



Solutions to Grow and Diversify the Energy Efficiency Workforce



ENERGY EFFICIENCY
PROGRAMS



Workforce Development Stakeholders

Job Seekers

High school, community college, and university students; employment seekers or career changers; formerly incarcerated individuals

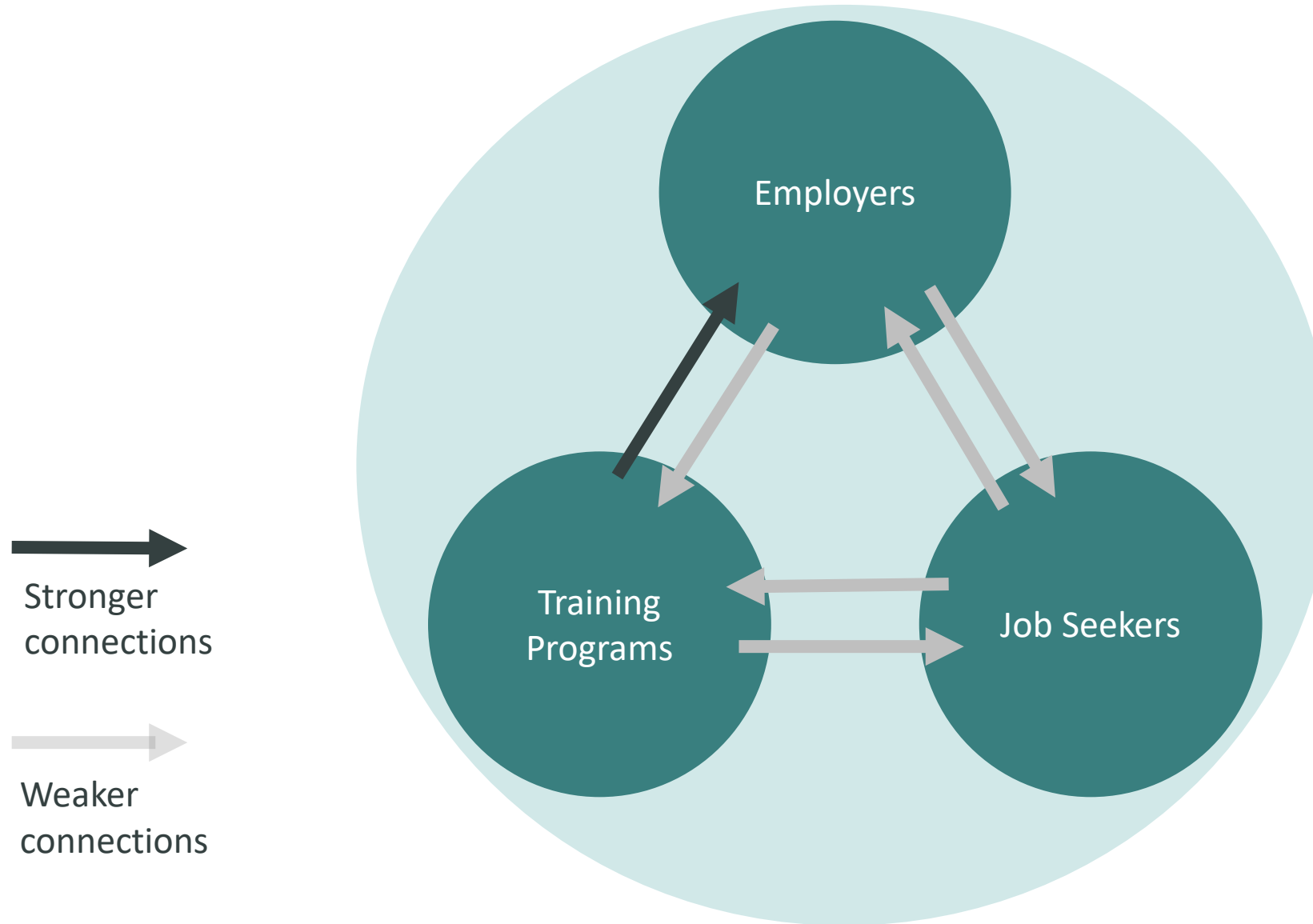
Training Programs

Community colleges, universities, community action agencies (CAAs), community-based organizations (CBOs), unions, and high school shop classes

Employers

Electricity and lighting, HVAC, weatherization, construction, renewables, and energy consulting

