

# Developing a Lifelong Learning Partnership to Strengthen the Workforce & Economy

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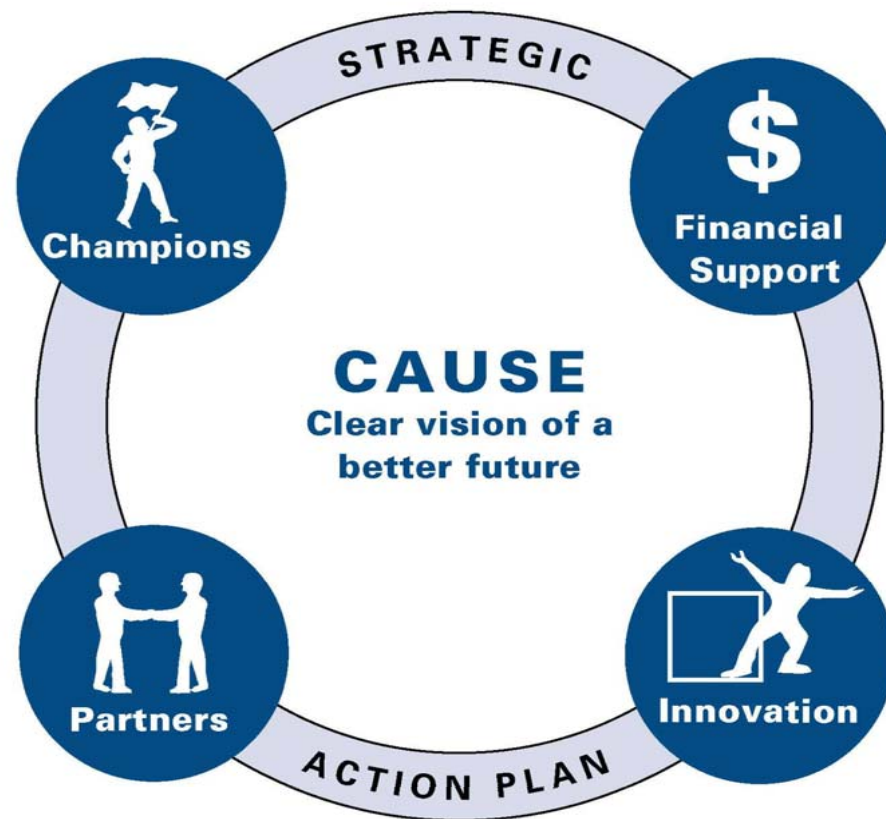
## DCA, Inc.

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- Boston-based consultancy founded in 1991
- Mobilizes communities and resources in support of social causes
- Our clients include:
  - Foundations
  - Local Governments and Federal Agencies
  - Non-governmental Organizations and Non-Profits
  - Corporations
  - Member and Trade Associations

# Cause Development<sup>®</sup>

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# What is a Cause?

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A Cause:

- is *not* a new program or marketing effort
- is an effort to achieve *transformative, lasting change* in the lives of individuals and society
- Embraces the *multiple agendas and organizations* needed to ensure success



# Successful Causes

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- **Turn an issue into an aspiration** that is a top civic priority.
- **Express a goal** that is measurable and is supported by clear strategies and responsibilities.
- **Enlist significant commitments from partners** who gain benefits from participation and success.



## Successful Causes (cont.)

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- **Actively engage leaders** as advocates for the resources and policies necessary to succeed.
- Mount an **ambitious effort** instead of incremental change.



# Successful Cause – Charlotte Reads

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- Commissioned by Knight Foundation to assess literacy programs in the Charlotte region.
- Helped create a campaign to ensure:
  - all children in Mecklenburg County enter kindergarten ready to learn;
  - all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students are able to read at or above grade level; and
  - under-educated residents take advantage of available adult education opportunities.



# Successful Cause – Charlotte Reads

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- Champion Institution: The Charlotte Chamber
  - Created community-wide agreement on goals and plan of action.
  - Created central source of information on educational resources in the region.
  - Established multi-sector partnership and leadership.



# Successful Causes – Charlotte Reads

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## □ **Results:**

- Mobilized funding to ensure that every young child at risk of school failure receives extensive support through a proven program called Bright Beginnings.
- Created partnerships and funding to significantly expand enrollment in basic education and family literacy support.
- End-of-grade test scores in literacy and math indicate significant and sustained benefits from program participation.



