

NATIONAL CONVERGENCE TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Implementing the BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM (BILT) Model of Business Engagement

*A **Toolkit** for Strengthening Industry Commitment for Technical Programs*



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BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Almost all community and technical colleges are required to hold business advisory committee meetings annually or semi-annually to obtain business/industry input on their Associate of Applied Sciences - and sometimes Associate of Science - programs. However, these meetings could often be described as "rubber stamp" events during which faculty tell employers what they are doing in the program rather than asking business members what they should be doing in the program. This one-sided approach often results in graduates who are not best-aligned with business need and therefore not as employable as they could be and it often results in employer teams that are not really engaged beyond just the meetings.

The Business & Industry Leadership Team (BILT) model, originated by the National Science Foundation Convergence Technology Center of Excellence based at Collin College in North Texas, puts businesses in a co-leadership role for college technical programs so they have direct input into the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that program graduates should possess 12-36 months into the future. The BILT model has been implemented at more than 100 colleges and projects in multiple disciplines across the country and has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor and Department of Education as a leading model for strategic employer engagement. The goal is for colleges to align their curriculum to BILT-prioritized KSAs so graduates are workforce-ready. Because BILT members must be Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to truly know what KSAs are needed, BILTs should focus on a single program rather than all the programs in a division. While it is not essential for colleges adopting the BILT model to retitle their new and improved business advisory committee a BILT, doing so can help signify to employers, faculty, and administrators the importance of the group's shift in mission and process.

Business engagement is also improved with a more structured KSA evaluation process, one that includes both discussion of and voting on each of the KSAs. This structured process removes much of the subjectivity that can occur when the KSA evaluation relies totally on discussion captured by traditional meeting minutes.

In short, think of the BILT program as…

- A business advisory council "on steroids" whereby employers co-lead the program.
- A structured, repeatable process that can be used for any technical program.
- A model that puts employers in a co-leadership role.
- A method to both ALIGN curriculum to industry needs and BUILD lasting relationships with employers to greatly increase their engagement with your program.

The BILT model is scalable. It can work for different sized needs: a local BILT can advise a single college or district; a regional BILT can advise multiple colleges; a national BILT can advise colleges coast to coast; and a project-specific BILT can advise a particular initiative like a grant.

> ***"Our goal is to produce graduates that are ready to work. And that means we need to teach them the most up-to-date skills in the classroom. That's why the BILT is necessary."***
>
> -- Dr. Abe Johnson, Collin College

The table below illustrates some of the differences between a traditional business advisory model and the more engaged, business-led BILT model.

ADVISORY BOARD	BUSINESS-LED BILT
May only give advice and suggestions	Co-leads
May “rubber stamp” existing program	Actively helps faculty improve program
May only meet once a year	Meets at least three times a year
Faculty may drive meeting agenda	Employers help develop agenda – especially sharing trends
Job skills recommendations delivered through discussions	Job skills recommendations created through voting process and synchronous discussion
May not be highly invested in success of the program	Feels ownership of the program and its students
May not be kept in the loop on how suggestions are implemented	Regularly informed on how suggestions are implemented (also involved in discussions to resolve implementation challenges)

BENEFITS OF A BILT

Implementing a BILT is a win-win-win—for students, faculty, and BILT members.

STUDENTS:	FACULTY:	BILT MEMBERS:
Sought by BILT members because businesses feel ownership of courses, certificates, and degrees.	Teach with assurance they are addressing the competencies businesses want future employees to possess.	Connect to a pipeline of "workforce ready" job
Considered first for opportunities such as internships, even before they complete the program.	Benefit from BILT members serving as guest speakers or assisting with recruitment events, on-campus and off.	Develop professional relationships with other BILT members and with the college.
Gain ready access to BILT members as mentors.	Discover industry trends from BILT members in time for curriculum adjustment because of trend-focused meetings.	Give back to the community in a way that makes a tangible difference.
Benefit from opportunities to attend workshops delivered by BILT members on topics such as interviewing skills, resume writing, workplace challenges.	Enroll in free or reduced-cost professional development provided by BILT members.	Know that their time is valued.
Learn from curriculum tightly aligned with employer needs.	Participate in possible externships sponsored by BILT members.	Attend efficient meetings where their time is not wasted.

"Leveraging the expertise of educators and the passion of industry leaders, the BILT framework enables powerful collaborations that ensure program curriculum meets employer needs and that students are well-prepared for the digitally-transformed workplace."

-- Mercedes Adams, NetApp

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A BILT

The most successful BILTs always...

- Focus on a single program (e.g., software development) rather than focusing on all the programs within a division (e.g., IT) at the same time because BILT members must be SMEs in the program area.
- Use an efficient, structured, repeatable voting process that frames discussion to evaluate program KSAs one by one.
- Involve faculty, who buy into the BILT model and attend the meetings, knowing that their program will be stronger when employers co-lead the work. Faculty still "own" the resulting curriculum. Faculty must cross-reference the BILT-prioritized KSAs to existing curriculum, identify possible content gaps, and update curriculum as needed to address KSAs needed by businesses.
- Provide BILT members with specific feedback from the college faculty regarding how they implemented the prioritized KSAs in curriculum. And, if faculty cannot implement desired KSAs for some reason, the reasons for non-implementation are discussed with the BILT for possible solutions.
- Meet 3-4 times per year.

    1. A longer face-to-face synchronous virtual or hybrid meeting focusing on the KSA voting and discussion. These meetings are approximately 2-2.5 hours
    2. 2-3 other meetings should last 45-90 minutes and can be accomplished through virtual meetings to focus on:
        a. Feedback on KSA implementation in curriculum as well as updates on the target program and any associated grant, and
        b. A discussion of industry trends, three years or more into the future, allowing faculty to begin planning for needed curricular changes.
    3. Rather than having each recruiter of a BILT member explain the BILT, those recruiting invite potential members to a short virtual Orientation Meeting. An Orientation Meeting will familiarize both existing advisory council members and potential new BILT members with the benefits of converting to the BILT model. This Orientation Meeting – which runs no more than 45 minutes to encourage attendance – is a way to introduce the BILT concept in a low-stakes setting to key employers. Attendees are there to better understand the BILT model and decide whether they're interested and able to participate going forward. Orientation slides are also shared with potential new members one-to-one in following years.
    4. Always invite faculty to attend so they can hear BILT comments first-hand.

5. Employers report they are more likely to hire graduates from programs for which they have curricular co-leadership responsibility.

    a. Employer time is respected.

    b. A method is provided to ensure employer input is consistently and seriously considered by faculty members.

