



Marketing and Employer Linkages Committee

Employer Market Research

November 29, 2007

Workforce Investment Board Vision Statement

“Working to build a quality and diverse workforce that meets the employment and training needs of employers and individuals in a compassionate, timely and efficient manner through a committed Lake County network”.



Agenda

- WIB's purpose for conducting employer market research
- Employer survey background
- Employer forum invitees
- Employer survey results and recommendations
- Core recommendations
- Next steps
- Wrap up



In September of 2006, the WIB met to develop a 2007 strategic business plan, at which time the following was determined:

- A need for a stronger business community relationship
- Market research required to understand business community interest and best way to promote Job Center business services.
- Evaluate existing Job Center services

The Marketing and Employer Linkages Committee was assigned this responsibility, working in concert with the Youth Council and One Stop System Committee.

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First quarter of 2007, the Marketing and Employer Linkages Committee analyzed the existing data of 540 companies that had been previously contacted by the Business Services Team/BST and determined the following information was needed:

- What services employers valued
- How to effectively communicate with employers
- How to manage, cultivate, implement and maximize service opportunities
- How to train and coach the BST to properly use tools and execute processes to be more successful

As a result, in April of 2007, the Marketing Committee sent forward a Request for Proposal to five potential bidders and after an insufficient response decided to manage the market research as a committee.

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Survey Background

In preparation for developing an employer survey, the Marketing Committee was briefed on the contents of the December 2006 U.S. Government Accountability Office's/GAO report on employers use of One Stop centers.

Based on the findings of the report, the committee determined that a focus group, consisting of local business partners, would be beneficial in determining the needs and perceptions of Lake County employers.

As a result, the Marketing Committee hosted a Lake County WIB employer forum on June 19, 2007.

- ❖ Committee members provided pro bono assistance that resulted in an approximate cost savings of \$12,000.

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Employer Forum Invitees

- 291 personalized invitations were sent to local employers
- Invitees included small, medium, and large employers from the Critical Skills Shortage Initiative targeted industries located throughout Lake County.
 - ❖ Healthcare
 - ❖ Manufacturing
 - ❖ Transportation, Warehouse and Logistics
 - ❖ Finance and Insurance
 - ❖ Construction
- A total of 46 individuals attended the forum, all of which completed the survey and participated in a large group discussion.

Note that the RFP targeted 25 employers

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Survey Results

Demographics:

The primary industries served by the Job Center of Lake County are manufacturing, healthcare, and financial services and employ 100-249 employees. Most of the employers that participated in the market research indicated that they hire in excess of 30 employees per year. This indicates the opportunities for the Job Center of Lake County to service this community are significantly high.

Overall Analysis of Services Offered:

Out of the four service categories surveyed, 3 out of 4 have 96% or greater respondents who have not used these services. Recruiting and Personnel is clearly the most recognized and accessed service offered at the Job Center of Lake County.

Survey Key

Forum attendees were asked to rate each Job Center employer service category as follows:

High 5	Medium 4	Neutral 3	Low 1-2
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Awareness
Usage
Satisfaction
Importance

Results were based on the majority of the responses for each category.

Survey Results

Recruiting and Personnel

Illinois Skills Match

Awareness: High

Usage: High

Satisfaction: Low

Importance: High

Feedback indicates that this tool, although the most utilized service in this category, is not user friendly and does not always facilitate the acquisition of the appropriate talent.

Recommendations

Recruiting and Personnel

Illinois Skills Match Recommendations

- Provide feedback to the State regarding ISM structure and content changes. “Make it user friendly.”
- Determine how other local WIB’s use job matching to minimize employer ISM frustrations.
- Identify data management processes to ensure better data input and clearance. “Minimize garbage in - garbage out.”
- Develop a focused communication plan that enhances and articulates ISM image and value.

Survey Results

Recruiting and Personnel

College Central Network*

Awareness:	Medium
Usage:	Low
Satisfaction:	Low
Importance:	Neutral

Feedback indicates that this tool is not user friendly and does not always facilitate the acquisition of the appropriate talent.

Recommendation:

Refer to Illinois Skills Match recommendations.

*College Central Network/CCN also provides internships and job shadowing opportunities.

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Survey Results

Recruiting and Personnel

Job Fairs

Awareness:	High
Usage:	Medium
Satisfaction:	High
Importance:	Low

Feedback indicates employers rate this service as low value even though the Job Market Place job fair is a well known brand in the business community.

Recommendations

Recruiting and Personnel

Job Fairs Recommendations:

- Co-brand to elevate credibility, i.e., with College of Lake County and/or other notable organizations.
- Establish and collect metrics to evaluate Job Center services usage that improve value, i.e., job seeker traffic rates, employer participation, etc.

Recommendations

Recruiting and Personnel

Overall Recommendations:

- Guide employers through educational and marketing tools to assist with their candidate selection requirements.
- Develop a webpage that links employer needs with Job Center resources.
- Optimize job seeker workshops by awarding completion certificates to attendees.
 - ❖ “**Job Center Certified Candidates**” reflect professionalism, dependability, and strong communication skills.

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Survey Results

<p>JCLC Facilities and Equipment</p> <p>Awareness: Low</p> <p>Usage: Low</p> <p>Satisfaction: N/A</p> <p>Importance: Medium to Low</p>	<p>Education and Training</p> <p>Awareness: Low</p> <p>Usage: Low</p> <p>Satisfaction: Low</p> <p>Importance: Low</p>
<p>Financial Packages</p> <p>Awareness: Low</p> <p>Usage: Low</p> <p>Satisfaction: Low</p> <p>Importance: Low</p>	<p>Business Services</p> <p>Awareness: Low</p> <p>Usage: Low</p> <p>Satisfaction: Low</p> <p>Importance: Low</p>

- Feedback indicates a possible need for a different marketing approach.
 - ❖ We could have repositioned the survey question(s) to read, “If this service met all your needs, would it be important to you?”

Survey Results

Youth Council

Awareness:	Low
Usage:	Low
Satisfaction:	Medium
Importance:	Medium to High

Feedback indicates interest in youth employment with caveats regarding candidates' commitment, dependability, maturity, and work ethics.

Recommendation:

Employ the “Job Center Certified Candidate” concept.

Core Recommendations

- Develop a communication strategy to demonstrate Job Center alignment with unmet employer needs, i.e., highlight the “**WIIFM’s/what’s in it for me**” and use e-blast for quickest employer touch.
- Focus on delivering good customer service, i.e.:
 - ❖ Establish a BST single point of contact.
 - ❖ Implement an automated voice mail system to direct employers to the right place.
 - ❖ Improve BST back office processes.
- Facilitate employer networking with flexible workshop times and host “lunch-learn-network” events.
- Dispel, by promoting all candidates and skill levels, the employer perception that only low skilled/wage workers are Job Center candidates.

Next Steps

- Encourage board member utilization and referral of Job Center business services.
- Deliver a monthly/quarterly communication piece, via e-blast, to Lake County employers keeping them abreast of the improved Job Center business services.
- Continue working together to promote the Job Center business services to Lake County employers.
- Board to incorporate, as applicable, employer market research findings into proposed 2008 Board retreat and planning process.

Wrap Up

- Employer Forum is another great opportunity for the WIB to serve as a communication catalyst to Lake County employers and impact workforce development.
- Attendees were highly appreciative of the event especially as a means to network with other Lake County employers.
- The WIB is Lake County's "best kept secret" and can bridge the gap between Lake County employers and the Job Center working toward a stronger Lake County workforce.



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to
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