## Similar Initiatives

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- Asheville-Buncombe Education Coalition
  - Eliminate achievement gap; lead the state in educational performance
- Miami-Dade Family Learning Partnership
  - Provide strong education path for young families
- Louisville's Every1Reads Initiative
  - Achieve universal literacy among k-12 students as core economic development strategy



# Questions

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- About Cause Development
  
- About examples



# The challenges of developing your workforce in a “flat world”

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- ❑ *The World is Flat* by Thomas Friedman shows market barriers are falling, thereby intensifying global competition – you are no longer competing with other cities, but other nations.
- ❑ ***Quality*** of labor is more important than ***quantity***.
- ❑ Lifelong education is essential.
- ❑ Components of lifelong education system are disconnected – from one another and from the economic development world.
- ❑ Econ. Development focuses on municipalities and counties, but labor pools are drawn regionally.
- ❑ Large segments of potential workforce cannot find a clear path to life-long learning that can lead to prosperity.



## A goal for developing your workforce in a “flat world”

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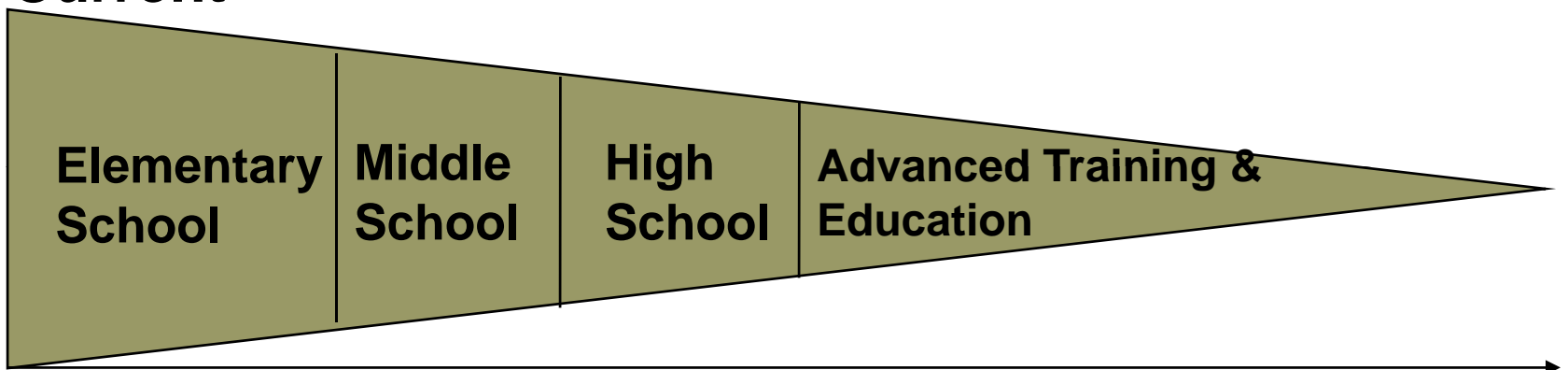
- Widening the pipeline of workers for more technical and skilled positions and create a system for continually updating skills throughout a worker’s life
  - Not just for highest-level positions (e.g., a Ph.D. Biologist)
  - For the knowledge-based positions at all levels that form the bulk of workforce needs in new economy (e.g., a lab tech)



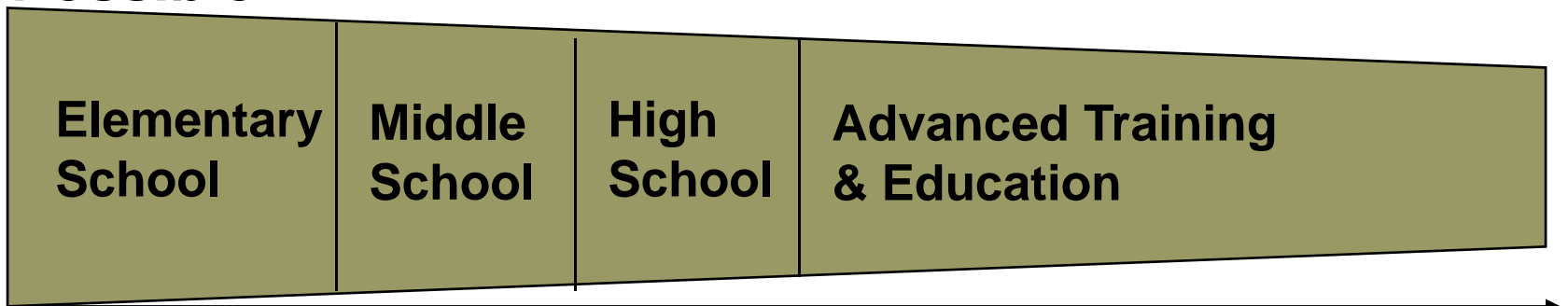
# Widening the Pipeline

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## Current



## Possible





# System Perspectives

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## Employers

- Ways to easily identify workers with key skills

## Economic Developers

- A way to show prospective employers there are skilled workers & a system of lifelong learning

