

**ECONOMIC GROWTH REGION 6 WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**  
**Joint Meeting - Marketing & Communications Committee & Workforce and Business**  
**Services/Accountability Committee**  
**August 24, 2011**  
**Meeting Minutes**

Present: Ron Best, E. Roy Budd, Fred Davis, Rhonda Duning, Mark Goldman, and Jim Riggle

Absent: Wayne Blevins, John Carl, Gail Chesterfield, Liz Hightower, Tim Loyd, Sonya Paul, Kevin Polivick, Tim Rogers, and Deb Tipton

Others Present: Tracy Dishman, Jacob Everett, Stephanie Goodman, Tracy Hartman, Dave Koesters, Mellisa Leaming, and Barbara Street

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by co-chair of the Workforce and Business Services/Accountability Committee, E. Roy Budd at 10:30 AM at the WorkOne office in New Castle, IN.

**DELCLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** Rhonda Duning requested declarations of conflicts of interest. None Declared

**BUSINESS MARKETING PLAN:** Budd gave an update on discussions that have occurred about how the Marketing & Communications Committee can work together with the Workforce & Business Services Committee to better engage employers in East Central Indiana and what the purpose of today's meeting is. Budd shared that we have done a fair job of engaging "some" employers and that we have a lot of work to do in engaging "all" of the employers. There has been a lot of focus on the job seeker customer and we now must focus an equal amount of time on the employer customer. We have done a good job of making new companies coming to town aware of our services. We need to do a better job of making sure that our existing companies are also aware of WorkOne services they could benefit from with expansion and retention issues they are currently facing. Budd welcomed any and all ideas and encouraged a brain storming session and discussion. Budd turned over the discussion to Mark Goldman who will be working with DWD on the same issues.

Goldman suggested more frequent communication with employers that is shorter. Most emails that have the "government-speak" language are not interesting, so boring, and tend to be ignored. It would be ideal to come up with 15-20 things that employers really care about. Send an email to employers that is two or three sentences in length once a week.

Budd called on Tracy Hartman, BSR, who is responsible for talking with employers in the field and soliciting input from them. He asked for a summarization of two or three things that this group could be doing better. Hartman answered that marketing is part of the issue, as well as the lack of capacity to be contacting employers that should be contacted. A lack of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software has also prevented progress on enhancing a lot of things that BSR's work on. CRM software will enable reaching out to employers on a consistent basis, thus improving the marketing that has been lacking. Budd also questioned what level of activity is being conducted with WorkKeys in our region. Hartman responded that job seekers are currently being assessed using Key Train as practice for the WorkKeys testing. The effectiveness of recent Job Fairs was also questioned. Hartman responded that there might be better ways to conduct a Job Fair. What was the response from the "Virtual Job Fair" held last year? Dishman responded that there was a great response; however most of our workforce is not comfortable with the computer. Employers responded very favorably to the Virtual Job Fair.

They did not have to commit staff to work a traditional job fair. Communicating with employers online is the way we are progressing towards. For example, job seekers must apply for jobs online, and create/submit resumes online, etc.

Is it a myth or reality that new employers to the region have difficulty finding employees with the skill sets they are looking for? Any ideas on how to combat that? Ron Best responded that he noticed the ads for jobs in the WorkOne Career Connect Magazine. He is fearful that if he were to advertise a job in this magazine, his system would be overwhelmed by people applying for the job. He believes this to be the perception of most employers in the region. WorkOne would be more helpful to the employer if they were to help employers find employees without publishing the job posting publicly.

Budd commented that one of the best things that WorkOne does is testing, pre-screening, and pre-qualifying candidates before they are sent out to the employer. Mellisa Leaming responded that this is a true statement and that there are some areas that we need to improve on. We are currently working on the parameters that employers will give to WorkOne, who will then be better able to pre-screen applicants for the jobs. This should be marketed to employers so they no longer have the false perceptions of being overwhelmed by applicants if they post a job with WorkOne! Hartman responded that marketing IndianaCareerConnect and training on how to use it also needs to be a big piece of what is marketed to employers, as it has a lot of information that would be beneficial to employers.

Budd questioned how Business Services is currently reaching out to employers. Hartman responded that BSRs currently attend chamber meetings, HR association meetings, network with employers at job fairs, use IndianaCareerConnect, and target employers who are hiring by visiting with them and promoting the OJT program. Another suggestion was to speak to more employers, rather than job seekers, through media events – such as newspaper columns in the Business section. Dishman responded in agreement. General Marketing and Target Marketing was discussed. A suggestion would be to gather employers in a focus group and discuss their needs. It was also suggested to look at some other states for best practices. While attending NAWB conferences in Washington, D.C., Dishman researches best practices on a national level. Portland, Oregon is excelling in their employer marketing, as well as Texas and Florida.

Jim Riggle commented that when WorkKeys was initially introduced to employers, their responses to BSR's were that they did not have the time to invest. We should consider if employers will actually invest their time and effort to attend a focus group to express their needs. Most employers are aware of WorkOne services; however are reluctant to take advantage of them.

Another concern that was discussed was the fact that some groups of employers are simply looking for "cheap labor". It would be difficult to determine what WorkOne could do for those employers, if anything at all. Most lower-paying employers have a high level of turnover and a tougher time using WorkOne services. Goldman commented that he is not losing employees who have a lower-paying wage. Hartman commented that we are not targeting those low-paying wage employers. We are targeting high-paying wage premier employers. Barbara Street shared that one of the things we are tasked with in our region is determining the in-demand occupations. Jacob Everett is currently working on this as an update so as to drive who the employers are that we are marketing to.

