

Workforce Summit – Breaking Out! Sessions

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Hilton & Towers

Pittsburgh, PA

A Qualified Talent Pool: Finding & Supplying Entry-Level Employees

INTRODUCTION

Facilitator: Barbara Pares, Director Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission, City of Pittsburgh

Presenters :

Barry G. Maciak, Executive Director, Institute for Economic Transformation, Duquesne University & Managing Partner, World-Class Industrial Networks, LLC

William Freed, President & CEO, The FREEdLANCE Group for Career and Workforce Innovation

PRESENTATION TRANSCRIPT

Bill Freed

case study from manufacturing
applicable to various industries

Purpose: To strengthen the human resource supply chain.

when considering financial, insurance, and call center positions, how many opening are there? Are they good jobs?

Ask industry:

are you hurting?
do you need help?
are you interested in collective strategies?

Effort should be demand driven.

Should be scaled across region.

Should be supported by cluster industries.

Needs Assessment:

common skill sets for financial, insurance, and cold calling industries in demand occupations

In demand occupations:

data entry
tellers
customer service representatives and associates.
financial service representatives and associates.

Findings: (12 months ago)

3500 customer service openings with wages of \$6.95-13.46

800 data entry openings with wages of \$6.56-8.35

trying to revitalize numbers

customer service pays well, has a career track/ladder and is needed across all industries, not only cold calling, but answering/product maintenance and support.

program proposed from Needs Assessment

specialized recruitment

There are core skills across industries:
40 firms surveyed to create list
customer service skills are portable

Innovations should be:
designed and supported by employers
replicated as successful models
linked with regional initiatives
leveraging state/federal programs

Barry Maciak:

Program Overview:

Not all industries are the same, but the system is flexible for various contents.
Advancing workers is a common issue.
High turnover is an issue.
Low interest in entry-level an issue.
Private schools/CCAC better at preparing students than vocational schools.

Training Curriculum important:

needs to be hands on simulation
must reach industry standards
training supplements important

System for emerging grads needed:

in recent times, even with 125 openings it didn't work.
need placement system

Now: same local companies only hire thru Barry and Bill because guaranteed to provide quality workers.

Over two in a half years, 500+ people trained/placed in manufacturing.

What does it mean to financial industry?

identify targets for recruitment
create offers
all the while, keep data!!
show people that there are ladders in the industry and show them how to climb.

Targeting is important

travel distance matters
training centers recruit and attract those "close by"

When economy improves, industries will compete for limited opportunities.

Outreach is key:

brought in marketing firm to find target "population who will respond."
prism by claris
took 7 of 64 socioeconomic clusters
encourage minorities
direct response and diversity outreach is needed.

4 Teams:

Customer Service Supply Chain Program - CSSC

- Recruitment, training, placement, retention, business development are all planning teams.

2 People Sharing Experiences on Teams:

Greg Witkowski, Mellon: Training Team

- charged with finding quality people at work, spend time hiring but never get
- around to training because of turnover, etc.
- need people who already have skills; especially soft skills
- need mentorship, job shadowing opportunities
- cultivate those skills, reward people, retain them

Victoria Chester, Highmark: Recruitment team only met once, and training teams (What core competencies are needed?)

- survey organizations involved to ask supervisors, staff, and customer service reps “to profile what they need in workers.”

Summary/Wrap Up:

Employers define who will be profiled

How do we screen?

How do we assess suitability?

Training standards?

How do we retain workers?

System can work in most industries once model is sold.

If you're interested get involved!!

Question: Now that you are looking at financial services, what is the timeline?

Development until early spring; pilot in late spring

Q: How long will trainings last? What skills will be developed?

A: 7 standard skills blended from national standards/employers ranked by importance .

Programs will last 4-6 weeks for certification of foundations of skills. Online report

@<cdpn.net> needs analysis for financial and customer service clusters. (Bill)

Q: Will you address soft skills?

A: Yes, participants will learn them in simulations-soft skills are integrated.(Bill)

Custom skills have and can be added at employers' discretion (Barry).

Q: How do the youth get connected?

A: Providing opportunities for emerging high school students; work with YouthWorks.(Barry).

Statistic “In Pennsylvania, 47% of those who go to college do not finish.

SESSION ISSUES USED FOR GROUP DISCUSSION:

- Lacking clear skill model to facilitate job matches
- Need to upgrade current skill levels of workforce to include customer service skill training
- Industry is unable to attract enough qualified applicants for openings
- Need a central talent pool to draw applicants from

ADDITIONAL ISSUES RAISED BY AUDIENCE

How do we connect with the youth, especially those not in school?
issue of English proficiency

4 Areas Affecting Industry Breakout:

lacking clear skills model to facilitate job matches

need to upgrade current skills levels of workforce to incorporate customer service skills.

need a central applicant pool from which to hire/draw

industry unable to attract enough qualified applicants for existing job opening