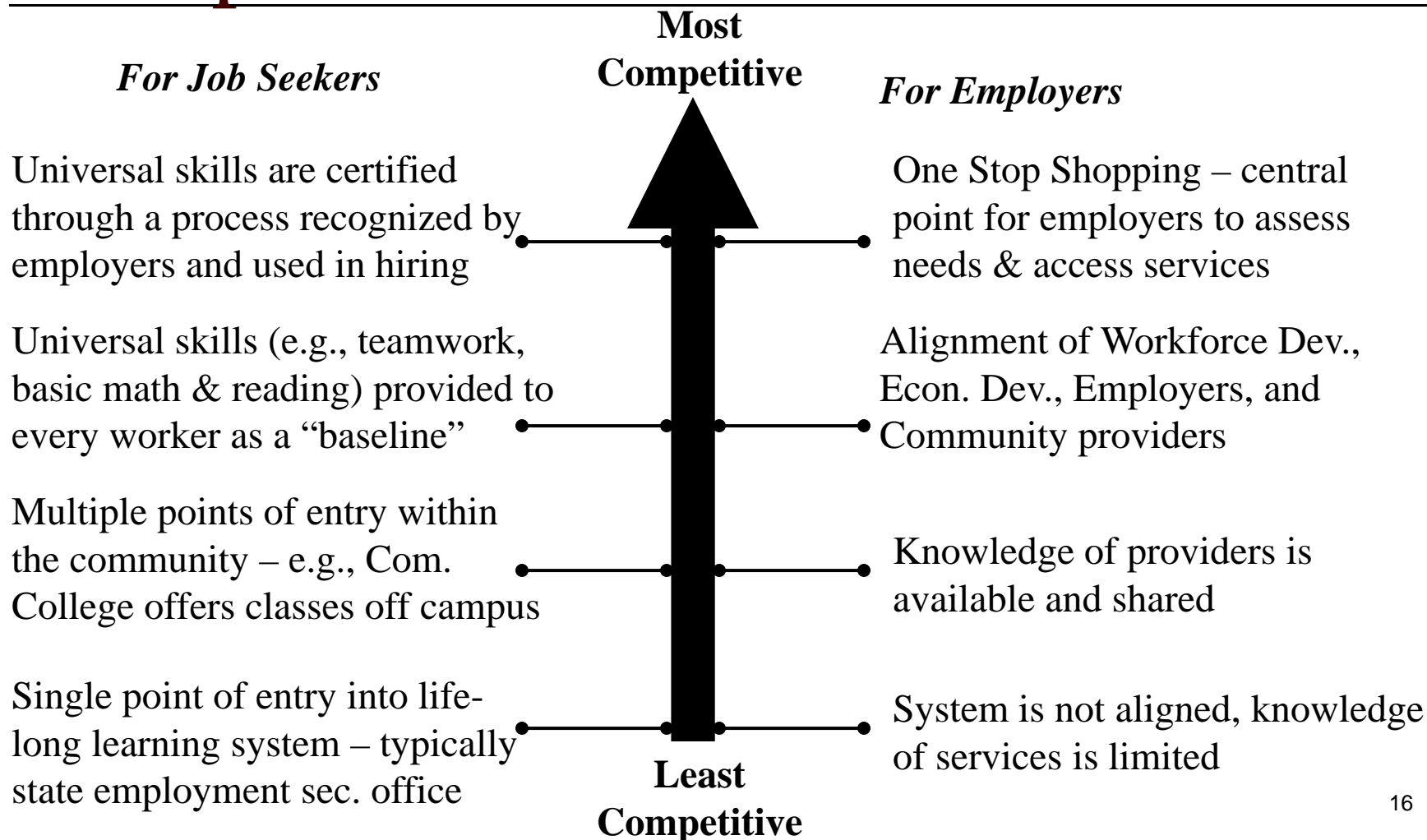
## Workers

- A clear path to prosperity in the new economy
- A variety of venues for acquiring and updating skills

## Workforce Developers & Educators

- A clear articulation of the skills that are needed for successful workforce participation

# Levels of Workforce System Competitiveness





## Creating the system

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- Widening the pipeline and creating a system for lifelong learning requires coordinated strategies among leaders in:
  - Early education
  - Public & Private schools
  - Basic literacy and skills programs
  - Community and four-year colleges and universities
  - Business
  - Economic Development
  - Workforce development
  - Grassroots/community-based organizations



