

Spokane Area Workforce Development Council Strategy Team Notes

Business Clusters Team

Date of Team Meeting: January 11, 2006

Location: Spokane Community College in the Sasquatch Room

Members:

Arteaga, Frankie

Cabildo, Ben

Dias, Craig-Co-Chair

Garza, Albert

Hanson, Steve-Co-Chair

Iranon, George

Kogle, Gail

Lee, Craig

Link, Patrick

Odle, Susan

Marchioro, Bill

Murcar, Joanne

Members Present:

Cabildo, Ben

Dias, Craig-Co-Chair

Hanson, Steve-Co-Chair

Iranon, George

Kogle, Gail

Lee, Craig

Murcar, Joanne

Odle, Susan

Guests:

Specific Purpose of Meeting:

Action Items Discussed:

1. There are two approaches to clusters:
 - Industry clusters and occupational clusters. Perhaps we should consider a hybrid approach
2. The WDC could hold back a portion of funding each year for special needs when a cluster gets hot.
3. Link businesses together that have common themes or common services, such as "customer services"
4. Focus on skills and career ladders
5. Identify skills for workforce development

6. Identify portable skills sets
7. Provide outreach to youth and inform them about opportunities
8. Offer applied technology classes in high schools
9. Educate students about occupational clusters
10. Keep a skills-based approach
11. How can we help small businesses identify needed skills? How do we exchange information with small businesses?
12. Need to align cluster needs with resources. Identify funding “resources” for clusters/training opportunities
13. Business needs to be willing to invest in long-term training
14. Need to identify long-term trends
15. Basic skills have been identified that are needed
16. Need to cluster businesses
17. How could the 501c3 help us?
18. Need to catch clusters earlier to engage them as partners and meet their needs (Identify clusters with growth potential)
19. Identify transferability of skills
20. Should recognize that many sectors in Spokane are doing well and have needs for skilled workers
21. Need to assist incumbent workers within businesses to help them move up career ladders
22. Provide background information on clusters identified by Camber and EDC

Open Action Items: See Action Items Discussed. This meeting was the first meeting of the Team and they just created the action items, so every item is still open.

Action Items Completed: None at this time.

Next Meeting Date and Location: Tuesday, January 17, from 7:30-9:30 am, at Career Path Services, 905 N Washington #300 in the Manito Park Room.

Workforce Analysis by Sector

The WDC annually reviews the industry sectors in King County to determine our workforce sector strategies.

The Three-Year Strategic Action Plan directs the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County to “review and assess the strategy annually, and to update targeted industry sectors to reflect changing economic conditions and emerging needs.” In November and December of 2004, WDC staff prepared an updated assessment of the six target sectors that were identified as areas of focus by the strategic planning committee in spring 2003. Staff used a set of ten criteria established by the Strategic Planning committee in 2003 to revisit the target sectors and conduct an inventory of sector strategies articulated by other local, state, and federal workforce development partners and economic development groups. The following revised workforce sector analysis reports were presented to the Strategic Planning Committee at its January 5, 2005 retreat where support was given for the recommended strategies associated with the sectors.

In PY05 the WDC will focus its sector strategies within Construction, Manufacturing, Information Technology, Life Sciences, and Health Care.

Based on the strategic planning committee's direction, the WDC staff set out to research and collect data on six sectors: Finance, Construction, Information Technology, Construction, Manufacturing, and Life Sciences. As part of the research and collection of information, the committee accepted a series of measures to analyze each industry, and prioritize four of those measures as being essential to the success of the sector strategy. The four essential measures are:

- Commitment of employers and/or labor to develop the workforce and contribute resources.
- Workforce is critical issue to industry.
- Industry is important to the economic development of Seattle-King County.
- The WDC has the ability and a leverage point to address industry workforce issues.

In addition to the “first tier” measures listed above, the workforce analysis report considered an additional six factors:

- Existence of an industry intermediary/association.
- Degree of demand for workers through employment growth or attrition.
- Nature of the demand for workers, is it time-limited, immediate, intermediate (2 – 4 years out), or is it a future demand for workers.
- Does the industry provide wage progression and career ladder opportunities that can lead toward self-sufficiency.
- Are there parallel efforts underway that the WDC can leverage or partner with.
- Level of participation of training and education institutions.

Staff used the above ten criteria to evaluate each sector and assigned values of High, Medium, or Low for each measure (with the exception of “Nature of Demand”, which used time-limited values of immediate, intermediate, and future.