

ATE Industry Consortium Getting Started

- Identify an industry peer leader who is likely to support your efforts. Meet first with a top administrator of the company to get his or her buy-in and to arrange for the company to sponsor, or co-sponsor, a kick-off event.
- Recruit Department of Commerce, local industrial development personnel, and state and/or local Chamber of Commerce representatives to assist with the kick-off event. The "bigger" the names the better to help ensure publicity for the event.
- Start by inviting the biggest and most influential employers in the area. Others will quickly jump on board.
- The kickoff event should include a meal, either breakfast or lunch, at no cost to participants. (Try to get the sponsoring industry to pay for the meal. This sends a message to others that they, too, should contribute.)
- Involve students in the program for the kickoff. Impressive students using technology and speaking well on behalf of the program will sell what you are doing better than anything else you can do.
- Invite some faculty members to participate in the kickoff, particularly those who may be talking with the industries about student placements as interns.
- Have organizational information packaged for the meeting. Demonstrate that you are using a well-developed and refined model that has been successful elsewhere. (The local group will establish their own by-laws, etc., but they have samples to go by that will make the process easier.)
- Stress what this program does for them. Benefits include
 1. Reduced training costs;
 2. Employers "grow their own" technicians for the future;
 3. Opportunity to hire the best technicians in the program before non-participating companies have access to the students;
 4. Reduced recruiting costs;
 5. Reduced shortage of technicians and need to hire technicians from other employers; and,
 6. An on-going opportunity to work with other employers to continuously improve the college's technician preparation programs to meet local workforce needs.

- Keep the meeting short. Do not exceed 1.5 hours. Start and end on time.
- Set the date and time of the next meeting before adjourning (provide participants an opportunity to state preferences of time of day and day of week).
- Get the college's marketing department to arrange as much publicity as possible for the launch of the ATE Industry Consortium. Include industry representatives in photographs (remember this is about students and employers and not about the college). Copies of press releases and newspaper articles can be used in the future as you recruit other industries.
- Have a designated ATE Industry Consortium liaison at the college to manage the Consortium and student internships.
- The college ATE Industry Consortium Liaison and/or others should follow up, follow up, follow up!
 1. Contact those who could not attend, tell them who is participating, and send them information about the next meeting.
 2. Contact those who attended and committed to participate and thank them. Never take their support for granted.
 3. Contact those who attended but did not, or could not, commit to join or provide internships. If the person who attended did not have the authority to make a commitment, encourage the person to follow-through with higher management to get participation approved. Offer to meet with the decision maker yourself. If dealing with top corporate management, but the person is not ready to make a commitment, encourage the company's participation in other ways until the time is right for the company to be involved through scholarships and internships. Treat them as if they are part of the group. Most who are kept informed participate fully after seeing that it is working well for others.
- Quickly set up process for selection of a Consortium Chairperson. Include provisions for replacing that person every year or two. No one wants to accept a job with no end in sight! Provide support staff from the college to assist the Chair and to minimize his or her work load as Chair. The Chair's primary job (after getting the by-laws and internship processes established) is to chair Consortium meetings (two meetings/year are recommended).