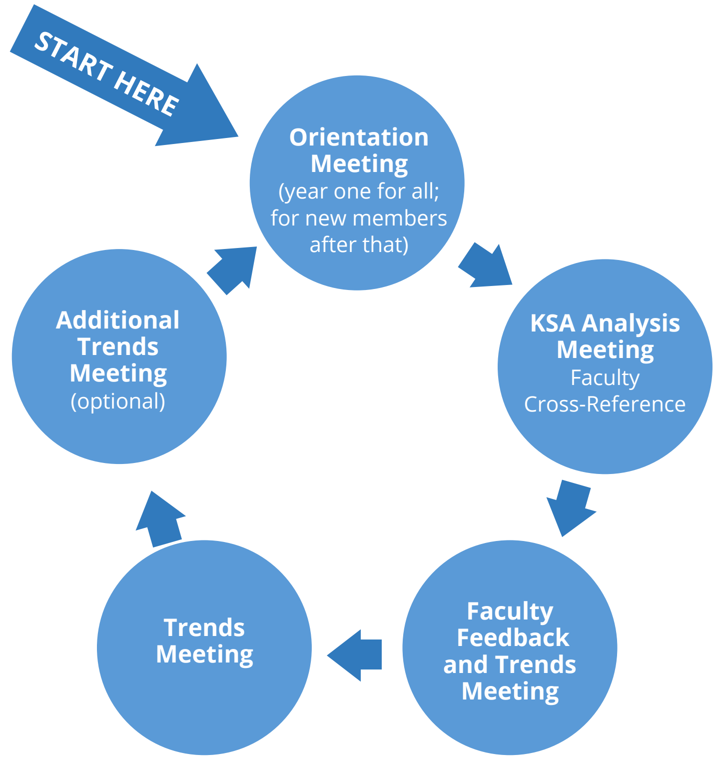
    c. Employers consistently receive feedback on their recommendations.

> ***"The BILT has inspired industry leaders and faculty to unite in an effort to build students into the very best workforce-ready employees."***
>
> -- Matt Glover, Yern

12-MONTH BILT MEETING CYCLE

Building and maintaining a BILT is a high-touch activity with two-way communication.

The first convening of the BILT is an Orientation Meeting for all BILT members to explain the process and secure interest. Inviting employers to a 1-hour orientation meeting is a much easier ask than starting out inviting them to a longer KSA Meeting. After the first year, use the orientation meeting for new BILT members as they join, and aim to add 1-2 new members annually.



After that, the BILT meetings can follow an annual schedule of:

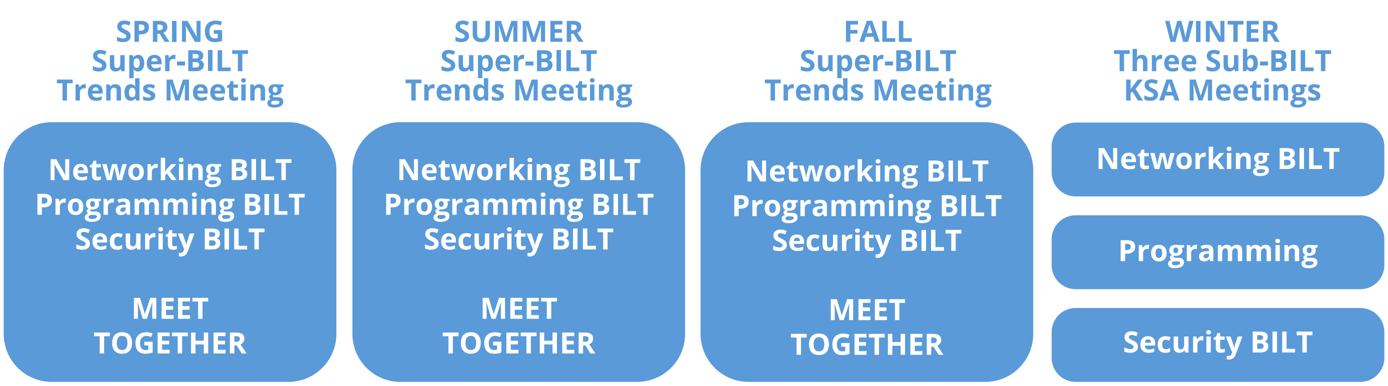
- One annual KSA analysis meeting held in hybrid mode – in person for those who are able and web meeting software for others. This is a single 2-2.5 hour meeting per year.
- Two to three Industry Trends virtual meetings held each year via web meeting software.

The first Trends Meeting after the annual KSA analysis must feature detailed feedback to the BILT regarding the implementation of the KSA analysis and recommendations based on the faculty cross-reference meeting.

Departments covering a number of different disciplines may want to consider dividing your BILT to better leverage the know-how of subject matter experts. In other words, don't ask BILT members to provide expertise across multiple disciplines. Use them only in the areas where they can help.

- Convene a "super BILT" for broad departmental, industry-wide discussions and trends.
- Build smaller niche "sub BILTs" to examine specific KSAs for a single discipline area.

Here's one example for an IT program:



IDENTIFYING AND RECRUITING THE RIGHT BILT MEMBERS

- BILT members must be technical SMEs for the program being addressed and be able to predict both their specific future needs and the overall future needs of the industry.
- Examples of effective members include:
  - High-level technical executives (strategists) who are responsible for evaluating future technologies for their companies.
  - First-line hiring managers who are aware of the KSAs they currently need their employees to have as well as the challenges they face.
  - Recent program graduates working as technicians currently doing the job represented by the sub-discipline. While technicians are often not attuned to future workforce trends, recruiting graduates adds important perspectives to the BILT; they have a unique position of knowing the program and also working in the industry.
- Human resources professionals should not be the sole representative for a company. (Human resource staff generally receive their KSA knowledge from hiring managers; therefore, their knowledge is second-hand.)
- Recruit companies that are representative of those who hire your graduates – both large corporations and small businesses.
- Ensure department faculty understand and are engaged in the BILT member selection process. Faculty are sometimes apprehensive about the BILT "co-leading" the work. In reality, faculty retain control of the curriculum but use the BILT's prioritized KSAs and discussion to guide curriculum updates.
- Suggestions for finding potential BILT members involve networking with your own human network, both professional and social. Possible approaches include using the following avenues to invite potential BILT members to a short Orientation Meeting:
  - Involve existing advisory council members (do not fire anyone from an existing program advisory council), and mine contacts on advisory councils for related programs.
  - Talk with workforce groups on campus who may already have contacts with employers to get leads.
  - Contact your president and ask for personal introductions to appropriate community contacts; also ask your president to mention the need to college trustees.
  - Connect with local organizations like the Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development (and workforce boards) to get virtual introductions to likely BILT members.
  - Collaborate actively with industry associations, asking for participation so that your program can produce more qualified graduates.

    - “Cold call” on target businesses in your region. A BILT is beneficial and not difficult to promote, though gaining one confirmed attendee may take several calls.

- Recruiting BILT members is a high touch process. Reach out both via phone and email. Printed letters mailed with a stamp can also help your message stand out.

- Before you start recruiting, be sure you understand how much of a time commitment you’re seeking.

- The most important element for any recruitment effort is to understand your prospect’s WIIFM (“what’s in it for me?”). How will participation in the BILT give that person something of value? What about the BILT will be most appealing? Do they need more workers? Do they want to “give back” and support education? Do they want to hear from their peers about industry trends?

- Be sure to also invite faculty to the BILT Orientation Meeting.

BILTs also often require the involvement of stakeholders who are not in industry. Be sure to customize your pitch to your audience to best address their unique WIIFM.

- External – You may need to sell the BILT to outside groups like Workforce Boards, Economic Development Corporations, or Trade Associations. To recruit them, remember that most of these organizations are interested in strategies to create more qualified workers in a specific job area. They may be interested in attending KSA and trends meetings as observers to better understand what industry needs.

