Matt Gee: How does your org look at labor market data?

Erin Dalton: Have good integrated systems in the state and want client-level data on jobs and know who is getting jobs.

Tyler Waring: Want to integrates sources of labor data

Jennifer Newcomer: Want to get more market data and see what people are obtaining and compare to what we see in the forecast. Know what future jobs will be coming up. Denver is on the up and up and we want to know what the realities are of matching the economic development programs. Also look at housing development realties. If jobs pay less than $36,000 what do we need to do on the housing end.

Brittany Ramos: Work at Living Cities. Want to understand some of the untapped potential of private sector data and how it can inform social good work.

Kristen Murray: Use it as requested and for transportation planning. Similar to housing themes.

Amy Terpstra: Look at it from broad perspective. Access client level data from workforce system, look at workforce training side. Try to understand impact of certain job programs on people’s earnings and employment levels. Something I would love to have is better access to the data. There’s a lot of bureaucracy to get there. People’s employment and income change are the additional pieces that help you understand trends. Three’s a real lack of really local unemployment and jobs data. To think about Chicago community areas, and having to go to the ACS for 5-year estimate. It’s useless.

Devin Keitheley: We haven’t been doing so much in the last couple of years. We’ve come up with some proxies at the local level but I’m not really involved in it. We also do things on the creative job and defining what those are. There are also green jobs which are another beast but the government hasn’t defined them since they ran out of money. SO there is not good way to count green jobs even though there is an interest. We’ve also had requests on a regional level. I don’t find the data sources we have early reliable, not specific enough. Trying to put that into a neighborhood profile or client report. Is not good.

KP: Private-sector data sources. There are generalizable applications. I’m working on some corridor development projects but I don’t know if this has address level. It would be nice to know how this data would be useful and to at what geographic level. It would be interesting to know how it needs to be cross-referenced. It feels not very helpful by itself so what else do we need to match it with to make it useful?

AT: Relates to lessons learned from working with corporations. Any time we ask to get data and info from whatever group, there are issues with the quality of jobs. There’s a risk in giving that data because I might turn it around and say something negative about businesses and corporations and capitalism.

MG: The way these orgs think about risk is very different from other NPs and government orgs.

Shahrukh Farooq: Don’t do much with labor market data

Lisa Nelson: Interested to apply to larger geography. Figure out what are the occupations that are better, pay more, etc. Looking more at MSA level.

KP: Feels similar to where we were at the start of the foreclosure crisis. Trying to use and sell the mortgage data. The sales people had no idea what is in the data and they wouldn’t tell you about the quality to limitations. I had some emails from other data friends where we would share insights. Feels like there needs to be a community of practice around researchers suing this data—how to classify, how to code, etc.

AT: Also how to get beyond jobs and apply to PTO and retirement savings, etc. Know how many jobs provide family sustaining elements. Other overall measures of job quality.

Nancy Jones: Do workforce and economic indicators use LEHDs dataset annually.

MG: It was suggested that we met with folks at the Census to learn how to use the very rich but locked down private data. Part of a proposal called Communities USA. The first proposal was to work with LEEDS data called “where we work.org.” It shows where people work and where they live. Shows that census data can be more accessible. The second year, we worked with private sector partners to generate locally relevant and more timely data. Worked with Skills for America’s Future (does job training programs) but didn’t know if the things they were training on where in demand. We worked with IDS and CareerBuilder and used raw job posting and raw resume data to link to IDS data. We extracted the skills from the job posting data using ONED (sp) and extracted skills from people’s resumes. We knew where the job posting was and where the person submitting was. We knew the skills gap. That led to a few conversations about doing this nationally, originally just for Chicago. This summer we have a whole bunch of stakeholders from Burning Glass, data providers, etc. We wanted to create a locally relevant and timely measure of skills gaps. Hope that others can plug into this effort.

ED: What were the limitations based on the results in Chicago?

MG: For all CareerBuilder data we looked at where it was representative and where it was not. We compared job postings to a BLS data source to get a sense of that. As you’d expect, there’s good representation for tech jobs where there is high technology literacy needed. You got decreasing representatives for blue collar jobs and in the service sector.

AT: What do you anticipate the final product as being?

MG: I’d like to cast that back and ask what you’d like. What kind of data product would you want and what would benefit your orgs most?

BR: Searchable by multiple geographies, maybe a drawing tool to search more specific areas like Zillow. Zip code would be a good starting point.