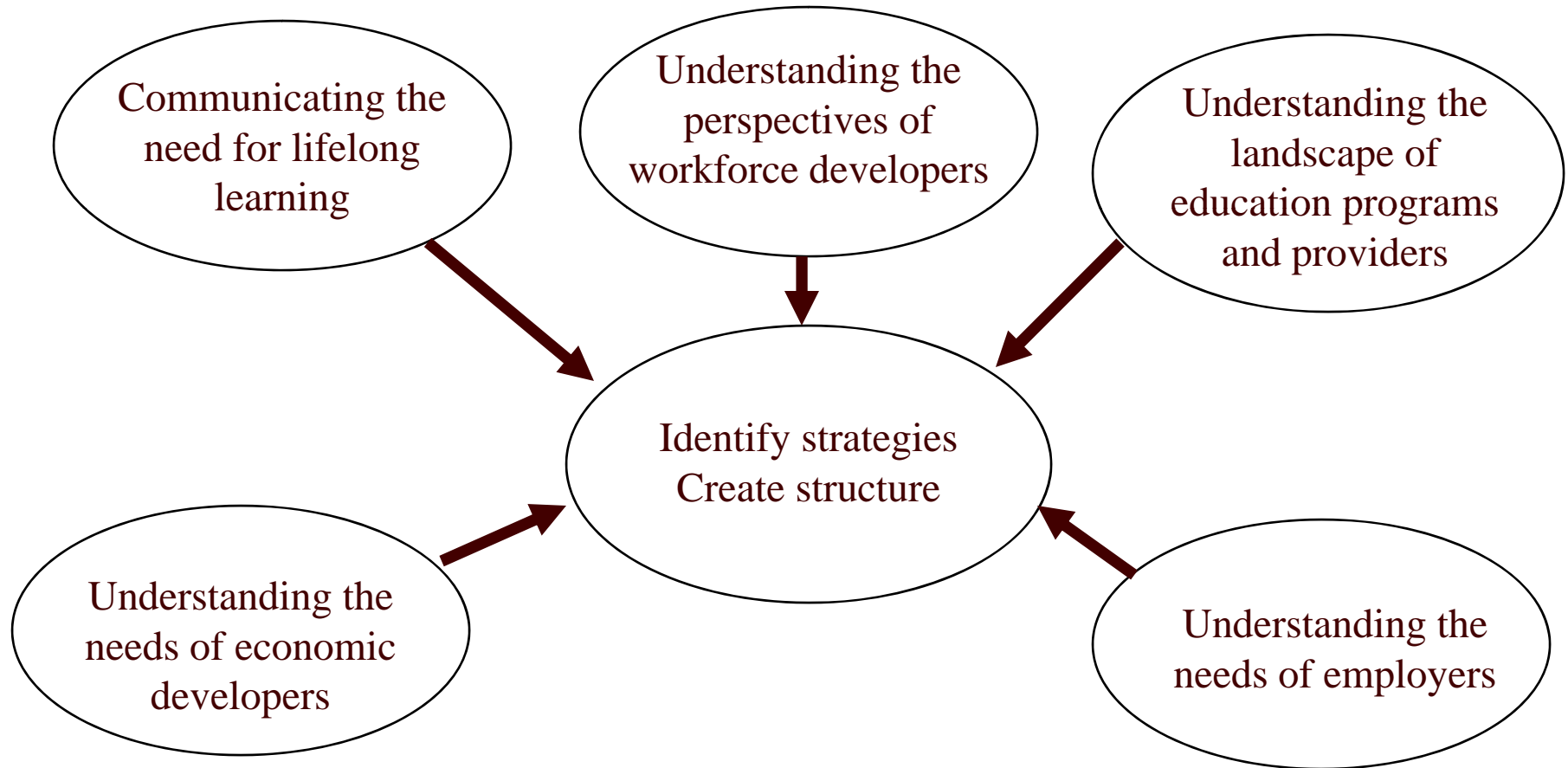
# Implications

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- How does this relate to your challenges?
- What do you hope to accomplish?

# Developing a lifelong learning partnership

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# Elements of A Lifelong Learning Campaign

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- **Accurate & Candid Local Assessment** – History, Traditions, Culture, Programmatic Assets, Leadership, Change, Future
- **Vision & Leadership** - Employers, Workforce Developers, Economic Developers, Educators & Literacy Providers, Media, Spokespersons/Celebrities
- **Unambiguous Message:**
  - Lifelong Learning is *Essential* to Economic Prosperity
  - Change is accelerating need for new knowledge, skills, teamwork, resiliency and problem solving



# Elements of A Lifelong Learning Campaign

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- Formal Structures & Mechanisms to Continually Assess, Plan and Adapt
- Coherent Vision of Future Economic & Employment Drivers
- Communications Themes, Strategies, Media and Spokespersons
- Commitment to Invest & Develop New Human, Financial and Institutional Resources

# Questions & Breakout Session

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