- Internal – Implementing a BILT may require approvals of administrators, whether it’s a Department Chair or a Vice President. Keep in mind that administrators are often motivated by enrollment numbers, which an active BILT helping align curriculum to workforce needs can certainly help deliver. As for faculty, recruit them by focusing on their interest to teach relevant content to their students. Explain that the program’s success and profile will only improve with a closer partnership with industry that supports curriculum aligned with the workforce.

PREPARING FOR YOUR BILT ORIENTATION MEETING

As mentioned earlier, the purpose of the Orientation Meeting is to explain the value proposition for implementing the BILT model to existing advisory council members and new prospective BILT members. You will explain how the BILT model will invigorate your advisory council and how implementing the BILT is mutually beneficial.

This meeting is almost always held online and takes 45-60 minutes. When inviting new BILT members to join it's often easier to get them to attend this shorter meeting.

Logistics:

- Pick a date and time.
- Use the Orientation Script template (and TIPS) – see Resources on page 35 – to build an email and/or printed invitation to the meeting - or to create a phone script to use when calling prospective BILT members individually.
- Schedule your meeting in the web platform of your choice (i.e., Zoom, WebEx).
- Arrange for web-meeting invitations to be sent to BILT members and to faculty three weeks in advance with reminders sent one week, and then two days prior to the meeting. Do not send reminders to those who have already declined to attend.
- Track RSVPs to keep tabs on who's coming, who's declined, and who hasn't responded. A good rule of thumb is that half of your positive RSVPs will not show up, so if you want six to attend, you need 12 to RSVP "yes."
- Customize the Orientation PowerPoint template to guide your meeting.
- Host the Orientation Meeting to explain the BILT and to invite the employer attendees to fully participate in your program BILT.
- End the meeting by asking attendees to join in on the upcoming BILT KSA Meeting, and tell them they will receive an invitation to that meeting.

Communicating the BILT Transition for Existing Business Advisory Committee Members

- Let your existing BILT members know that you're planning to convert the current business advisory committee format into a more active BILT. Since they're already committed to the program, you'll just need to explain details of the new model.
- Invite them to your Orientation Meeting so they can better understand this more engaged approach.
- Understand that some of your existing BILT members may choose to leave.

YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

The elevator pitch should consist of 4-5 sentences and describe:

- Your program.
- Why you need employer SMEs.
- What you need them to do and how long it will take.
- Potential WIIFM for them (e.g., Would your company benefit from a trends discussion with other key employers in our area?).
- You'll end the elevator pitch by asking for their participation.

In addition to preparing the pitch itself, also take time to brainstorm possible objections to your pitch and how you can best respond to those. Don't be caught off guard by an obvious question or objection to what you're proposing. This may include, for example, knowing specifics of labor market demand for a specific job.

Elevator pitches should be customized for each prospect so you can clearly address the value of your work from the listener's point-of-view (POV) and appeal to their WIIFM.

Here's one possible elevator pitch:

> ***We at (your college name) want to align a program in (program name) with employer demand in our area, and we are adopting the Business & Industry Leadership Team Model for our advisory council. The BILT is a proven model that puts area employers in a co-leadership role for programs.***
>
> ***We invite (business rep name or their company) to become part of our BILT team to guide our curriculum so that the knowledge and skills of our graduates better-align with your needs for job candidates.***
>
> ***Could you join us for a virtual orientation session on (date and time) to learn more about our BILT and how your participation may be beneficial? We will meet no longer than thirty minutes.***

> *"The professors and instructors are very busy doing a great job of teaching the curriculum. And that doesn't often leave enough time to really go out and do the research, attend the conferences, and do the future studies work of how that will impact businesses moving forward."*
>
> -- Glenn Wintrich, RDM Innovation Training

PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST BILT KSA MEETING

Once a year, BILT members will meet to prioritize a detailed list of entry level KSAs (knowledge, skills, and abilities) for 12-36 months into the future. This online vote – and the synchronous discussion that follows – is a structured, repeatable process.

Logistics:

- Pick a date and reserve a room. For face-to-face meetings, an 8:30 am start time on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday often works best because business representatives can come directly to the meeting rather than trying to extricate themselves from their offices in the middle of the day. However, be sensitive to your employers and ask a few of them what timing will work best. Always plan for web-meeting attendance as well so that those who cannot or do not want to travel to campus can participate. This meeting is typically 2-2.5 hours.

- Ensure catering will be available for a meal or snacks for face-to-face meetings, especially coffee and water throughout.

- Secure commitment from a non-biased, experienced facilitator to ensure that the meeting runs efficiently and ends on time. Typically, this person is outside of the faculty because faculty often have a difficult time accepting even constructive criticism on their curriculum. A dean or assistant dean might be appropriate.

Drafting Invitations for New Members

- Review the BILT KSA script template – see Resources on page 35 – and customize for use in a printed and/or email invitation and a telephone follow-up. Email and printed invitations always require telephone follow-up.

- Arrange for meeting invitations to be sent to BILT members and to faculty three weeks in advance with reminders sent one week, and then two days prior to the meeting.

- You may also want to invite the appropriate dean, vice president, and even the president to give them an opportunity to learn more about your work.
- In the invitation, which goes out 3 weeks before the meeting:
    - Identify the value proposition (WIIFM – "what's in it for me?") for BILT members. The value to each business representative may differ; some may want to have an improved pipeline of candidates for open jobs, while some may want to retrain their workers. Almost all BILT members want to see more qualified job candidates.
    - Be clear that a meal or a snack will or will not be provided. (Quality food and coffee will improve any face-to-face meeting, but it need not be elaborate.)
    - State whether the meeting will be face-to-face, virtual, or both
    - Tell them if they need to bring a device to the meeting for voting
    - Ask invitees to RSVP to a person who can track responses and send web meeting "save the dates" or full invitations to those who respond positively so that time on their calendar is blocked.
- Advise the invitees that someone from the college will follow up to answer any questions, and do so via phone.
- Remember that invites are sent three weeks in advance with reminders sent one week, and then two days prior to the meeting.
- For your first KSA Meeting, plan to mail printed and hand-signed invitations in stamped envelopes so the invitation stands out and is more likely to be opened. Also email the invitation, but don't use email only as email is too easily ignored by individuals not yet familiar with your program.
- Once your BILT is well-established, email communication will be more effective.
- Modify the KSA PowerPoint template – see Resources on page 35 – to guide your meeting.

KSA Invitation Follow-Up and Other Preparation for Face-to-Face KSA Meeting

- Secure A/V equipment including a projector and screen, plus a webcam and microphone if some are participating remotely.
- Provide web meeting access to the face-to-face meeting, if possible, so those who cannot attend in person may phone in and/or view the meeting via web. It helps to have screen sharing capabilities to display information for discussion; meeting software such as GoToMeeting, WebEx, TEAMs, and Zoom have this capability.
- Secure/confirm catering; arrange for water, coffee, and meals/snacks.

- Reconfirm the room reservation and arrange for room set-up. (Typically, a "U" within a "U" plus a refreshment table and a registration table. The inner "U" is for the business representatives, and the outer "U" is for the faculty and staff. The room arrangement may need to vary depending on the room size or shape. At minimum, the business representatives need to sit around a "U.")

- Invite/confirm a person who will be the minute-taker in the room. Also plan to record the meeting and use the web-meeting software's transcript capability. This individual can also staff the registration table.