The Consensus: Stronger Connections are Needed



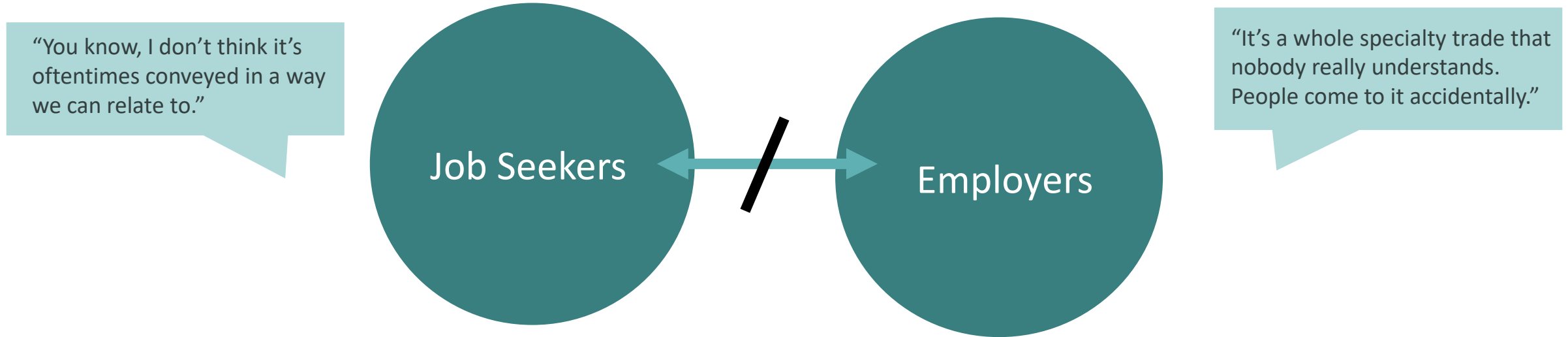
"We typically don't coordinate with one another. We don't have enough connections for the synapses to occur."

"We need to take a very intentional look at who does what for whom and with whom and how do we have a handoff between the organizations."

Concerns

Weak Connections = Lack of Awareness

Widespread lack of awareness prevents more job seekers from pursuing employment in energy efficiency

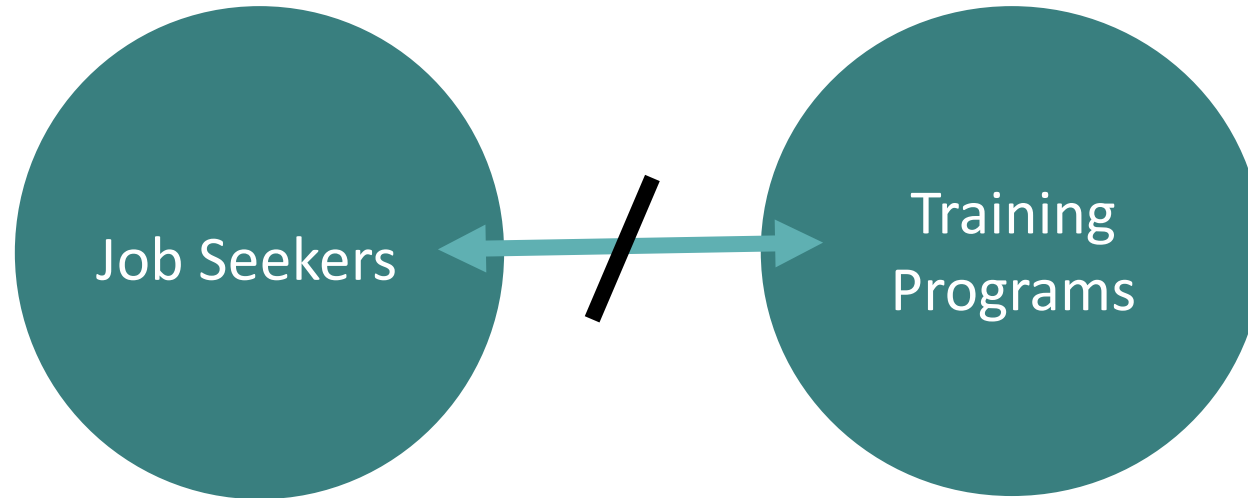


- Professionals often find their way into the field by accident
- Training pathways unclear
- No widely accepted understanding of the depth and bounds of the field

Weak Connections = Lack of Diversity

Training programs struggle to recruit, train, and support students from underrepresented groups

“The trust issue is a big barrier.”

