

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Market Trends and Oversight Committee

November 12, 2010

Minutes

WIB Members Present

Patricia Brady
Toni Carter
Joe Crowe
Amy Filice
Trixie Golberg
Dennis Johnson
Barb Mednick
Paul Nelson
Joe Stratig

Members Absent

Elizabeth Campbell
Lee Helgen
Janet Ludden EA
Jim Schultz
Dan Strittmater EA

Staff/Guests Present

Robert de la Vega, WIB member
Mary Jo Gardner, WIB CEO
Ashley Howard, US Bank
Doug Hubbard, WIB Member
Maureen O'Brien, Bremer Bank
Corrine Shepherd, Blue Cross Blue
Shield
Emily Ulwelling, US Bank
Jim Zentner, Workforce Solutions

Call to Order

Barb Mednick called the meeting to order.

Approve October Market Trends and Oversight Committee Minutes

Motion made by Joe Crowe with second by Joe Stratig to approve the October minutes as presented.

Motion carried.

Welcome and Introductions

Members and guests introduced themselves.

Updates

Healthcare Initiative

The Healthcare Initiative is underway with partners meeting weekly. The teachers are meeting to determine how to provide information to the students and how they will coordinate with each other. The case management for the students is being coordinated by Goodwill/EasterSeals. They are developing the process and working with the other partners so that the participants are receiving the same information and coordinated services. Coursework at Saint Paul College will start the week of January 10, 2011.

The partners who are working on the US Department of Labor Career Pathways Initiative met on October 22 in Saint Paul. The next meeting will be in Washington DC November 30 – December 2.

RENEW

Patricia Brady provided an update on the RENEW training. Presently there are 243 participants in training in the areas of construction, manufacturing, renewable energy and building systems. 12 employment service providers and 12 training partners are working on the project and currently 45 participants from the trainings are working. The majority of the participants are male, over 35 years old up to 55 with many holding felony records. The foundation community is involved and gave funding to get materials that are business oriented.

The WIB is working on business outreach looking to find new employers. The DEED Business Services Specialists are working with the WIB letting the employers know about RENEW and identifying jobs. The Business Service Specialists are being creative and identifying employers that may not have initially come to mind.

The WIB is also reaching out to organizations including the Minnesota Precision Manufacturers' Association and the Midway Chamber and also with larger employers.

Industry Workforce Focus: Financial Services

The committee continued its scan of the industries that seem to fit as WIB priorities by hearing from industry experts. Previously, the committee focused on manufacturing and healthcare, this month the focus is on the financial services industry. Industry experts at this meeting included Maureen O'Brien, Bremer Bank, Bob de la Vega, Wells Fargo, Corrine Shepherd, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and Ashley Howard and Emily Ulwelling from US Bank. Each guest discussed the industry needs and challenges from their perspective.

Maureen O'Brien, Bremer Bank

- Turnover has been around 4%. Bremer employs about 325 people and currently has 2 openings.
- Bremer is receiving a large volume of applications
- Bremer works with Goodwill/EasterSeals on their program to train people for the banking industry.
- Bremer also works with PPL's program
- The expectation is that when the economy improves there will be turnover.
- The current employee engagement survey showed that 60% of current employees plan to stay with Bremer until they retire
- Bremer supports training efforts in community and recognizes that work by community based organizations helps to create opportunities in the workplace for others who may not otherwise.

Bob de la Vega, Wells Fargo

- The financial industry restructured over the last years with a high-level of consolidation
- Statutory changes will change the way the industry works
- The population that is hired for areas other than customer facing can be located anywhere which is a difference between big banks and the local banks.
- The banking industry is highly regulated and includes background checks

Corrine Sheppard, Blue Cross Blue Shield

- Blue Cross Blue Shield has approximately 3500 employees
- The turnover rate is low and close to a flat line with entry level people staying and Blue Cross Blue Shield not replacing people who do leave.
- A large amount of routing work is going away or becoming automated.
- Entry-level jobs require 3-6 months of invested training
- Blue Cross Blue Shield is a non-profit organization
- Jobs are requiring a higher level of thinking skills.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield favors to higher internally
- Blue Cross Blue Shield hired about 60 people in 2010
- The industry is highly regulated with background checks and a large amount of audits

Emily Ulwelling, US Bank

- There are currently around 15 – 25 entry-level openings in the twin cities in the banks.
- US Bank works with the Goodwill/EasterSeals program.

Ashley Howard, US Bank

- There are about 250 people in the call center with 10 – 15 hired each month
- Turnover is mainly from moving up or losing their jobs
- Managers interview 8 people for every person they hire

- A strong background check is required
- Jobs are paying \$12 – 15/ hour with benefits available at 20 – 30 hours/week
- 2 years of customer service experience is desired
- The call center requires clear communication skills and a strong work ethic
- The call center provides 5 weeks of paid training with ongoing coaching sessions
- The employee is provided a 3 month ramp up for hitting goals in the job
- The question, “why do you want that particular job?” is asked in the interview.
- The job is a balance between customer service quality, sales process (offering other products and services), productivity (calls per hour, average handle time)

The typical timeframe for an entry-level person to move up or out of entry-level work from the various organizations were defined as follows:

- Bremer - long enough to demonstrate competencies
- Wells Fargo - If you demonstrate hard work and competencies, your opportunities are endless. You don't have to have a bachelor's degree to become a banker.
- US Bank Call Center has different levels of experience. If you can speak politely and intelligently you can be hired. The call center can meet different needs including entry level jobs or those who don't want to move up. The call center asks for a one year commitment and then the manager will support the move up.

The use of vendors vary from community bank to large corporation and includes IT and temporary hires.

The future trends for the financial industry workforce shows that people need to be adept at technology, have good communication skills and be able to think outside the box. There is an expectation that the field won't grow since people are using on line banking.

There is a need to find a way to assess people's writing skills

Adjourn

Motion made by Joe Stratig with second by Dennis Johnson to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

Next Meeting- December 10, 2010