

## **Spokane Area Workforce Development Council Strategy Team Notes**

### **Business Clusters Team**

**Date of Team Meeting:** February 15, 2006

**Location:** Career Path Services, 905 N Washington, Manito Park Room

**Members:**

Arteaga, Frankie

Cabildo, Ben

**Dias, Craig-Co-Chair**

Garza, Albert

**Hanson, Steve-Co-Chair**

Iranon, George

Kogle, Gail

Lee, Craig

Link, Patrick

Marchioro, Bill

Murcar, Joanne

Zahir, Jeff

**Members Present:**

Dias, Craig

Hanson, Steve

Iranon, George

Kogle, Gail

Lee, Craig

Link, Patrick

Marchioro, Bill

Moholt, Lyle

Zahir, Jeff

**Guests:**

Roger Ingbretsen

John Baumhofer

Rich Hadley

**Specific Purpose of Meeting:** To continue the discussion of implementation of clusters approach to workforce development. Specifically to hear presentations from Community College of Spokane, The Spokane Regional Chamber, and the Economic Development Council on their cluster initiatives.

**Action Items Discussed:**

- 1) The purpose of the meeting was to identify differences and commonalities of the identified clusters to guide the WDC actions, since each partner defines a cluster to fit their purposes.
- 2) Craig Dias reviewed the agenda and the summary of the basic concepts developed at past meetings.
- 3) Presentations, handouts, and subsequent discussions centered on Community Colleges, Chamber, and EDC's rationale for cluster identification, and how that information is utilized to support their basic mission.

<b>State Community College System</b>	<b>***Spokane Regional Chamber of Commerce</b>	<b>Spokane Economic Development Council</b>
Demand Driven Provider Perspective Job Seeker Customer	Wealth Driven facilitator perspective business customer	Wealth driven facilitator perspective business customer
Agriculture	Agriculture National Resources	
*Construction		
Education	Higher Education	Higher Education/R&D
* Healthcare	Healthcare Industry	Healthcare/Biomedical
IT		** IT
* Manufacturing	Manufacturing	** Advanced Manufacturing
Natural Resources		
	Armed Services	
		Financial & shared services
	Professional services	
		** Logistics

\* Local Community College concentration

\*\* Priority

\*\*\* Each Chamber cluster has special plans in line with business growth, public policy, civic leadership, marketing, small business infrastructure, and education roles of the Chamber. The Chamber currently operates the Advanced Manufacturing and Healthcare Skills Panels.

Community College– The main purpose of cluster identification is to increase program offering by successfully applying for state high demand grant dollars. Requests must be demand

driven based on data from business on job demand in high paying clusters, \$12.00 per hour. While clusters are identified at a macro level, there is significant diversity within a cluster, manufacturing for example. This approach is subject to significant fluctuation over time as demand for specific jobs change and how the total economy changes.

Chamber-

Rich offered a contrast to cluster identification. Whereas Community Colleges of Spokane and the WDC look at clusters from a “provider” perspective, the Chamber and Economic Development Council look at clusters from an overall economic development/building wealth perspective. Business is the prime customer vs. the individual job seeker. Creating wealth can come from selling local product/services to those outside the area to bring in new wealth (\$) and by value added strategies in the local region. Sectors/clusters are in part chosen not to duplicate the work of others. Another joint board retreat combining the Chamber and Economic Development Council boards is scheduled for August 2006.

- 4) Craig Dias offered the perspective of identifying “drivers” in specific clusters and clusters that are “below the line” (Clusters that will be there and are driven by general economic factors). Clusters identified as below the line include financial services, manufacturing, energy, professional services, and logistics.
- 5) Given the number and variety of clusters, Rich suggested concentration of those with WDC/Workforce related activities that are underway or existing i.e. Healthcare, Construction and Advanced Manufacturing Skill Panels.
- 6) Jeff brought up the challenge of making the state’s Demand/Decline list more responsive to future planning necessity as well as the list’s inherent historical perspective.
- 7) Roger presented a perspective on the aging of the workforce and the impact on businesses finding the number of qualified workers they will need. Also the baby boomers, generation X and generation Y have differing perspectives on work, careers, and education.
- 8) National initiatives will affect workforce programs:
  - Current siloed funding
  - Domestic budget levels
  - Reauthorization of WIA
  - Alternative strategies like the Career Advancement Account (CAA).
  - Availability of “foundation” grants

### **Open Action Items: (No Change)**

1. There are two approaches to clusters:
2. Industry clusters and occupational clusters. Perhaps we should consider a hybrid approach
3. The WDC could hold back a portion of funding each year for special needs when a cluster gets hot.
4. Link businesses together that have common themes or common services, such as “customer services”
5. Focus on skills and career ladders
6. Identify skills for workforce development
7. Identify portable skills sets
8. Provide outreach to youth and inform them about opportunities
9. Offer applied technology classes in high schools
10. Educate students about occupational clusters
11. Keep a skills-based approach
12. How can we help small businesses identify needed skills? How do we exchange information with small businesses?
13. Need to align cluster needs with resources. Identify funding “resources” for clusters/training opportunities
14. Business needs to be willing to invest in long-term training
15. Need to identify long-term trends
16. Basic skills have been identified that are needed
17. Need to cluster businesses
18. How could the 501(c)3 help us?
19. Need to catch clusters earlier to engage them as partners and meet their needs (Identify clusters with growth potential)
20. Identify transferability of skills
21. Should recognize that many sectors in Spokane are doing well and have needs for skilled workers
22. Need to assist incumbent workers within businesses to help them move up career ladders

**Action Items Completed:** The presentation and information on Community College, EDC, and Chamber cluster initiatives.

**Next Meeting Date and Location:** To be determined when Craig has contacted key partners, i.e. AGC, Home Builders Association, Skill Panels, and other appropriate businesses, education, labor and government representatives.