Photo from: https://classroomessentialsonline.com/blog/the-21st-century-classroom-7-ways-to-arrange-collaborative-desks

To help guide your development of KSAs, below are the definitions the CTC used. Be sure you let your BILT members see these as well.

Knowledge	Knowledge focuses on the understanding of concepts. It is theoretical and not practical. An individual may have an understanding of a topic or tool or some textbook knowledge of it but have no experience applying it. For example, someone might have read hundreds of articles on health and nutrition, many of them in scientific journals, but that doesn't make that person qualified to dispense advice on nutrition.
Skills	The capabilities or proficiencies developed through training or hands-on experience. Skills are the practical application of theoretical knowledge. Someone can take a course on investing in financial futures, and therefore has knowledge of it. But getting experience in trading these instruments
Abilities	Often confused with skills, yet there is a subtle but important difference. Abilities are the innate traits or talents that a person brings to a task or situation. Many people can learn to negotiate competently by acquiring knowledge about it and practicing the skills it requires. A few are brilliant negotiators because they have the innate ability to persuade. Abilities may also be used for "soft" skills in many areas.

"I think that the BILT model is not an option. I think it's a must."

-- Carolyn Corbin, Center for the 21st Century

Preparing the KSAs for Voting

The most important annual role for the BILT is to conduct a job skills validation of program Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs), using a process that originated in the US Air Force. The KSA analysis process was first used in the 1990s at Richland College and then at Collin College starting in 2003. It is a modified DACUM process that takes 2-2.5 hours (using the electronic voting process) and can be used for any technical program at any size college. The process has been used successfully in rural colleges in Arkansas, Iowa, Montana, Nebraska, and South Carolina, and in urban college districts in Arizona, California, Florida, Texas, and beyond.

The KSA Meeting relies a voting process followed by a facilitated discussion, and both parts are equally important. It is important to resist the urge to send out the KSAs via email and ask the BILT members to rank the items without discussion. Experience has shown that effective discussion only happens synchronously, not through emails. Further, those who view and rank the KSAs prior to the meeting can feel that they have already done their work and may decide that their attendance at the meeting is not needed.

That said, after the first KSA meeting, some colleges have had success asking BILT members to vote on the KSAs on their own ahead of the meeting and then use the meeting to discuss the results as a group. This is not the ideal approach, but it can work if you're able to get the employers who vote on their own to also attend the meeting.

The information that follows contains details and a timeline of activities to help you prepare for a KSA meeting.

Creating the Pro Forma List of KSAs

- Create the pro forma list of KSAs. Ideally, also ask key campus personnel and 1-2 employers to suggest revisions to your draft list prior to the meeting. This initial list is the best guess at the possible KSAs the employers will want. Providing this list shortens the time needed for employers to identify needed KSAs.
- Never start with a blank wall – always give the BILT something to which they can respond.
- Do not assume you know what employers want in graduates; let them tell you.
- Pro forma KSA list is:
    - A starting point for discussion; business representatives may add, change, or delete items during the meeting.
    - No more than 75-125 items, maybe less. Rule of thumb: 30-35 KSAs per each hour of meeting (e.g., 2-hour meeting = 80-100 KSAs, 2.5-3-hour meeting = 105-125 KSAs).
    - The list may initially be largely knowledge areas (The Ks from the KSAs), especially in new programs.
- Here are some strategies for developing the pro forma list:
    - Incorporate multiple sources of information, if possible.
    - Identify similar programs at other colleges and start with the student learning outcomes of the courses within those programs.
    - Identify and use national standards, if they exist.
    - Look for help from government resources like NIST or CareerOneStop.
    - Involve a small number of employers to help develop pro forma list.
    - Use a Google search to find KSAs.
    - Pay for data from workforce research firms like EMSI Burning Glass.
    - Be sure to also add some “future-facing” items learned from thought leaders.
- Note: Skills databases such as O*NET Online are good resources but recognize that they provide static KSAs for existing job titles and are not future-facing.
- Be sure to eliminate duplicates from your pro forma list before sharing with your employers.
- Each KSA item should be a single concept or skill. If you have an item with the word “and” in it, take steps to split it into two separate items. This will avoid the problem of your BILT liking one half of the item but not the other.

Below is a sample pro forma list prepared prior to the KSA Meeting. Note the "4 3 2 1" columns on the right, which are used to tally (and automatically average) the real-time voting.

2 Weeks Before Face-to-Face KSA Meeting

- Tabulate the RSVPs.

	Infrastructure KSAs	# votes (4 = most important)				green cells ≥ 2.60
		4	3	2	1	Avg
	Knowledge Knowledge focuses on the understanding of concepts. It is theoretical and not practical. An individual may have an understanding of a topic or tool or some textbook knowledge of it but have no experience applying it. For example, someone might have read hundreds of articles on health and nutrition, many of them in scientific journals, but that doesn't make that person qualified to dispense advice on nutrition.					
K-1	Knowledge of computer networking concepts and protocols, and network security methodologies.					
K-2	Knowledge of laws, regulations, policies, and ethics as they relate to cybersecurity and privacy (e.g. PCI, PII, PHI, GDPR). Note connection to K-8 below.					
K-3	Knowledge of cybersecurity and privacy principles.					
K-4	Knowledge of cyber threats and vulnerabilities.					
K-5	Knowledge of specific operational impacts of cybersecurity lapses.					
K-6	Knowledge of communication methods, principles, and concepts that support the network infrastructure.					
K-7	Knowledge of capabilities and applications of network equipment including routers, switches, bridges, servers, transmission media, and related hardware.					
K-8	Knowledge of risk management, cybersecurity and privacy principles used to manage risks related to the use, processing, storage, and transmission of information or data.					
K-9	Knowledge of information technology (IT) security principles and methods (e.g., firewalls, demilitarized zones, encryption).					

- Phone those who have not yet RSVP'd to promote the event and get responses. No response may simply mean an email was missed.
- Aim for at least 15-20 positive RSVPs to get 8 to 10 attendees. It is typical for as many as half of those responding positively to have something come up at the last minute that prevents them from attending.
- Ensure the KSA list has been finalized and reviewed; import KSAs into an electronic Google voting form and create the summary spreadsheet that will automatically tally the votes during the meeting. Test the voting form and summary sheet.
    - Votes are automatically recorded via the electronic voting form and spreadsheet. Manual vote counting is no longer required.
    - Learn more about how to use this free online system by referring to the Resources on page 35.
- Tip: If you wish to use a system other than the Google form arrangement CTC has used, be

sure you can show the number of votes for “4,” “3,” “2,” and “1” and the average.

- Test the A/V and web-meeting equipment and software. Remember also to have handy a conference phone – even for local meetings – to allow remote participation. Also ensure that BILT members in your room have microphones available, if needed, for them to be heard on the Zoom call.

- Prepare for the Faculty Cross-Reference Meeting that will follow the KSA Meeting:

  - Determine date, time, and room for meeting. (Soon after the KSA Meeting is optimal so that faculty can recall employer discussions more easily but at the latest you want to meet so there’s time to make adjustments prior to the next BILT meeting, at which time you will provide feedback)

  - Invite faculty via calendar appointment, not via a standard email invitation.

  - Working with faculty, identify courses that are or may be included in targeted certificate/degree.

