

Workforce Innovation Fund

Employer Feedback and Input Meeting

Wednesday, February 14, 2012

8:00-9:30 a.m.

Department of Labor and Training

Agenda

In Attendance: Jeff Swallow (Electric Boat), Courtney Murphy (Electric Boat), Craig Sipe (Electric Boat), Brian Hull (Harvard Kennedy School), Kathie Shields (Tech Collective), Hy Goldman (Greylawn Foods Coastal Refrigeration), Lauren Slocum (Central RI Chamber of Commerce), Jim Glover (Workforce Solutions of Providence Cranston), Marc Amato (Walco), Sidney Tillett (Dorcas Place), Peter Stipe (AAA Southern New England), Tim Kinnaman (OST Services), Tom Costello (CCRI), Judy Jones (Poverty Institute), Mary Ellen McQueeney-Lally (RI DLT), Joe DiPina (Exeter Job Corps), Manuel Regas (Dorcas Place). David Tremblay (RI Department of Labor and Training), Mavis McGetrick (RI Department of Labor and Training)

Facilitators: Sarah Griffen and Kristin Lehoullier

Proposed Logic Model – Key Points

- **We need to make sure that the pathways are transparent. There needs to be some way that employers can see what programs and funding are available. They should also be able to find out who is graduating from the programs and by when.**
- **If the state's focus on bringing business into RI is not aligned with the workforce systems efforts we will be training people that are not aligned with job needs.**
- **We also need to think about meeting the needs of businesses that already operate in Rhode Island.**
- **We are bringing in entry level workers and doing most of the training ourselves. We are seeing fundamental gaps in the basics such as reading, math, work ethic, problem-solving, communication, and team work. What funding is available to help us address those gaps?**
- **We need to allow businesses to access funding as they need it so that they can respond to real-time needs. If they can only access it one time per year it becomes very difficult to effectively project needs and use those funds to their highest and best uses.**
- **Rhode Island has many organizations that have information on job growth and projections. We need to aggregate that data and use it together to drive decisions.**

- **We need to reach out to small businesses and connect them to the workforce development system.**
- **We need to start building awareness of career paths at the high school level with intentional linkages between high schools and technical and trade schools. There is really a lack of knowledge among students about potential careers that do not require a college degree. We know that there is a lack of skilled trades people throughout the country so many of these careers are viable for non-college bound students.**
- **We need to think about pipelines as well. For example, tractor trailer drivers are in demand nationwide. However, to drive a tractor trailer you must have 3 years of experience. As a result, most people must go to tractor trailer school at the cost of \$7000. If we started training for these jobs at earlier ages and identified incremental steps that would help people gain the experience required we could create a better pipeline of candidates to fill these jobs.**
- **We need a more responsive system. One that can turn around training programs (both public and private) that respond to our changing business within a short timeframe (3 months).**
- **We need to develop a training module that has intense basic work readiness training that could be adapted to go along with technical**

training.

- **Although the One Stops have been getting more training and been trying to be more responsive to employers there is still a lot of work to be done. We need to make sure that staff is trained too so they can be more responsive to employers.**
- **We have to fix the caseload of the One Stop staff. How can they do the kind of follow-up on clients that is required and still effectively focus provide career planning and coaching to new clients?**
- **We cannot assume that everyone can access the internet. We find that 1 in 10 people we employ do not have a bank, telephone, or internet access. They pick up their paycheck go to Walmart and cash it for food.**
- **The amount paperwork required by the workforce development system of employers is onerous and deters employers from using the OFT system. We need to reduce the paperwork and make it easier. One idea is to move the forms online. If employers have to do 1 hour of paperwork to access \$500 it is not worth their time.**
- **Employers are often the best training providers.**
- **The meeting adjourned at 9:25**