

RETOOLING WASHINGTON'S WORKFORCE: Responding Locally

Workforce Board Presentation
March 10, 2011



Presentation Focus

- ❖ How have WDCs responded to the “Call to Action” from the Retooling initiative?
- ❖ How has the economic crisis sparked new ways of doing business?
- ❖ What unique, innovative and emerging Best Practices have resulted?
- ❖ What role can the State play ensuring greater success in Retooling?

“Call to Action” from Retooling

All 12 WDCs are...

- ❖ Engaged in discussion and planning for “Retooling Washington Workers”
- ❖ Engaging and informing Chief Local Elected Officials
- ❖ Holding community meetings highlighting “Retooling Washington Workers”
- ❖ Increasing emphasis on serving Unemployment Insurance Recipients and soon to be Exhaustees
- ❖ Placing greater emphasis with On-the-Job Training (OJT) as a priority training service
- ❖ Shifting and refining focus of business service teams

Engaging Councils and Local Officials

Each Workforce Development Council (WDC) has been briefed on this issue and many groups have developed special tracking, projects or expectation for involvement. **South Central** exemplifies the system's effort as it seeks alignment of current work and prioritizes OJT and business outreach.

Local officials are being regularly briefed either as part of their WDC involvement or separately. Some examples...

- ❖ **Olympic Consortium Board** (9 County Commissioners) have been briefed and began hearing RTWW updates with reports and discussion occurring quarterly.

- ❖ The Chair of the Board of **Spokane County Commissioners** participated in the annual SAWDC planning retreat in December and all 3 Commissioners were updated on the RWW efforts.

New Thinking about Business Connections

Spotlight Olympic, Northwest and Southwest:

- ❖ Streamline services and focus on job placements, not just numbers of job orders.
- ❖ Team members closely review qualifications of applicants to ensure quality fit for the business customer needs. Businesses report improved satisfaction with WorkSource referrals.
- ❖ Review job seeker database to better match business needs.
- ❖ Work with Economic Development partners to develop priority list of key businesses and industries. This priority focuses resources to ensure the right businesses are getting their needs met.
- ❖ Identify and aggressively support select employers who can provide high wage jobs, in high demand occupations.

Enhancing Business Services with Focused and Diverse Business Teams

Spotlight: Spokane, Benton-Franklin, Tacoma/Pierce, Snohomish County

- ❖ Gather real-time information on labor market hiring trends, job openings, occupational trends and jobseeker inventories
- ❖ Develop strategies for market penetration within each sector
- ❖ Conduct Business Needs Assessments that target industry needs
- ❖ Develop comprehensive service plan that includes high level, innovative services designed to meet the industry sectors' needs
- ❖ Communicate workforce intelligence across our workforce system to WorkSource staff, partners, and affiliates
- ❖ Leverage resources and activities to avoid duplication

Business Services...a Bottom Line Difference

“Business Connection provides quality, on-site training to our management staff, serves as a resource for general WorkSource queries, and offers outstanding research assistance for compliance issues. The Business Connection is a partnership that no company should be without.” AHBL, Inc.

“I love WorkSource--I couldn't do my job without it! I can quickly post jobs and get results right away. About half the people I hire come from WorkSource.” Amtrak in Washington, Oregon and Montana

***“MultiCare Good Samaritan is extremely grateful for the funds received to help train our staff on our new electronic medical records...helped train over 250 healthcare workers on our new state of the art system, providing safer and more convenient care to our patients.”
MultiCare/Good Samaritan Hospital***

***“The Shared-Work Program aided our small company in retaining employees and their health benefits during a difficult economic climate.”
Orca Marine Cooling Systems***

OJT: Train and Promote Economic Development

Spotlight: North Central

- ❖ *My Job Network*: a networking group for OJT ready candidates to research labor market and fine tune job search skills.
- ❖ Assessments help determine if a candidate has the skills necessary to be successful in training and on-the-job. Targeted instruction is available at Learning Centers if the candidate shows a deficiency.
- ❖ Combine skills instruction such as digital literacy with OJT makes candidates more competitive
- ❖ Outreach to CTE graduates who need short OJT to get the hands-on experience and the business connection they need.

Spotlight: Pacific Mountain

- ❖ OJTs are proposed to assist two *new* businesses in manufacturing, spurring growth in that sector and providing jobs to the deeply depressed forest products area

***11 WDCs asked for total of \$3.2 mil to fund OJTs in their areas.
\$1.5 mil is available.***

Focus on UI Exhaustee Needs

Spotlight Snohomish County: social media campaign for WorkSource to better attract those job candidates who are not already visiting the Centers and to tie in business. Project **R.I.S.E** (Reconnecting Individuals to Sustainable Employment) is targeted at participants collecting UI for 99 or more weeks, are placed into supportive cohorts of 15-20 for a three week intensive skills training.

Spotlight Tacoma/Pierce: Partner with ESD on a new “Hiring Academy”. Model provides: intensive preparation needed by applicants to articulate skills, tailor their resume and sell themselves in an interview. Graduates of the Hiring Academy gain exclusive access to monthly hiring events.

Spotlight Rural Partners and King County: well attended community meetings and “personal touch” for claimants who have or are about to exhaust benefits.

What are the Major Challenges to our Success?

- ❖ **Declining resources** even before the economic recession...How to cover the physical distances, diversity and magnitude of the need?
- ❖ How to thoughtfully program for the **new workforce environment**: long-term structural unemployment and the “new” job seeker...skilled, unfamiliar with being unemployed and exhibiting signs of depression and job search fatigue
- ❖ **Rallying our partners** whose programs and resources are also stretched very thin in their own shops
- ❖ What to do for our **youth population** who have skyrocketing unemployment and fewer options...what does it mean for the future?
- ❖ Serving and finding the right priority balance with the **dual customer--**job candidates/seekers and business support services

How to Help...

- ❖ **Job development and job creation initiatives** that specifically include, thoughtfully consider and value workforce development
- ❖ **Highest level recognition** of the value of the system that includes encouragement and support for local boards, partner acknowledgment of the leadership and convening role of WDC, State agency coordination to ensure all measures directed to same goals
- ❖ Provision of funds that support additional **business outreach, enhanced support for work-based training (OJT) and resources to address the new “job seeker”**
- ❖ Demonstrated relief and continued support for **reduction of administrative burdens** so WDC can focus on DOING the work
- ❖ **Accessibility to decision makers and inclusion** in decision that affect WDC functions and operations

Workforce Development Councils Serving Citizens Across the State

- ▶ Olympic Workforce Development Council
- ▶ Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council
- ▶ Northwest Workforce Development Council
- ▶ Snohomish County Workforce Development Council
- ▶ Workforce Development Council of Seattle–King County
- ▶ Tacoma–Pierce County Workforce Development Council
- ▶ Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council
- ▶ North Central Washington Workforce Development Council
- ▶ South Central Tri–County Workforce Development Council
- ▶ Eastern Washington Partnership Workforce Development Council
- ▶ Benton–Franklin Workforce Development Council
- ▶ Spokane Area Workforce Development Council

WASHINGTON WORKFORCE ASSOCIATION

