

To: Workforce Action Team  
From: Richard and Chuck  
Date: March 6, 2012

Re: Workforce Action Team February 29 Meeting Minutes

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Attendees: Joe Doiron, Sanford Regional Technical Center; Paul Schumacher, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission; Mark Ouelette, Mobilize Maine; Cheryl Dearman Mills, Wells-Ogunquit Adult Community ED; Theresa MacDonald, Sanford Community Adult ED; Richard Fifield, Goodwill Workforce Solutions; Robert B. Carr, Technological Innovations, LLC; Dawn Self-Cooper, York County Career Center; Justin Davis, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard; Paulette Millette, York County Community College; Richard Freund, York County Career Center; Chuck Morgan, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission; Lisa Martin, Manufacturing Association of Maine; Suzanne McKechnie, Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; Ruth Graves, Women, Work and Community; Cindy Young, University College Saco; Connie Taggart, Goodall Hospital; Carolyn Burgess, Goodall Hospital; Mark Wilcox, The Sentinel, Mike Westort, Wasco Products, Inc.; Rick Wileman, Corning, Inc.; Mary Nevells, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard; Maria Michaud; Criag Pendleton, Biddeford Saco Chamber; Will Armitage, Biddeford-Saco Area Economic Development Corporation; Stacy Chilicki, York County Community College; Peg Levasseur, Biddeford Regional Center of Technology.

Richard Freund opened up the meeting and asked everyone in the room to introduce themselves.

Following the introductions Richard gave a brief re-introduction of the mission of the Workforce Action Team, how it came in to existence, and its relationship to the Mobilize Maine effort.

Several team members stated what had happened in response to several action items from the last meeting. Justin Davis from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard indicated that they cannot provide the screening list for applicants to the Shipyard's apprentice program, but were committed to trying to provide the initial list of applicants. In addition, they will continue to work on providing additional information on the applicants where possible. Also, Justin indicated they will continue to work to provide information on the Shipyard's screening tests. Paulette Millette of the York County Community College said she would give an overview of YCCC's past efforts to assist the manufacturers with their training and workforce needs later in the meeting.

Richard detailed a PowerPoint presentation that showed the potential positive impact of creating applicants for current and future needs in the York County Manufacturing sector. The presentation highlighted the development of a Workforce Center of Excellence model that can meet immediate and near term needs as well as address long term industry needs. Lastly, Richard walked the Team through a flowchart, or process flow, for the Workforce Center of Excellence model. Lisa Martin from the Manufacturing Association of Maine gave an overview of her organization's programs and efforts and highlighted several areas where the efforts were similar. In addition, Paulette gave an overview of YCCC's past efforts to assist the manufacturers with their training and workforce needs.

There was general agreement among the Team that current efforts and discussions needed to focus on near term action steps, which directed the scope and tenor of the discussions for the remainder of the meeting.

Several of the manufacturers present indicated that for many of the entry level positions they hire temporary workers from an employment agency and hire for permanent positions from that pool. Others collaborated that this is a system used by many.

Those present indicated that utilizing a training program for prospective employees was a good alternative, but that they have to have faith and trust in the program, that it would satisfy the business's requirements. If such a training program was in place it was felt that it would save money for the businesses.

There was also some general discussion relating to new hire employee testing. Each business has some type of tests that they use to screen new employees. Some are common and some are unique in nature. There was general agreement that if there was a clearinghouse of tests, or a common test, then educational service providers could train for, and implement these tests. Such a common testing procedure would save money for the businesses. Again, the businesses would need faith and trust in the testing system.

The Team went through a facilitated session, and utilized the results of some previous work done by YCCC, to identify the skills/assessment needed by a quality prospect. The results were broken out into the following four sections.

#### Basic Skills

- Math
- Communication (written/oral)
- Reading
- Common courtesy (understanding roles/positions)
- Accountability

#### Soft Skills

- Written, oral, relational, technical (communication terminology)
- Life long learning
  - Lean principles/practice
  - Safety
- Leadership/follow through
- Attendance – punctuality
- Work ethic – integrity
- Quality practices/applications
- Employment retention practices
- Versatility

#### Technical Skills

- Blueprint reading
- Basic computer skills
- L.E.A.N.
- Mechanical
- Electrical

- Pneumatic

#### Hydraulic

- Electronic (robotic)
- PLC
- CNC
- CAD
- Mold maker

#### Certifications

- Welding
- Core skills certification
- OSHA
- CNC
- Administration – Word, Excel, etc.

There was some general discussion that much of the needed training programs already exist but just need to be put together in a unified training program.

There was agreement that there are two areas that we need to focus on in the near term. The first is to continue the effort to work with employers to identify the skills/assessment that are needed in a Quality Prospect/Qualified Applicant. The second is to work on testing alignment with programmatic curriculum.

Several Team members volunteered to work on an effort to curriculum and testing alignment: Paulette Millette, Theresa MacDonald, Ruth Graves, Cheryl Dearman Mills, and Rick Wileman.

#### **Action Steps:**

Implement the following outline: 1) Host a small facilitated session with private sector employers to identify the skills/assessment that are needed in a Quality Prospect/Qualified Applicant. 2) The curriculum testing alignment group will identify existing applicable programs and ensure that program curriculum and testing meets the identified business needs, which will all be rolled into one unified program. 3) An administrative structure or organization will be identified that can run the program, and a cost per student will be developed. 4) Program will be presented to Workforce Action Team and private sector employers.