adults with new dreams full of excitement and passion. We mustn't fail them; we need to implement tools that break down struggles and bring light to the solution process.

Our Goal – Increase support from the workforce system in order to:

- Support Career Pathways and Career Awareness offered by the Education System
- Promote awareness of workforce services and providers for future utilization
- Increase connectivity between youth employment and career pathways through collaboration in support of youth employment
- Improve workforce navigation and access points for youth by introducing workforce system elements through multi-system collaboration

Our Recommendations – Workforce Support for Youth Career Navigation:

- Labor Market Report with Youth Pathways Detail
- Regional youth Employment Coalition
- Shared Employer Directory

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