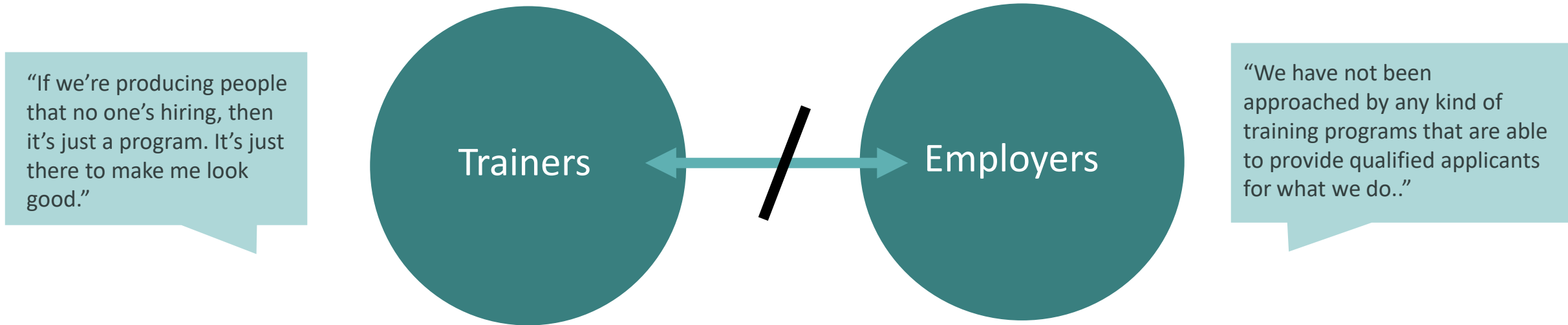


“They can’t make it to class. Transportation issues, childcare issues. Something happens with the car.”

- Many programs report low enrollment
- Economic, logistical, and geographic barriers prevent engagement

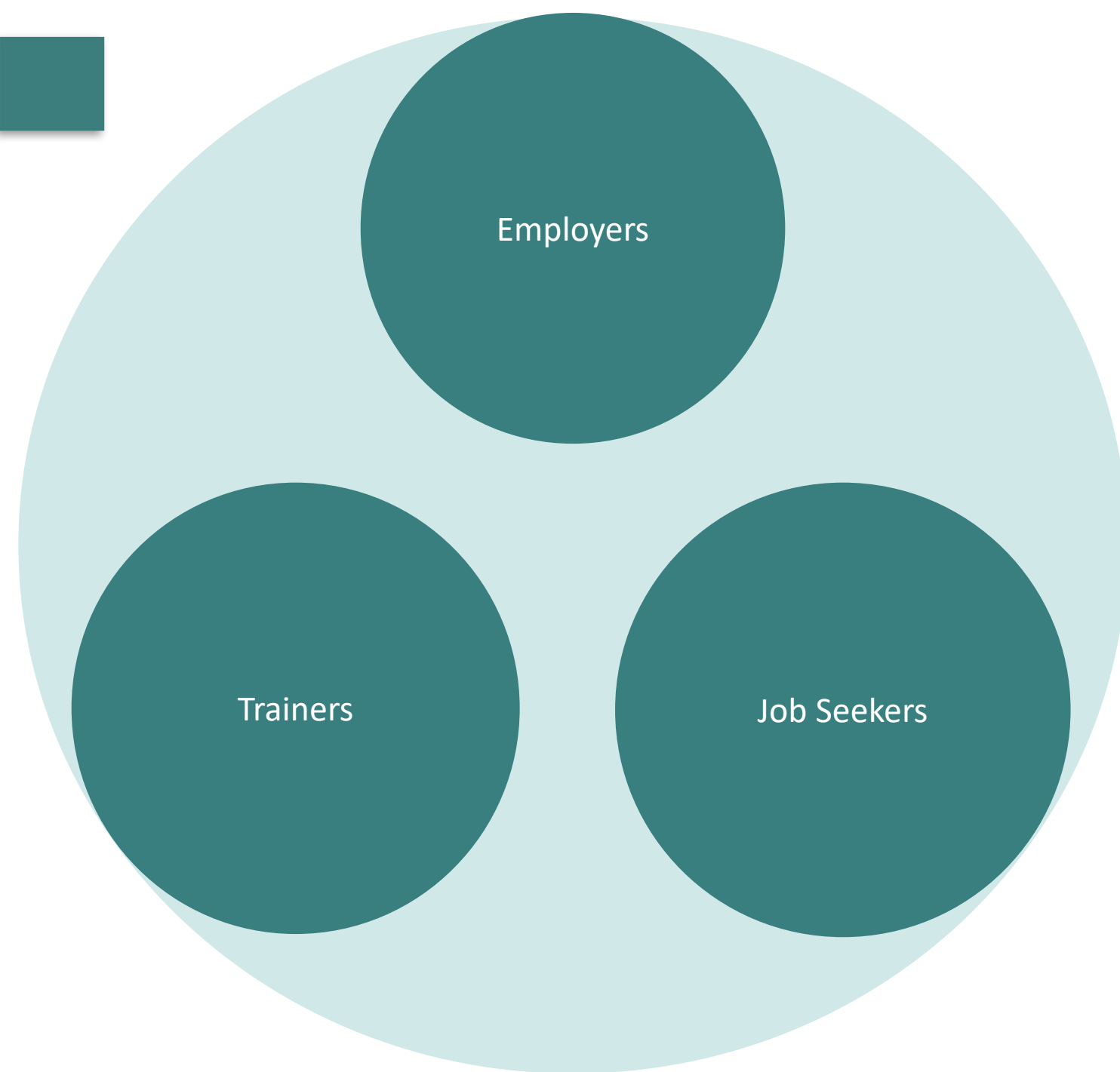
Weak Connections = Skills & Training Gaps

