

Workforce Steering Committee – Attracting & Retaining

BUSINESS CASE:

Even if our pipeline of local students is strengthened to prepare a larger percentage for the workforce, our region will still experience a shortage of qualified workers. Additionally, the current workforce is aging quickly and within five to ten years a significant amount will be eligible for retirement. In order to meet these challenges, we must learn how to attract quality workers to our area and retain local talent, particularly college graduates and young professionals.

HYPOTHESIS:

If we can capitalize on the assets of our region and target young professionals, our employers and our community will thrive. Then, we must focus on retaining that talent to help grow our regional economy.

CURRENT CONDITION:

- Stop recruiting lower wage jobs - Be competitive with pay, benefits, vacation, bonuses, fair treatment, workplace culture; sustainable jobs
- Improve cultural diversity
- Need vision of future – focused effort and common message
- Need dynamic leadership
- Continue and expand development of downtown (condos, shops, entertainment)
- Support the visual and performing arts; promote cultural events
- Metro government; stop gov't bickering
- Increase investment in public schools
- Actively recruit
- Increase support for innovative start-ups
- Attract mid-career changers
- Increased partnerships between county, city, UT – public/private partnerships; Collaboration in technical corridor.
- Focus on specialized characteristic within Knoxville or surrounding counties (“Green City”, “Worlds Fair”)
- Improve on what already exists to promote long-term commitments
- Young professional initiatives
- Show growth opportunities – opportunities for advancement
- Show community involvement
- Follow-through and implement ideas of the community
- Make it youth-friendly; what will make them stay?
- Advancement opportunities – based on performance
- Work environment; offer mentoring opportunities
- Hire the right people

TARGET CONDITION:

Attracting & Retaining

- This region will become a national location for college graduates and young professionals to start their careers and have a life.
- Area high school and college graduates will stay in the area to work.
- Alumni of area schools who have left the region will return.
- Employers will implement flexible and targeted practices to retain their talent.
- Young professionals currently employed in the area will speak on behalf of their employers and the region with pride.

ACTIONS:

	Task	Person Responsible	Completion Date
1	Compile Graduation information from all local colleges and universities - where are graduates choosing to take jobs and are there any trends or indicated reasons as to why?		
2	Construct a survey – what would make the community a “top-choice” in terms of employment – what do graduates look for in terms of lifestyle, community, culture of employer, benefits, etc.		
3	Determine who would be surveyed – high school seniors, college/technical/professional school graduates, young professionals 3-5 years in the workforce?		
4	Identify best practices of successful employer strategies in terms of training your professionals and attracting and retaining a generationally diverse workforce.		
5	What can employers do to meet the needs of these groups?		
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METRICS:

Metric	2008	2009	SPA:

ACTIONS (Continued from page 1):

	Task	Person Responsible	Completion Date
6	Determine ways to increase business involvement in efforts – focus on internship/apprenticeships/co-op/mentoring programs, work with local HR associates.		
7	Develop and begin promotional program to increase awareness of opportunities in area and benefits of living in region – who to target and how is it delivered?		
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