



JOB DESCRIPTION

Position:	Chief Program Officer
Reports To:	CEO
Positions Supervised:	Director, Community, Young Adult and Reentry Services; Director, Industry Partnerships; Senior Manager, Data Analytics

OVERVIEW

Towards Employment believes in a dynamic world of work where all people—regardless of race, justice involvement or where they live—have an opportunity to thrive. Achieving this vision takes more than just connecting people to jobs. Our mission is to champion the potential of every person to succeed in a rewarding career today, while working to create an equitable and inclusive workforce for tomorrow. Using the proven WorkAdvance model as a solution, we increase Clevelanders' chances to advance by providing skill development for in-demand jobs, comprehensive supports that address the social determinants of work, extended career coaching, and direct connections to employers. Towards Employment's pathway model helps job seekers connect to careers that lead to economic mobility. Additionally, we advocate for policies that reduce workplace inequities and improve job quality, partnering with employers, workforce providers and government leaders to promote equitable access to living wages and quality jobs and eliminate racial income gaps.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

The CPO serves on the executive team of Towards Employment. The chief program officer position is critical to achieving the growth in community impact envisioned by our strategic plan. S/he oversees TE's key program portfolios, including Community, Young Adult & Re-Entry Services, which provides job preparation tailored to the needs of target populations, and Industry Partnerships which provides sector- specific job training, placement, and advancement programming, ensuring industry-informed curriculum and deep employer engagement. The CPO is skilled in strategic planning; risk management; resource development; program development, management, and evaluation; and has a strong interest in building and sustaining collaborative relationships within and across organizations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Program Strategy and Planning:

- Develop and implement program strategies aligned with the organization's goals and objectives.
- Create a program roadmap, defining milestones, deliverables, and dependencies.
- Conduct program evaluations and make adjustments to ensure successful outcomes.
- Research and stay abreast of emerging trends, opportunities, and technologies relevant to workforce and career pathways with particular focus on successfully connecting formerly incarcerated, young adults and working poor.
- Pursue opportunities to ensure the short- and long-term scalability of TE's programs. This may include application of new technologies, building new collaborative partnerships to leverage additional competencies or geographic reach, or formalizing tools for greater efficiency and replication.
- Develop funding models to support initiatives that strengthen TE's financial position.
- Engage in workforce collaborations as a prominent thought leader, recommending responsive approaches to evolving community needs.
- Staff the Program Committee of the Towards Employment Board



Program Management:

- Support Program Directors in the execution of programs from initiation to closure, ensuring adherence to project management best practices.
- Allocate and manage program resources, including budgets, personnel, and equipment, to achieve program goals.
- Monitor program progress, identify risks and issues, and implement appropriate mitigation strategies.
- Foster effective communication and collaboration among program teams, stakeholders, and senior management.
- Oversee internal Centers of Excellence to ensure continuous learning and application of best practices across key functions (Case Management, Training, Career Coaching, Data and Employer Engagement).

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Establish and maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders, including employers, policy makers, program, and community partners.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to understand their needs and expectations and incorporate them into program plans and activities.
- Represent TE in the community; Regularly communicate program status, milestones, and risks to stakeholders, ensuring transparency and alignment.

Performance Monitoring and Reporting:

- Review performance metrics and measurement systems to track program progress and outcomes.
- Prepare regular program status reports, highlighting key achievements, challenges, and recommended actions for senior management.
- Conduct post-program evaluations to identify lessons learned and areas for improvement.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree in a relevant field (e.g., Business Administration, Social Work, Human Resources, Criminal Justice) or equivalent experience.
- At least 7 years' experience in workforce development programming.
- Demonstrated understanding of criminal justice reform and of the racial disparities generated by the current system.
- Proven experience in program management, including managing large-scale programs or portfolios.
- Strong supervisory skills.
- Strong understanding of project management methodologies and best practices.
- Demonstrated networking and coalition building skills.
- Experience working across workforce, economic development, and human services systems, and identifying opportunities for alignment and collaboration.
- Sound financial acumen, including budgeting, forecasting, and resource allocation.
- Experience in risk management and implementing risk mitigation strategies.

COMPETENCIES

This opportunity poses a unique opportunity to demonstrate leadership for the succession planning of the organization. Success in this position requires:

- **Relationship Building** - Builds and maintains effective relationships with all stakeholders, including staff and external individuals and organizations that can impact Towards Employment's success and future. Outstanding ability to effectively communicate plans and desired outcomes.



- **Problem Solving** – Demonstrates ability to anticipate organizational needs and challenges, gather needed information, synthesize, and analyze sometimes disparate data, assess risk, make recommendations, and take decisive action.
- **Emotional Intelligence** – The ability to understand what motivates the team, and to lead with consideration of the whole employee; able to build rapport and maximize individual strengths while driving outcomes. Demonstrated ability to work with people from diverse cultural, socioeconomic, racial, and educational backgrounds.
- **Managerial Courage** – Actively engages in the thought leadership of the organization; seeks information, expresses informed opinions, and respectfully challenges status quo; provides feedback to others; takes action to the betterment of the organization.
- **Intellectual Curiosity** – Genuine interest in the models of work and ability to ask critical questions and challenge conventional thinking with a continuous improvement mindset.
- **Social Justice Advocate** – Passionate about promoting racial equity and inclusion at personal, organizational and systems level.

10/2023