It takes considerable effort to determine what employers need



- Few formal avenues for feedback from employers to identify skills and training gaps
- Stronger connections needed to recruit and support qualified, diverse candidates

Strengthening Connections



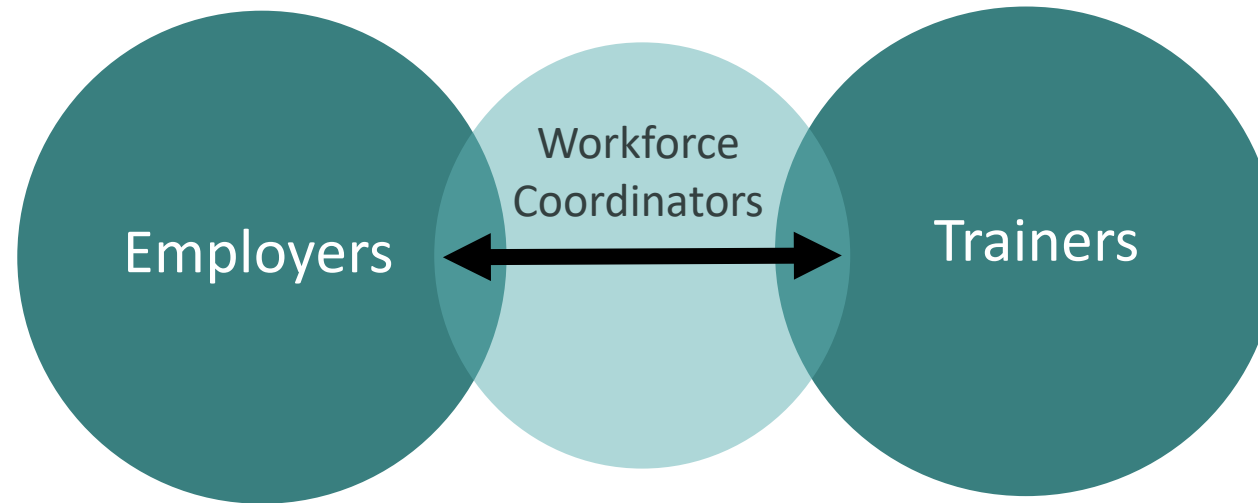
The goal: To grow the energy efficiency workforce by filling jobs with qualified, diverse candidates

How might stronger connections facilitate this goal?

Stronger Connections: Filling Training Gaps

What are the energy efficiency job needs?

How can existing training programs be augmented to meet job needs?

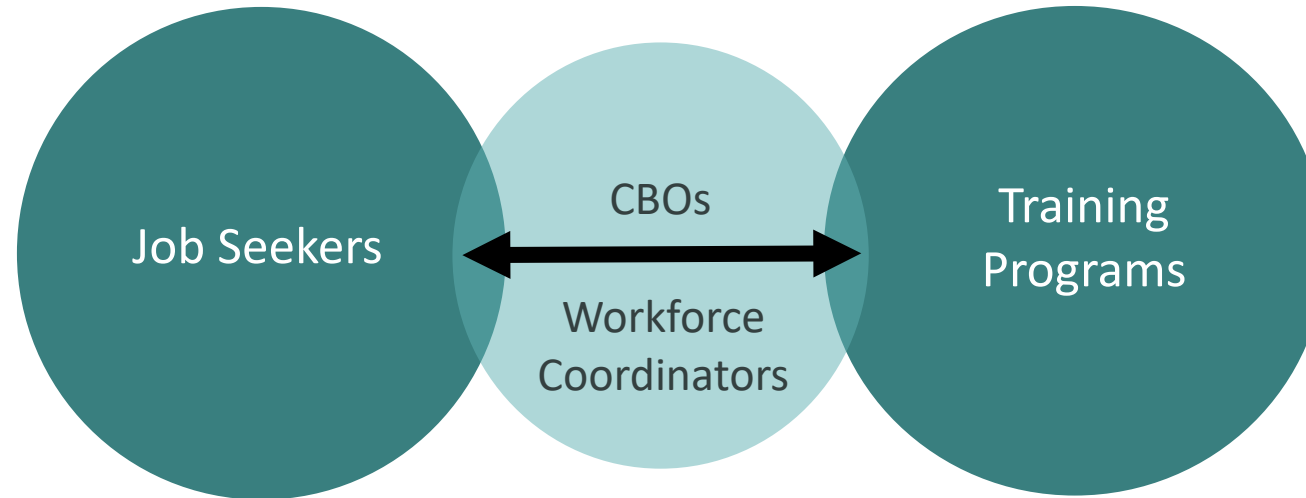


Workforce Coordinators:

- Facilitate roundtable discussions
- Develop inventory of positions and requirements
- Assess curriculum development needs

Stronger Connections: Recruiting

What community-based organizations serve underrepresented groups?