Budd commented that we already know the industry clusters that we should be focused on:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Transportation & logistics
- Food processing
- Alt. energy
- Health care

Riggle commented again that we cannot be all things to all people. In agreement, Hartman shared that we do have IndianaCareerConnect, which everyone can use. We also have WorkKeys, which everyone can use. There was a time when the State would not profile a job unless the employer was hiring at least ten people in that position, which put us out of business with all of the smaller businesses. Another matter that should be looked at, with regards to WorkKeys, is the actual WorkKeys themselves and the National Career Readiness Certification. Which do we promote? The difference between the two is with the National Career Readiness Certificate no jobs are profiled. A job seeker simply takes the WorkKeys assessment and if all 4's are received on the score they receive a Silver Certificate. If all 5's are received they receive the Gold Certificate. Budd commented that nobody knows about this. We have to show that these assessments are valuable to the employer in a simple and straight-forward way. Hartman suggested asking the employers what their preference is – the National Career Readiness Certificate or do they have an open position they would like profiled and have WorkOne send candidates who have those specific skill sets required to fill the position (WorkKeys).

Mark Goldman recommended that WorkOne staff first meet with the candidates who have been WorkKeys profiled and are being sent to fill the open positions that employers post with WorkOne. Most candidates who have been WorkKeys profiled and sent to an employer do not meet the job skills required, although they passed the WorkKeys profile test. Budd recommended that during the annual meeting it would be beneficial if we could get some good, solid positive testimonials from employers who use WorkOne and have had success.

Street questioned that when we talk about our Business Marketing Plan, are we saying that we really want the plan to be Target Marketing for only those employers who meet the wage, benefits, and target industry criteria? Budd responded that what we should be doing is identifying target industries we are trying to recruit in our region, match those target industries with the type of skill sets required for the jobs in those industries, and that is what should be marketed.

A concern was brought forward about job seekers who have been out of work for longer than six months. Most employers will not consider applications of individuals who have been unemployed for that length of time. It is a national phenomenon. Rhonda Duning asked how that could be changed. Hartman responded that we engage those individuals in our free workshops so they can show employers that they ARE doing SOMETHING while they are unemployed.

Another discussion began about the concern for underemployed individuals vs. unemployed individuals. Dave Koesters commented that helping the underemployed is where we can really make a difference. The lack of training dollars for incumbent workers is the missing piece. Mellisa Leaming commented that it is difficult to define underemployed. How do we determine if an individual is indeed underemployed? We also cannot report to prospective employers who are considering coming to our region on the number of underemployed individuals we have

available who would meet the skills needed to become employed with that prospective employer. Budd commented that economic developers, from time to time, have access to an underemployed survey that has been conducted by a company called PathFinders. The real issue is having a skilled workforce that we can demonstrate and document for new employers, as well as existing employers. It is very important to economic developers in attracting new companies to come here. New companies will not come here if they cannot find a workforce.

Dishman commented that it seems like we need to target marketing to job seekers and make them aware that they should increase their skills and education, etc. Ron Best commented that we have two customers – job seekers, and employers. WorkOne is the “matchmaker”. Do we have software that matches them up? Do we have career advisors who match them up? How do we do the “match making”? Mellisa Leaming responded that Career Advisors assess the job seekers to determine what skill sets they have, what they might be lacking, and if they are someone we want to work with on getting a job. Funding dollars has also been an issue. Budd commented that the Workforce & Business Services/Accountability Committee can now track the amount of dollars spent on each trainee and cost per placement. This really shows how efficient we are in terms of return on investment that we are spending in training dollars. Spending money on training that does not result in job placement is not a success!

Koesters suggested that the requirement for individuals who are receiving unemployment benefits be changed from requiring them to apply for three jobs each week to requiring them to attend a certain number of workshops each week to increase their skills and help them become more employable. Fred Davis commented that the generation of kids today believe they are “entitled” to many things for nothing and really have no interest in working. Also, an elder generation should not be disqualified for a job due to not passing a test on a computer. Most are intimidated by the computer.

**Next steps:** Jim Riggle commented that we need to get a group of employers together to discuss the results of the Conexus Survey. We need to find out more from employers about what they expect of us and do our best to meet their requests.

- How can we get out there in front of employers and make a difference?
- We need to go out and get in front of some of the local and regional HR groups, local and regional manufacturing groups, and attend some forums that are already out there.
- Get more involved with the Chambers of Commerce in each region.
- Present to the HR group in Muncie and Richmond.
- Kiwanas and Rotary groups need to be visited to let them know about WorkOne services.
- Engage the National Association of Manufacturing to help with the already scheduled employer forum.
- Engage with Economic Development to find out what kind of companies they are attracting.
- If Economic Developers continue to attract foreign companies, we need to develop training that meets their needs. For example – welders. Our welders are not trained to know certain foreign specs and measurements required by foreign companies who send their products overseas.
- Reallocate funds to help more employers, rather than job seekers.
- Define who the premier employer is.

There is an identified gap in what employers are looking for and what job seekers possess in terms of skills and ethics.

Dishman commented that we are conducting an employer forum for the manufacturing industry. We need to conduct employer forums for the other in-demand occupations as well:

- Health
- Warehousing
- Call centers
- Agri-business.

Leaming commented that we should first update the In-Demand Occupations List. Budd requested that we assure the Demand Occupations list is congruent with what Economic Developers are doing with regards to their Target Industry Study.

Business Service Reps who meet with employers every day should always ask these two questions:

1. What do you see is the most valuable thing that WorkOne does for you? (*their answer will provide us with what their perception of WorkOne is*)
2. What do you need from WorkOne?

The answers that employers give should be shared with the committee.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The joint meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mellisa Leaming  
Director of Operations

Tracy Dishman  
Director of Marketing