  - Input course names or numbers into the KSA spreadsheet on the right side (hide these columns during the KSA Meeting).

1 Week Before Face-to-Face KSA Meeting

- Send reminder email/calendar invitations to all who were invited to the KSA Meeting asking those who have not RSVP’d to do so (includes faculty). Include campus map and parking instructions along with directions to the room and a PDF of the original invite. If you’re allowing virtual attendance, include the log-in directions. You may also want to send a meeting agenda. Do not send reminders to those who have already declined to attend.

- Verify catering is arranged, confirm headcount, and ensure delivery aligns with your meeting schedule.

- Ensure KSA PowerPoint slides have been customized for your program and college.

- Prepare and print sign-in sheet for BILT and faculty.

- Ensure minute-taker is confirmed to attend; use web software to record and transcribe after.

- Finish any tasks left from previous weeks.

- If you’re asking BILT members to vote in advance of the meeting, then send them voting form link.

- Ensure everyone in the room can be heard, which may require a handheld microphone.

2 Days Before Face-to-Face KSA Meeting

- Send another email reminder with map. If you’re allowing virtual attendance, include the log-in directions. Do not send reminders to those who have already declined to attend.

- Reconfirm A/V and catering.
- Prepare table tents for all attending, including faculty; prepare some blanks as well for those who show up without RSVPing.
- Ensure your facilitator is still available.
- Load KSA Meeting introductory presentation and voting spreadsheet onto spreadsheet editor's laptop.

1 Day Before Face-to-Face KSA Meeting

- If you're asking BILT members to vote in advance of the meeting, send the voting form again to those who haven't yet participated.

Five Roles During the Face-to-Face KSA Meeting

- Facilitator
  - Conducts the KSA analysis meeting and is responsible for its effectiveness without bias towards existing curriculum.
    - May be an external process expert, a program chair, administrator, or other person, but the facilitator may not influence the voting or discussion.
    - Politely but firmly keeps discussion on track, intentionally calling on those who are "out-talked" by the more outgoing employers at the meeting.
    - Keeps the discussion focused on the recommended KSAs rather than the minutia of curriculum and courses.
  - Should NOT be the lead faculty member for the program of focus lest he or she feel defensive about employers finding "fault" with his or her program.
  - Reminds attendees of the meeting protocol.
    - Focuses on KSAs that will make graduates most broadly employable for the region.
    - Respects each employer's donated time and use it effectively.
    - Considers all employers' input, but do not let any one employer dominate.
- Faculty are SMEs
  - Serve as ex-officio BILT members, listening and asking questions without dominating the meeting. They do not participate in the prioritization votes. Faculty do not talk about the existing curriculum during the meeting as that could slant the discussion.

- After the meeting, faculty decide how to use KSA results to create curriculum that aligns with employer-needed KSAs.

- Minute-taker

  - Minutes are taken to document employer discussion in addition to using the transcript feature from the web-meeting software.

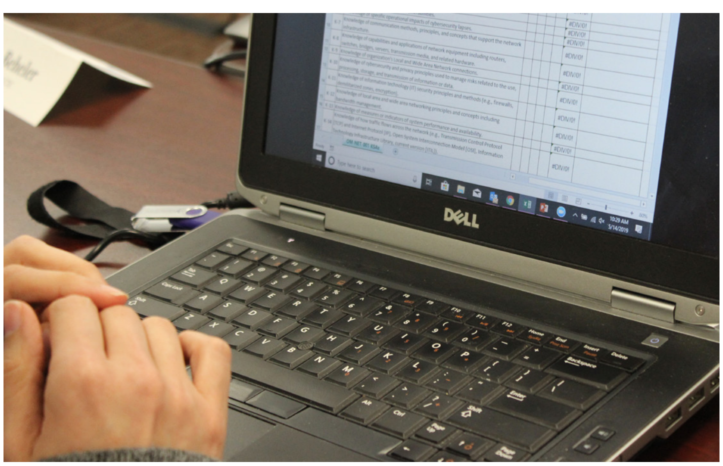
- Spreadsheet Editor

  - Even though the online tool will automatically tabulate the votes, you should have someone available to capture BILT comments in spreadsheet in real time, especially if the BILT decides to collectively rewrite the KSA item descriptions. Sometimes the facilitator can do this role, too, but the meeting will run more smoothly if there is a separate editor.

- Industry Members are SMEs

  - Participate fully in the prioritization voting and related discussion.

In the photos below, note the “U” table arrangement (upper right) to facilitate discussion among the BILT members. The “Spreadsheet Editor” (lower right) enters BILT comments into the spreadsheet (lower left) in real time, which is projected onto the room’s screen.



The KSA Meeting Day

- Send final email reminder early on the day of the meeting (if the meeting is at night) or the afternoon before if the meeting is early in the day. If you're allowing virtual attendance, include the log-in directions again.

- If you plan on taking photos or recording video, have ready a release form for attendees to sign.

- Arrive early to ensure everything is set up properly. This includes any catering or in-house water and coffee.

- Set up registration table with sign-in sheet, name tents, and information about the college/ program. Handouts include copies of the KSA list for reference and a reminder of the 1-4 voting ranks. For those joining by phone, this material can be emailed.

- Do not share existing course patterns for certifications and degrees so as to not influence the discussion.

- Test the equipment set-up including A/V, the conference phone, microphones, and online access one last time.

- Make sure all presentations and spreadsheets are on the appropriate devices.

- Greet the employers.

- If you're asking BILT members to vote during the meeting, you'll need to build 20 -25 additional minutes into the agenda to allow time for the voting process. This extra time isn't needed if you asked everyone to vote in advance.

KSA Meeting Suggested Agenda

Be sure to record the meeting, if at all possible, as it helps in documenting the minutes.

- **Welcome and self-introductions** by each attendee, including those on web meeting/phone. (Remember to call on participants connected by web meeting or phone just as if they were in the room. It is a good idea to have a sign in view of the facilitator that lists who is attending via web-meeting.)

  - Ground Rules include turning off cell phones or putting them on silent/vibrate; respecting differing opinions; employers participating fully in validation ratings and discussion.

- **Overview of purpose and characteristics of the KSA Meeting**

  - Emphasize desire to develop a stronger partnership with employers by asking them to co-lead the work.

  - Remind the BILT members that they are to focus on the KSAs needed in entry-level technicians, not existing courses or certificate and degree plans.

- Each BILT member will rate each knowledge, skill, or ability for what they expect an entry-level person to know using the link to the electronic form. (Consensus is not the goal.)

- The average rating for each K, S, or A will be automatically calculated by the spreadsheet.

- BILT members may skip elements for which they do not feel they are qualified to rate.

- Discussion around the importance of each KSA item is useful when faculty later determine how the KSA will be addressed in a course or credential. The discussion is just as important as the voting; this is the reason that in-person, real-time, synchronous KSA analysis is so much more effective than surveys sent out in advance.

- Beware of getting sidetracked by a deep dive into the need for strong employability "soft" skills like teamwork, communication, and work ethic. Employers all have horror stories about poorly performing employees and can spend a lot of our your meeting telling them. The soft skills discussion can happen at another meeting.

- Departmental items: Cover anything that needs to be addressed prior to undertaking the KSA analysis, such as announcements, background information, enrollment issues, etc.

- Begin by presenting the KSA process slides to set the stage.