CBOs

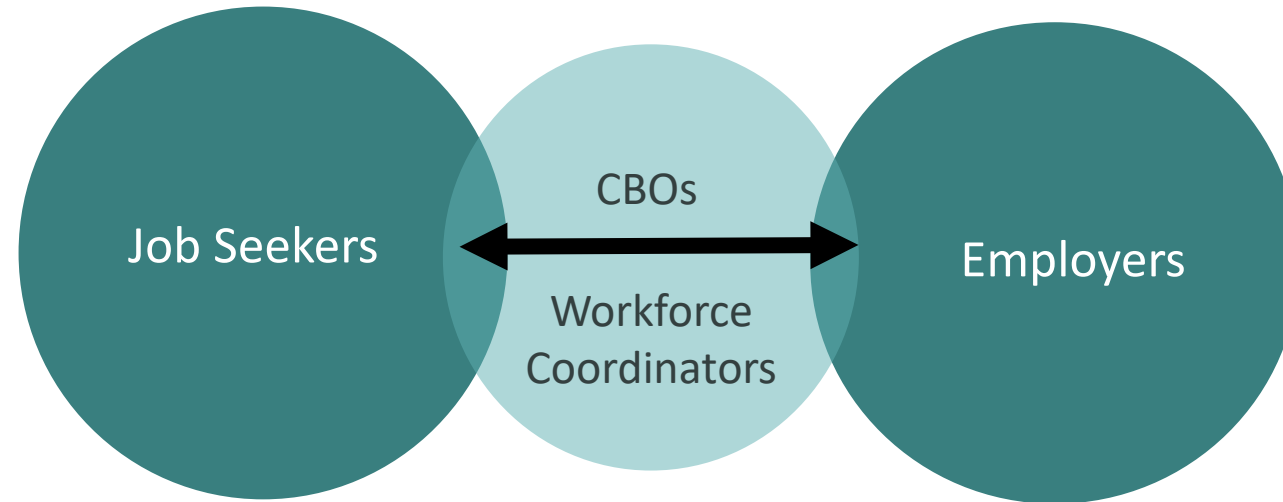
- Raise awareness of energy efficiency jobs, career paths through outreach and education
- Help recruit from underrepresented groups

Workforce Coordinators

- Facilitate meetings among CBOs and training programs
- Provide educational content to raise awareness

Stronger Connections: Support and Job Placement

What support do individuals need to complete training?
How can qualified job seekers and employers connect more effectively?



CBOs

- Provide mentoring, support for trainees
- Connect with employers to place individuals in internships and jobs

Workforce Coordinators

- Facilitate connections among CBOs and training programs/employers
- Provide information hub and job board



Workforce Development Pilot

Partnership between
Ameren Illinois Market Development Initiative and SEDAC



Focus

Address gaps in the workforce development system by:

1

Raising awareness of energy efficiency jobs and career pathways among job seekers

2

Increasing coordination among employers and trainers about current jobs, future jobs, and qualifications

3

Enhancing communication across the current workforce development system

4

Augmenting Ameren Illinois Market Development Initiative and other programs for more efficient conversion of program resources into job creation

Target Groups

Underrepresented Groups

- Women, black and brown communities, etc.