MG: We’ve been thinking about this and how to make sure the custom geographies don’t give away too much individual info.

BR: Also connecting the jobs to various training programs and policies.

MG: Something like a results reporter?

BR: Yes.

MG: We’ve been working with the Foundation Center and try and generate a map of each service area and see where the grant is being deployed. It would allow orgs to talk about their result.

LN: There’s the American Locator Service that allows us to do something similar. It’s just the publically funded services.

TW: Some way to get closer to the raw data would be useful but reaching. A service to aggregate a group of polygons. Maybe get raw data with some sort of fuzziness built in so it could be released and then aggregated to different geographic layers. That way data could be taken and maybe aggregated to the watersheds, etc.

MG: One of the projects we did with the Census was thinking about generating a marginal database with generated individuals off of the real data. The generated individuals would contain many of the same characteristics so some analyses would still be valid.

TW: That would be really variable because you wouldn’t be constrained by a specific geography.

KP: What about micro datasets? Might be mathematically easier than the synthetic data.

BR: Comparative data—knowing what is high, low, normal

KM: Also seeing change over time.

KP: Some sites also do peer matches. For example, you wouldn’t want to compare Detroit to everything. The comparative health stats do that.

MG: It would be good to compare to other similar counties around the area.

NJ: Would I be able to query the top skills in a certain area? At something lower than the zip code level? Small areas by skill would be a whole other dimension and would be a really good piece of info for Baltimore. For example, thinking about improvements in technology skills.

MG: One of the things that would be important is some measure that shows the likely representativeness of an area.

KP: Or not even showing some things.

NJ: Our steering committee would love to see this. I don’t think we would publish it to the city for fear of showing wrong information.

KP: It would be dangerous to show it to the city. I’m not saying to lock it down, though.

MG: We’re going to deliver it to the whole country. I’d love to have you guys be part of the stakeholder group.

NJ: Another colleague of mine would want to know about green jobs. Could that be shown?

DK: It’s hard to define. You can’t just look at industry numbers and occupation numbers. Just because someone works in the same industry and has another green job, it doesn’t mean that both jobs are green. When Brookings did their work, the way they defined it was different than the government.

KP: Providing use cases would be helpful for people. Ideally real life but also made up.

DHS: Another useful thing could be displaying it with other data.

DK: What about what skills people are learning to do? What are the certifications or two-year degrees people are doing? Those people are the ones who will be there in a few months.

MG: Like working with community colleges?

DK: Also beyond, there are so many places that do certifications. It’s beyond two-year degrees.

DHS: It’s also important to think that the skill sets reported on reuses are not actual skills.

MG: We could also think of that as a feature and not a bug. It could help an individual figure out what skills to use on their resume. Say one thing one way versus the other.

I can share my experiences working with private-sector clients on data sharing agreements. A few things have been very valuable. Visibility matters second to making money. Raising the profile of a project can be a good way to get the right people to the table. Ultimately it is the big boss that needs to sign off. You need to have high-level and low-level support. A lot of times having the mayor’s office of governor’s office call about an initiative is valuable for starting the conversation. Want high-level convening.

To get data, need to get to a business use case first. It’s helpful if you can demonstrate how a particular use of the data will be beneficial to their bottom line. In each case we did that. For CareerBuilder, a big part of our work was writing code to extract skills from resumes and jobs. This was a problem they had . We always release all of our code. They agreed to give us their data as long as we gave them the code. Just merging data sets can also work. Tell them they are getting R&D. There will be value tracked back in addition to the social capital. You also need to have someone who supports the project more than just sending over the data one time. You need to be able to have some over the course of the whole project. The nature of the data sharing agreement is important. For example, having intellectual independence around data can scare them off. Need to work with lawyers to tame that provision.

Good news is that a lot of these companies are recognizing the role of data intermediaries and community organizations. At Linked In we’ve been working with their head of data science as well as their head of public policy. Lots of larger companies have these. That’s good news because it shows they recognize the value of data and want to think creatively with you as a partner.

MG: Lightening round to throw out related/useful data set

IDES (Illinois dept of employment services)

UI data

Sales tax data (Think about labor demand. Get data on businesses paying taxes, figure out what establishments pay sales tax. Work with city agency to get data. Can get from city, sec state in CO)

🡪 JN: entity-level data

Business license data

Understanding local employment trend using Twitter data? Can use other social media.