In the photos above, BILT members in the room raise their hands to vote on each KSA item in real time – the electronic voting method eliminates the need for hand votes.

- **Vote on the pro forma KSA list**
  - Keep a copy of the chart at right explaining the rankings handy for the employers.
  - When voting on the KSAs, the BILT should consider these criteria:

    1. Importance
    2. Level of proficiency
    3. Time spent doing the skill
    4. Difficulty – how difficult is the KSA to learn?

    Note that the BILT should give the most weight to "importance."

KSA RANKINGS

4 The KSA must be included in the curriculum

3 The KSA really should be included in the curriculum

2 It would be nice for the KSA to be included in the curriculum

1 The KSA can be left out of the curriculum entirely

- **Discussion on voting results** with employers, especially if the votes are widely split (for example, three BILT members rank a KSA a "4," two rank it a "3," and the other three rank it a"2") or if an item received a particularly low average. The discussion should take up the bulk of your meeting time.

	Infrastructure KSAs - updated Summer 2022	# votes (4 = most important)				green cells ≥ 2.60
		4	3	2	1	Avg
	Tasks SPECIFIC THINGS an entry level person would BE EXPECTED TO PERFORM on the job WITH LITTLE SUPERVISION.					
T-1	Configure network, routers, and switches (e.g., higher-level protocols, tunneling).	2	3	1	3	2.44
T-2	Diagnose network connectivity problem.	4	3	1	1	3.11
T-3	Install and maintain network infrastructure device operating system software (e.g., IOS, firmware) which would include patch network vulnerabilities to safeguard information.	3	5	0	1	3.11
T-4	Install or replace network, routers, and switches.	3	4	2	0	3.11
T-5	Integrate new systems into existing network architecture.	4	4	2	0	3.20
T-6	Monitor network capacity and performance.	0	7	1	1	2.67
T-7	Test and maintain network infrastructure including software and hardware devices.	0	6	2	1	2.56
T-8	Conduct functional and connectivity testing to ensure continuing operability.	2	8	0	0	3.20
T-9	Implement group policies and access control lists to ensure compatibility with organizational standards, business rules, and needs.	1	7	2	0	2.90
T-10	Support group policies and access control lists to ensure compatibility with organizational standards, business rules, and needs.	1	7	2	0	2.90
T-11	Follow SOP and validate/update documentation of compliance.	8	2	0	0	3.80
T-12	Validate/update baseline system security according to organizational policies.	3	6	1	0	3.20
T-13	Manage accounts, network rights, and access to systems and equipment.	4	4	2	0	3.20
T-14	Provide ongoing optimization and problem-solving support.	4	4	1	0	3.33
T-15	Install, update, and troubleshoot systems/servers.	5	4	1	0	3.40

In this sample KSA spreadsheet, you can see each individual KSA item has a tally of votes (1 through 4) on the right, along with that item's overall vote average. Averages that are less than 2.6 – and are in danger of being removed from curriculum – are automatically turned pink. Note that the 2.6 is a number the CTC used with its BILT, but that number can be changed.

- **Next steps** - Conclude the meeting by telling employers about:
    - The faculty cross-reference process. Faculty will meet later to map the skills identified at this meeting to existing courses. Gaps will be identified and a curriculum strategy will be established.
    - How employers will receive feedback. Hopefully, this will occur at the next BILT meeting, usually within 2-3 months. Be sure to discuss possible dates and times before everyone leaves. Schedule the feedback meeting during the KSA meeting if possible so attendees can put it on their calendars.
- **Adjourn** - End on time, so employers believe you recognize the value of their time. If a few items remain to be discussed, follow up with email asking questions of the BILT members who attended.

FACULTY CROSS-REFERENCING MEETING

- Faculty meet soon after the KSA Meeting. Meeting the same day, next day, or at least within a week of the KSA Meeting is best so that faculty members' recollection of the employer discussion is fresh.

- Every faculty member who teaches in the program being discussed should be a part of this meeting.

- Give the group time to discuss the KSA feedback and make (or plan to make) adjustments in time for the next BILT meeting – providing timely feedback to the BILT is essential.

- These meetings typically last 60-90 minutes depending on the KSA results and number of existing courses.

- Bring discussion notes (transcript or otherwise) to the meeting to support the prioritization value per KSA. If employers suggested few changes or deletions, the meeting could reasonably be held prior to the notes being actually completed.

- Faculty collaboratively determine the average vote cut-off value (usually something between 2.6 and 3.0, sometimes a little less) for items to be included in the certificate/degree.

- Use the prioritized KSA sheet with course columns no longer hidden and insert the actual course names. Remember that you added course names/numbers to the sheet (and hid the columns) two weeks before the KSA Meeting.

- Considering one course at a time, faculty determine per K, S, or A which existing courses provide Exposure on the topic (mark with an "E"), and which provide Thorough coverage (mark with a "T"). Resist the urge to provide more than two rankings – from experience, that complicates the analysis and the discussion.

- Once each KSA has been considered for coverage, those KSAs with no "E" or "T" and those with only "E"s need to be highlighted as follows:

    - Note each KSA that has no "E" or "T," and highlight that line of the spreadsheet in a color such as pink.

    - Note each KSA that has only "E"s, and highlight that line of the spreadsheet in a color such as yellow.

- Faculty determine how to address the gaps that have no course coverage through creating new courses or perhaps adding a module to an existing course. OR, they may want to discuss the gap with the BILT members if addressing the gap has challenges. BILT members may, for example, be able to address equipment needs, provide adjunct instructors to teach emerging technologies, etc. If a gap remains, and the BILT members cannot help, BILT members need to help faculty determine what to do. Note that determining how to address gaps can require much more time for a new program.

- Items covered at an Exposure level only should be discussed with BILT members during feedback session to ensure that Exposure coverage is enough.

		Avg.	293	295	151	344	241	242	127	143	144	223	304	346	243	347	318
K-1	Knowledge of how to identify the machining motion of a 3-axis CNC mill and a 2-axis CNC turning center	3.88	E	E		E	E		E				E	E	T	T	
K-2	Knowledge of how to identify the four quadrants of rectangular coordinate programming	3.13				E	E		E					E	T	T	
K-3	Knowledge of how to identify CNC milling machine and CNC turning center components	3.38	E	E								E					
K-4	Knowledge of how to recognize incremental and absolute positioning	3.25															
K-5	Knowledge of how to identify the proper coolant, oil, and air supply levels for CNC mills and turning centers	3.00	E	E								E					

Above is a sample pro forma list as it would look after the cross-reference faculty meeting. Note the tallied (and averaged) "4 3 2 1" votes of the BILT and the "Ts" and "Es" rankings per course as determined by the faculty. Ks that are only given "exposure" are colored blue. Ks without any coverage at all are colored red.

Hosting the BILT KSA Feedback Session

- Plan to hold the feedback session 1-3 months after the KSA Meeting, typically in conjunction with the next Trends Meeting.
- Share the highlighted KSA prioritized spreadsheet with the BILT members during the meeting.
    - If faculty were able to determine how to fill the gaps, also share the proposed new course pattern for certificate(s) and degree(s) modified based on the KSA prioritization.
    - If faculty were not able to address all the gaps/changes, plan to discuss the challenges with the BILT and then create the modified course pattern for certificate(s) and degree(s) for presentation at a later BILT meeting.

