

# Clear Career Pathways Require Connected Data


One of the best decisions that state leaders can make is to prioritize getting individuals and system leaders quality information that helps them make choices about careers. Right now, information on high-quality credentials and their associated outcomes is often not available, resulting in a failed opportunity to prepare individuals to meet the needs of a changing economy. State leaders must modernize P-20W data systems and create tools that provide transparency about available credentials and their postsecondary and workforce outcomes. When it comes to a decision as important as preparing for a career, people deserve transparent and easy-to-understand information.




**DOUBT**  
Randall doesn't know if programs offered by the community college he runs are helping students successfully transition to further education or in-demand careers.




**GRACE**  
is 18 and wants to go into healthcare.




**LISA**  
is 28 and interested in cybersecurity.



**RANDALL**  
is 38 and a community college administrator.



**TRANSPARENCY**  
Randall receives feedback reports about student education and career outcomes. With this information, he aligns course offerings to in-demand careers, ensuring that enrollment is a worthwhile investment.



**UNCERTAINTY**  
Grace wants to become a nurse but doesn't have the resources or network to help her understand options for students like her.



**FRUSTRATION**  
As an IT Technician, Lisa knows there is opportunity to advance within her company, but doesn't know how to get there.



**MOBILITY**  
Lisa talks to her employer about the requirements for a cybersecurity position, and uses an online tool to find cost and outcomes data and identify a program in her area.



**OPPORTUNITY**  
Grace's high school counselor has a tool that helps her compare nursing programs. They use outcomes data to find Grace the right 2-year program with an apprenticeship.

## Credential Confusion

Grace, Lisa, and Randall are trying to find information about career opportunities and lack good information to help them understand and compare possible pathways. They are feeling frustrated and uncertain about the best path forward, and are left in the dark as they struggle to meet their goals.

## Connected Clarity

State leaders have invested in data systems that connect information about credentials to postsecondary and workforce outcomes, and Grace, Lisa, and Randall now have tools that help them answer their questions about career choices. They have clarity about the landscape of opportunities available to them and potential outcomes for those opportunities.