

Business Services Redesign

Greater Louisville Workforce Investment Area

Regional Input Session

October 24, 2011

NOTES

Participants represented the following organizations/ agencies:

- Office of Employment and Training
- Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Jefferson Community College
- KentuckianaWorks
- KentuckianaWorks One-Stop Career Center

Rapid Response Activities

The Rapid Response process usually includes the following steps:

1. Learning of the layoff typically comes from a WARN notice, word of mouth, newspaper or through an email
2. The Rapid Response Coordinator contacts the company to try to gather information on the workers that will be affected
3. The Rapid Response Coordinator contacts the partners which includes OET, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, Labor, WIA
4. The partners work to create a bridge between the company, laid off workers and then getting these workers back into new jobs

Rapid Response presentations are conducted on-site at the company (whenever possible) to encourage workers to participate in the presentation.

During Rapid Response, it is important to tread lightly especially when the union is involved. For example, when a presenter says "I'm with the Department of Labor...", it is important to clearly explain what he or she is going to be covering (i.e. not there to talk about OSHA). Rarely some employers do not want to access services, but most are excited to offer these services to their employers.

The Rapid Response Guide includes information regarding all the partner agencies and organizations and their contact information. The guide also includes information about the job market, assistance



when facing foreclosure, resume writing and interview tips. Adult Education has also included information about how to help family members understand emotions during a time of layoff.

One of the challenges with Rapid Response is that the Greater Louisville region has a very large immigrant population. This means that information is not always available in an individual's native language. There is a very large spectrum of languages spoken ranging from Spanish to Sudanese to eastern European languages.

Rapid Response could be more robust if the information was received earlier from the employer.

Recommendations for the Rapid Response System

It would be helpful to have a listing of job postings available when delivering a presentation to laid off workers that is broken down by industry. Having a list sorted by industry so that the team can direct individuals to industries or even companies that are hiring would make it a more positive experience.

Business Services Activities

KentuckianaWorks currently does not have a designated business services liaison. The closest role to this is the National Fund for Workforce Solutions grant that is focused on sector strategies.

Recently, KentuckianaWorks convened an industry panel with business representatives from the Food and Beverage Manufacturing sector in partnership with the chamber of commerce. There have been a handful of these meetings. The partners have also convened a similar panel of representatives from automotive dealerships related to their need for skilled technicians.

The region hasn't done on-the-job training in ten years, but has recently done two with companies that have been referred through the chamber of commerce. One of these companies was facing the possibility of having to compete for work within their own company.

A participant from the Jeffersonville Community College reported that the college offers business and industry training solutions that range from technical training to Six Sigma processes. The process of delivering services to employers includes:

- Assessments
- A customized training plan
- Delivery of training, preferably on-site

Manufacturers are upgrading equipment so that leads to the need to increase technical training.

When targeting and outreaching to businesses, the partners use a variety of methods:

- The chamber often refers businesses to the community college.
- Partners use a database and informative events to get information about businesses.
- Word of mouth is one of the most common ways of learning about business needs.
- Probably 90% of the businesses that the partners work with are repeat businesses.



Companies many times don't even know that money is available from programs like Kentucky WINS and others.

Louisville is a big, little town and everyone knows each other. Relationships are key.

The chamber of commerce is often the first point of contact, but not always. It is usually a combination of the chamber of commerce and economic development.

Companies use the Office of Employment and Training (OET) for the state job postings and job fairs. For example, a company just put in a job order for fifty workers. OET has to stay flexible and make sure to fit into the company's internal dynamics.

The region is unique in that the Jefferson Community College runs the One-Stops.

EKOS allows partner agencies to see where others have been and which employers have been contacted.

The reality is that we all represent different organizations with different focus areas.

The sectors targeted by the various partners are not all aligned among economic development, workforce development and community colleges. For the National Fund for Workforce Solutions grant, the sectors that have been targeted are:

- Advanced Manufacturing (with a focus on Automotive Technicians);
- Healthcare; and
- Food and Beverage Manufacturing.

The community college's targeted sectors are:

- Manufacturing;
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics; and
- Healthcare.

As a community, Greater Louisville is very focused on advanced manufacturing.

Because funding levels are going down, sector strategies help the region concentrate where to have the most impact.

One of the participants commented, "We have done a good job thinking strategically. Tactically, we are working more closely on how we link up our efforts." This was the genesis of the Monday meetings.

Recommendations for Business Services System

These types of meetings are good to have because they facilitate communication.

It would be encouraging to see the various boards (WIB, economic development, community college, etc.) to be better champions of the partners' services.



- Currently, board members are not knowledgeable enough about all the services that are offered.
- They are all business people and can create awareness among their peers and via word of mouth.
- Larger companies are usually less reticent about working government agencies.

Other Comments

There is a new grant proposal being developed jointly by the Bluegrass region and the Greater Louisville region (the WIBs and community colleges) for the H1-B Technical Skills opportunity. It will focus on IT with some specific focus on Healthcare.