Formerly-Incarcerated Individuals

- People who experience the most barriers to employment



Dual Approach

Short-Term Interventions

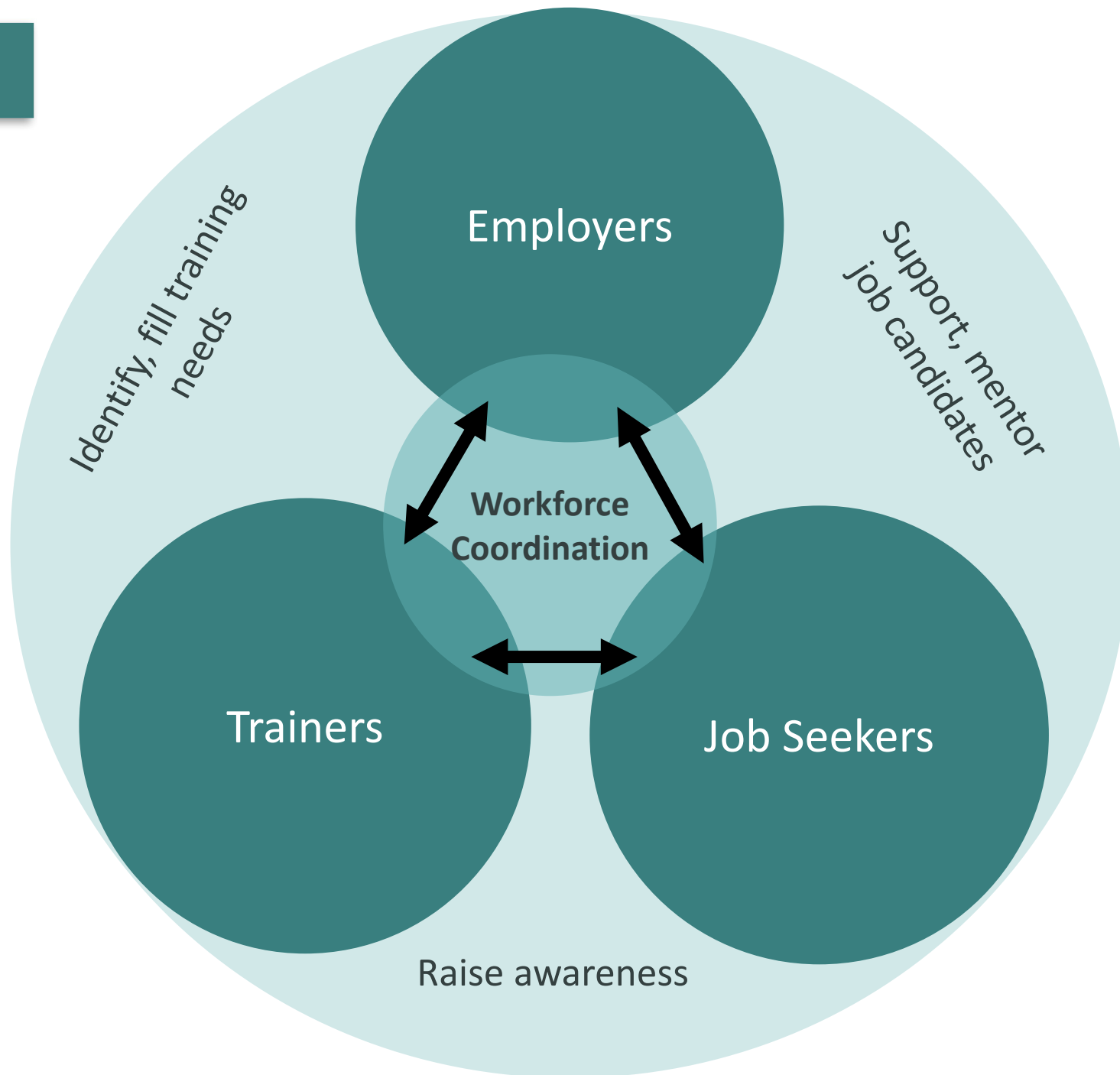
- Fill jobs through community connections and awareness activity



Long-Term Interventions

- Build pipeline for future jobs by connecting jobseekers to relevant training programs





The goal: To grow the energy efficiency workforce by filling jobs with qualified, diverse candidates

Pilot Process

(in 7 steps)

1. Outreach

Outreach to employers:

Roundtable discussions to address current and future job needs and qualifications



Employers Collaborative

Outreach to trainers:

Roundtable discussions to address training gaps, curriculum needs



Trainers Collaborative

Outreach to job seekers:

Roundtable discussions to address career goals and paths forward



Seekers Collaborative

Peer to Peer Learning

A Process

2. Regional job outlook: Identify short and long-term job needs, trends, and employer capacity, training pathways



3. Strengthen partnerships with CBOs: Work with CBOs to identify diverse job seekers, their skills, interests, and needs



A Process

4. Community Engagement: Work with CBOs to raise awareness, recruit job seekers (some for immediate job placement)



5. Training Engagement: Work with training programs to shape programs toward current and future jobs



A Process

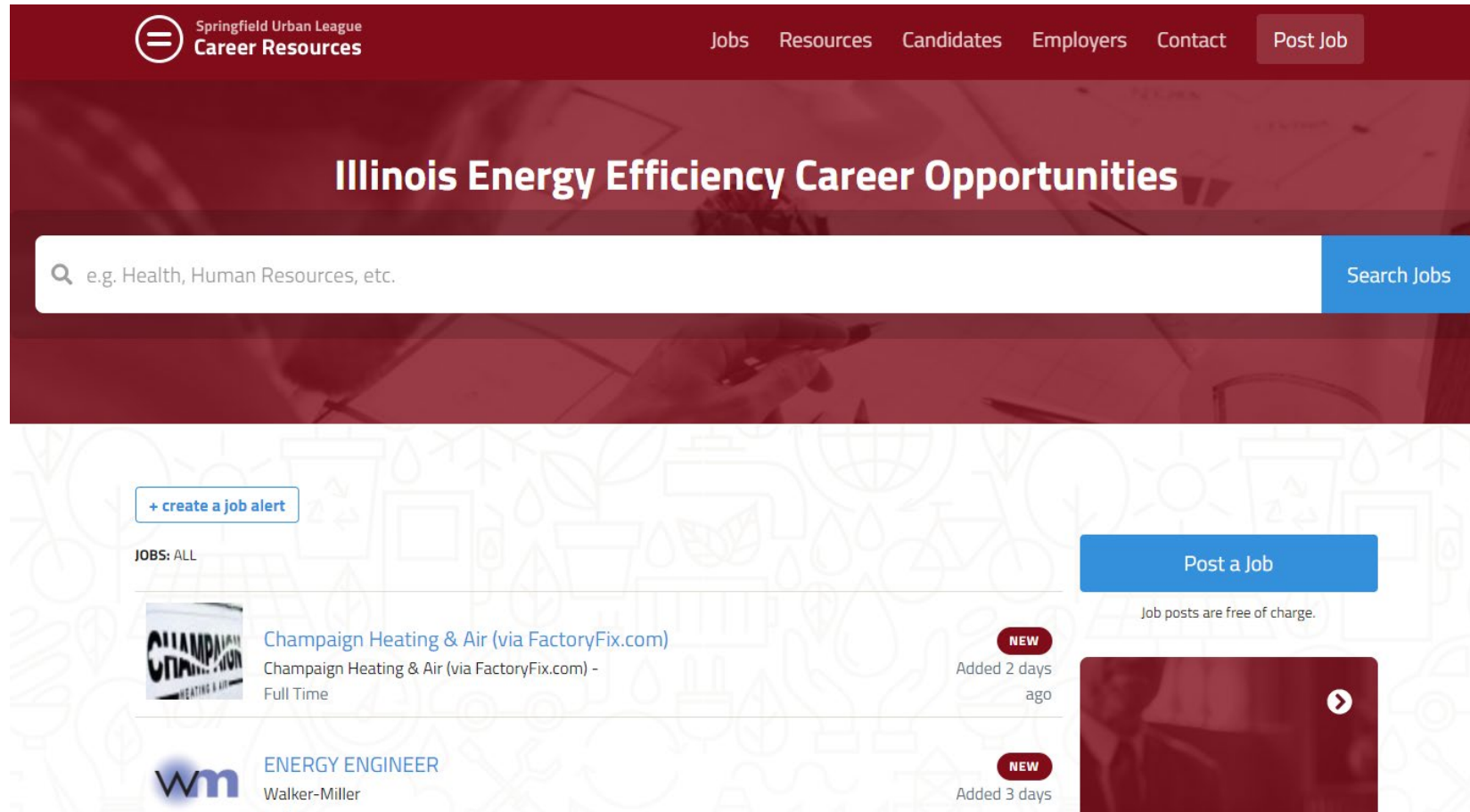
6. Trainee support: Work with Support trainees and help them find jobs and internships



7. Evaluation: Gather feedback from employers and trainers to refine process



Digital Information Hubs



The screenshot shows the Springfield Urban League Career Resources website. The header is dark red with a white menu icon and the text "Springfield Urban League Career Resources". Navigation links include "Jobs", "Resources", "Candidates", "Employers", "Contact", and "Post Job". The main heading is "Illinois Energy Efficiency Career Opportunities". Below this is a search bar with the placeholder text "e.g. Health, Human Resources, etc." and a blue "Search Jobs" button. On the left, there is a "+ create a job alert" button and a "JOBS: ALL" filter. The job listings include:

- Champaign Heating & Air (via FactoryFix.com)**
Champaign Heating & Air (via FactoryFix.com) - Full Time
Added 2 days ago (NEW)
- ENERGY ENGINEER**
Walker-Miller
Added 3 days ago (NEW)

On the right, there is a blue "Post a Job" button with the text "Job posts are free of charge." below it, and a red image placeholder with a white arrow pointing right.

