

Refining Program Implementation Through Continuous Improvement Cycles

Client: UNCF Institute for Capacity Building

Overview

A college degree is considered an investment that pays dividends through higher earnings and better employment stability, but graduation alone does not ensure equity in these outcomes. College graduates from low socioeconomic backgrounds and students of color, particularly African Americans, experience higher rates of unemployment and underemployment and lower earnings compared with other groups.

To address this issue, the UNCF Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) seeks to enhance the capacity of secondary institutions to help their students find meaningful employment in their desired career fields. The initiative's multifaceted approach supports experiential learning activities, faculty development, technical assistance, stronger campus-industry interactions, and systems change. As part of this work UNCF is providing technical assistance to 9 of the 24 funded institutions.

As part of this technical assistance, Insight is helping colleges to focus on one or two meaningful changes related to the CPI. The motivating questions asked of the institutions are—

- What is your institution trying to accomplish?
- How will your institution know a change is an improvement?
- What change can your institution make that will result in improvement?



Specifically, Insight is—

- Conducting Plan, Do, Study, Act cycles of improvement
- Defining issues within strategies that represent the “right fit” for a rapid-cycle, continuous improvement approach
- Helping to identify measurable outcomes to support the improvement approaches
- Identifying areas of focus that may be suitable for a rigorous testing approach such as a quasi-experimental design or a randomized control trial
- Hosting webinars to share findings

Products

Research briefs, webinars, technical assistance materials