



BetterBuildings
Workforce Peer Exchange Call: Kick-off
Call Slides and Discussion Summary

April 21, 2011



- What are peer exchange calls?
- Call logistics and attendance
- Key workforce topics
- Grant project go-around:
 - What aspects of your workforce program are you focused on now?
 - Are you using national certification programs? If so, which one(s)?
 - What are some key challenges or needs you have related to workforce?
 - Any successful strategies?
- Next steps
 - Future call topics, call frequency, format, etc.

- Effective strategies for ensuring workforce quality assurance, from training to implementation
- Strategies for building training infrastructure and networks
- National certification opportunities
- Lessons and best practices for customer rating systems and addressing under-performing contractors
- Lessons for building successful relationships with contractors
- Insights from the contractor's point of view (e.g., on workforce recruitment and retention)
- Experiences with contractor data reporting systems and strategies for ensuring timely, quality data
- Successful strategies for collecting job hours data

Participating Grant Programs



- Austin
- Charleston
- Chicago
- Cincinnati
- Connecticut
- Jacksonville
- Kansas City MO
- Los Angeles
- Maryland
- Montgomery
- New Orleans
- Portland
- Santa Barbara
- Seattle

Discussion Summary: Challenges

- Earning and maintaining customer trust
- Establishing good working relationships with training institutions (e.g., community colleges)
- Connecting training providers to needs of industry
- Creating more jobs and demand for jobs by getting contractors to hire new people and train workers
- Mitigating barriers to entry for new contractors (e.g., cost of equipment, need for “on the job” experience)
- Ensuring quality work by new/existing contractors
- Identifying good training curriculum and appropriate certification standards

Discussion Summary: Strategies



- Overcoming barriers to entry
 - Financing or scholarships for equipment/training (LA County)
 - Equipment lease program (LA County, Cincinnati)
 - Having ex-cons and other dislocated workers to commercial/demo sites rather than residences (Kansas City)
 - On the job training to “bridge the gap” between classroom learning” and being ready to work in the field
 - Mentoring program for local contractors (Kansas City)
- Quality assurance
 - In-house auditors observe first several jobs by new contractors and then a percentage after that (Cincinnati, Austin)
 - “Test out”, such as ex-post blower door analysis (Cincinnati)
 - Track contractor performance and have thresholds for “red flags” (e.g, 20-25% of jobs underperforming)
 - Focus on a small well qualified workforce vs. “throwing the doors open” (Cincinnati)
- Training Resources: Weatherization Assistance Program, NYSERDA

Discussion Summary: Future Topics



- Lessons learned from the Austin pilot project to retrofit 600 homes (study results due in May, 2011)
- Working effectively with community colleges and/or training centers (Kansas City, Cincinnati)
- Examples and discussion of Training Curriculum (e.g., WAP, NYSERDA)
- Effective strategies for working with workforce development intermediaries and networks (Kansas City, Chicago)
- Mitigating workforce barriers to entry, such equipment leasing/financing, incorporating dislocated workers, on the job training (Kansas City, LA County, Cincinnati)
- Building trust and quality assurance from training through potential actions for underperforming contractors (Cincinnati, New Orleans)
- Working with the real estate community (LA County)