> *"I have been actively involved in the Business and Industry Leadership team for the Convergence Technology Center for over ten years and students graduating from that program are exceptionally prepared to secure jobs in the workforce because they have skills that business needs."*
>
> -- Tu Huynh, Comerica Bank

- Be sure to also discuss those items with only exposure coverage to determine if the BILT members think exposure is enough; if they want deeper coverage, faculty need to decide how to provide that deeper coverage.

Applying the Results of the KSA Prioritization and the Faculty Cross-reference

- Develop enhanced certificate and degree programs.
  - Note that certificates will be most successful if they are created in a stackable manner. That is, the initial certificate gives the student credentials to obtain the first job, and the subsequent certificates stack atop the beginning certificate and sequentially on one another, culminating in an Associate Degree.
- Document which of the KSAs are covered by each certificate or degree by adapting the following template to show the KSA coverage per certificate (and then for a degree, if any) at the top, and the courses that are included. In the example below, the "Tech Project Management" certificate currently delivers "exposure for six Ks, a "thorough" coverage for two Ks, but has gaps when it comes to two other Ks. The grid below that lists some of the courses that make up the "Tech Project Management" certificate.

Certificate in Tech Project Management

KSA's covered by Certificate
Exposure: K2,K4,K10,K11,K12,K13 Thorough: K1, K8 Gaps: K9, K13

Courses	Course Title	Credit Hrs.
ITPM1001	Intro to Tech PM	4
ITSC1374	Intro to Comp Net	3
3rd course		
4th course		
etc.		

"As a member of the BILT for over fifteen years, I've seen how well the process works to deepen the connection and engagement between industry and educators."

-- Vincente D'Ingianni, Binary Systems Inc.

HOSTING BILT TRENDS MEETINGS

Aside from the annual KSA Meeting, your other 2-3 BILT meetings throughout the year will likely work better online and run shorter (between 45 and 90 minutes).

Typical Trends Meeting Agenda

- The typical meeting agenda for the shorter Trends Meetings will include:
  - Welcome and Introductions of employers and educators.
  - Employers highlight new trends and discuss each; other attendees may ask questions or contribute additional information.
  - Faculty share feedback on how previous BILT recommendations and KSA votes have been implemented into the program, especially at the first meeting following the KSA analysis.
  - College personnel present additional opportunities for involvement such as student mentoring, resume review, mock interviewing, speaking in classes, participating in employer panels, providing internships, etc.
  - Discuss any other items related to the program that may be interesting to the BILT.
  - Ask BILT members who else should be added to the team and request their assistance with introductions. It is a good idea to try to add at least one new member per quarter to keep ideas fresh.
  - Close by specifying the date and purpose of the next BILT meeting.
- Other agenda items might include:
  - Polls of the BILT members to gather feedback on specific questions.
  - Group discussion to address questions posed by faculty on a specific area of interest.
  - Guest presentation (10-12 minutes) by an employer on a single emerging trend or workforce issue.

Typically, Trends Meetings will focus primarily on two of the agenda items described above:

Discussing Trends

- Trends discussions will focus on industry innovation three or more years into the future as well as on any questions or reporting that the college personnel may wish to discuss. These talks are much less structured than the KSA vote and discussion.
- Note that employers may not yet know the impact on curriculum of a trend they are mentioning, but it's important for faculty to be apprised of the innovations early so that they can begin thinking about possible curriculum changes. It is also important for the facilitator

to ask the employers what each innovation means for curriculum. It is common for a trend's curricular application to become "clearer" over time with respect to curricular implications.

- One possible checklist to consider when discussing trends:
  - Define the trend
  - Discuss the ramifications for educators
  - Look at the trend's timing/adoption
  - Identify the mashups needed to make the trend successful
  - Project possible risks
- Note that it is a good idea to "seed" the trends discussions by asking 2-3 of the BILT members in advance to come to the meetings prepared to discuss 1-2 trends they are seeing; otherwise, there may be silence when a discussion of trends is requested.
- Another way to help spark the trends talk is to share an interesting workforce chart or graph and ask the BILT members to comment.

If the Trends Meeting is Also a Feedback Meeting

- As previously mentioned, when sharing feedback with the BILT be sure they have copies (whether emailed in advanced or provided as hard copies in the room) of the KSA spreadsheet with course cross-reference.
- If meeting in person, ensure room is set similar to how it was arranged for KSA analysis.
- Suggested agenda for the feedback portion of the meeting:
  - Thank the BILT for their dedication and commitment to the KSA analysis process.
  - Explain what the faculty did in the cross-reference process.
  - Present the spreadsheet with the priorities, but do not dwell upon it; rather, move on to the curriculum reporting.
  - Present the curriculum for each certificate and each degree, showing the K, S, and As covered by each credential, not by individual courses. That is, focus more on the bigger picture rather on the smaller details.
  - Talk about any new modules/courses created to fill gaps.
  - Talk about any gaps that the college is unable to fill (and why). Employers may be able to help with things like equipment outside the college budget and adjunct instructors.
  - Hold discussion of each degree or certificate, capturing employer suggestions.
  - Include trends in the feedback session only if there is time.

OVERALL BILT MEETING BEST PRACTICES

No matter the content of your BILT meeting, below are some best practices that the National CTC customized for use with its BILT members over the years through continuous improvement. You may want to consider these when managing any BILT meeting, although ultimately your process should be what works best for you and your BILT. This section may be a little duplicative of previous sections, but we think it's helpful to put these overall practical meeting strategies into one place.

Before the Meeting

- Schedule your meeting in the web platform of your choice (i.e., Zoom, WebEx).
- If there is an in-person element to the meeting, book your room and arrange any needed AV support well in advance.
- Order catering if applicable. Confirm the headcount often to give the caterers as accurate a number as possible. The CTC tried to serve the food in a separate room so the catering arrival didn't disrupt the meeting.
- Six weeks from the meeting date, send a "save the date" appointment to get on everyone's work calendar. The CTC's BILT asked for more advance notice than the traditional invite sent three weeks out.
- Two weeks from the meeting date, the CTC sent a more traditional invite email (using Constant Contact) to more formally collect RSVPs. This is a variation on sending a reminder email one week out from the meeting.
    - Design the invite so the "call to action" RSVP link is as close to the top of the message as possible to make it easy on the recipient.
- Some attendees will accept the calendar appointment, but not respond to the invite, and vice versa. While duplicative, using both invite strategies helped the CTC expand the attendee pool.
- Track RSVPs to keep tabs on who's coming, who's declined, and who hasn't responded.
- Print handouts if there's an in-person element. For KSA meetings, provide attendees hard copies of the Pro Forma list and the 1-4 ranking definitions. For virtual meetings, email handouts.
- Make table tents and/or name badges if there's an in-person element.
- The week before the meeting:
    - Send a follow-up invite email (using Constant Contact or mail merge) to those who have not yet responded.
    - Send personal emails to BILT members who have RSVPd, asking them to be ready to

share trends if it is for a trends meeting – you can be specific (“please be ready to talk essential AWS cloud skills”) or more general (“we need to hear what’s happening at your office”).

  - Send personal emails to BILT “regular” attendees who haven’t yet RSVPd, expressing hope that they’ll be able to attend.