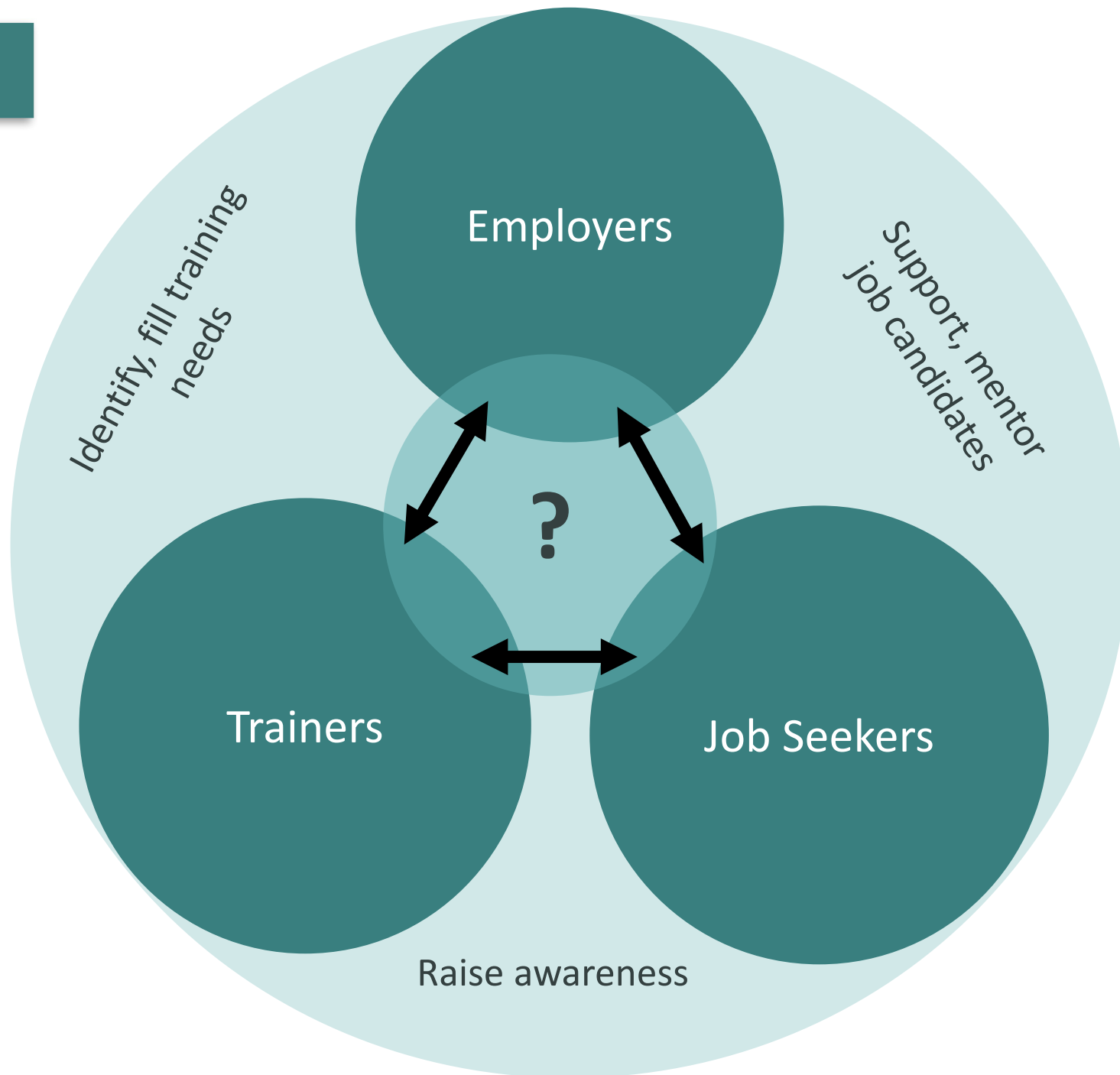
- Encourage use of Job Board (s)
- Identify overall job trends
- Advertise training opportunities
- Advertise funding opportunities
- Share career pathway resources
- Promote events, discussions

Region

- Pilot approach at regional level
- Scale up throughout Ameren Illinois service territory



DCEO Opportunity Zone Map



What are your ideas for strengthening connections and growing the energy efficiency workforce?

Next Steps

- Ameren Illinois and SEDAC will continue our partnership in 2021 to deliver this pilot.
- Over 25 partnerships in place since 2018 with continued pursuit of new partnerships in our service territory.
- Learn more about getting involved with the Market Development Initiative at:
AmerenIllinoisSavings.com/MDI



Discussion Questions

- What are your ideas for strengthening connections and growing the energy efficiency workforce?
- What connections among stakeholder groups are strong?
What connections could be stronger?
- What can **workforce coordinators and community-based organizations** do to strengthen connections and grow the workforce?
- How can we better coordinate to:
 - raise awareness?
 - diversify the workforce?
 - fill training gaps?

End