- The day before the meeting, all of the RSVPs get a reminder.

- An hour before the meeting starts, send all of the RSVPs one final reminder.

- You can never share the web meeting (e.g., WebEx, Zoom) log-in information too many times – unless there’s a compelling reason not to, every correspondence and invite should include that information.

During the Meeting

- Consider setting up your email auto-reply with the BILT meeting log-in information. Frequently, someone will email you looking for help after you’ve started the meeting and stopped checking email.

- Web meetings run smoother if you have at least two people hosting – one to do the facilitating and one to help watch the chat box, take attendance, and mute attendees.

- Start your web minutes at least 15 minutes early to make sure everything’s running smoothly. Encourage any guest presenters to likewise join early for any necessary troubleshooting.

- Be sure to have a welcome slide up and shared on the screen for those who join early.

- Playing soft music as you’re waiting to start can help let everyone know that you’re there, but the meeting hasn’t started yet.

- Once the meeting begins, show a “rules of engagement” slide to remind everyone of the guidelines:

  - Mute your phone if you’re not talking.

  - Pick a single audio channel – either your phone or your computer.

  - Always say your name so everyone knows who’s speaking.

  - Use the chat box to send questions and comments.

  - Focus on the best interest of entry-level graduates.

- The CTC kept this “rules of engagement” slide up during the roll call. If the meeting is larger, you may want to consider only conducting a verbal roll call with employers and asking your educators to check in via the chat box.

- Note that in some cases, attendees won't have access to the chat box – if they're only participating via phone, some may need to answer roll verbally.

- Record your meeting – if possible, change your settings so your web meeting platform will help transcribe the audio to help with your note-taking.

- If one of your attendees will be providing a presentation, be sure to adjust the web meeting settings so he/she can share their screen.

- Mute attendees who don't mute their audio. Only those talking should have their microphone turned on. You may want to assign this task to someone other than the presenter/host. This "meeting manager" can also help track attendance.

- If you're looking for a sidebar dialogue in the chat box, you may need to "prime the pump" and pose a few open-ended discussions to get the ball rolling.

- To encourage all of your employers to participate, you may want to politely call on them by name.

- Be sure to end the meeting with plenty of praise and thanks for everyone's time and expertise.

After the Meeting

- Send a "thank you" email – via bcc – to all attendees, expressing appreciation for their ongoing support.

- Prepare meeting minutes to share with all attendees. You can take notes in real time during the meeting, listen to the recording after the event, or a combination of both. Some web platforms offer transcription services, which can help. You do not need to include every single detail.

- If possible, make the meeting recording available upon request for those who want to hear it.

Below is an example of the JPEG image the CTC sent to all BILT meeting participants a few days after the meeting.

LEADERSHIP OF THE BILT

Because the main premise of the BILT involves co-leadership, it is a good idea to select a business chair who will co-lead the meetings along with the person leading on the education side. Typically, this chair is not chosen before the first meeting or even during the first year, because the entire BILT needs to learn the roles and responsibilities of the BILT. Further, the facilitator needs to ensure that the BILT co-chair is a person in a position within his or her company who is aware of future trends as well as current hiring requirements. It is better to delay the choice than to hastily choose a co-chair.

In the photo, the National CTC transfers BILT chair leadership from Glenn Wintrich (right) of Dell to Matt Glover (left) of AMX Harman in a short ceremony before the start of a BILT meeting.

The BILT co-chair should typically be selected only after you become familiar with the initial BILT members and can see which one has the time to give and is naturally a leader among the BILT community. And, there is no real hurry in choosing this person. It may take a few meetings for the leader to become apparent and it is not a good idea to have the whole BILT vote as that can become a popularity contest.

At the point the potential BILT co-chair has been identified, it is important to privately ask this person if he or she is willing to take on the extra responsibility for approving the agenda prior to each BILT meeting, co-leading the KSA analysis, and helping plan and manage the trends discussion agenda for the web meetings (or finding others on the BILT who are willing to identify trends each time). He or she will likely already be at the KSA analysis face-to-face meeting, so no additional time should be required. With respect to trends, though, the commitment could take significant additional time, and it is important that the person commit to coordinating and managing the trends portion of the meetings.

Some schools develop a system with set terms for co-chair service – that is, BILT co-chairs serve for two years, then pass the baton to another employer. The CTC has had only 2 chairpeople over 19 years, and this has worked for us. Also, some colleges require their BILT members to serve two or three year limited terms. At the end of that time, you could offer the BILT members a chance to roll off the BILT, but the CTC has had BILT members who have served the entire 19 years and have been able to contribute more each year as their own careers have progressed.

COMMON IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Challenge: Reluctance to schedule frequent in-person meetings.

Response: Meetings don't have to be elaborate, catered, in-person events. Web meetings work.

If you're only connecting with your business group once a year, it will be very hard to get them invested in your program. You need frequent meetings to develop the lasting connections and relationships that makes a BILT thrive. Strive to meet once a quarter or at least once each semester and once in the summer virtually.

Challenge: Reluctance to conduct the annual KSA vote.

Response: A free-flowing discussion without a vote can be difficult to analyze. To properly align BILT recommendations with curriculum content, faculty needs concrete, actionable metrics via the KSA vote.

The days of long, time-consuming manual vote counts are over – the online voting method is a much more efficient process. Going through 120 KSAs often takes no more than 20 minutes. That allows you to devote more of your meeting time to discussing the vote results, which provides additional context and perspective. Employer appreciate the efficiency of the process versus just holding discussions.

Challenge: Inability to find committed employers.

Response: Once businesses realize that they truly are being heard and are helping to steer the program as "co-leaders," they will commit. It takes time to find the right people. Aside from working with regional resources to recruit employers, you should also "network with the network." That is, as you bring employers into the BILT, leverage their contacts to find other employers.

Keep in mind the WIIFM ("what's in it for me?") for each BILT member. What's in it for me? Connect with your BILT members at least every 12-18 months to be sure you understand what they're hoping to get out of their involvement. Those kinds of conversations – that happen outside the BILT meetings - will help make them feel valued and appreciated.

Challenge: Difficulty getting institutional buy-in.

Response: Start small. Build the BILT for a single program. Over time, that program's success will inspire others to adopt the model. This has been the pattern at a number of colleges. Also consider recruiting an "influencer" that others follow – this could be a faculty member, a dean, or maybe even a vice president.

You need a champion who not only sees the value in the BILT model, but can also both inspire others to adopt the BILT and clear some of the institutional barriers that may be impeding the adoption.

Challenge: Faculty fear losing control to employers.

Response: BILT meetings focus on the KSAs, not classroom content. The faculty are the ones who design the curriculum and decide how and when to cover the entry-level skills the employers request. The BILT model simply keeps the educators better informed.

Faculty stays 100% in control of the curriculum. Even though the BILT model calls employers "co-leaders," the faculty remain the education experts.

For Questions:

Dr. Ann Beheler, Inventor of the BILT Model, abeheler@gmail.com

RESOURCES

Visit **tiny.cc/BILTlegacy** to access the following resources:

- KSA Meeting invitation template and tips
- KSA Meeting slide deck template
- Orientation Meeting invitation template and tips
- Orientation Meeting slide deck template
- Setting Up Google Form and Spreadsheet for KSA Voting process document (and companion tutorial video)

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