

Program/Initiative Title: Winona Area Workforce Survey
WDA Name: Winona Workforce Development Board/Winona WorkForce Center

Overview describing the innovative practice

Creation of a local electronic workforce survey to aid employers in addressing their employee recruitment and retention challenges. Employers were seeking local workforce data they felt was more relative to them, and data that was not currently available through the Labor Market Analysts and system. The survey addressed a local employer need and desire and aided in the development of their workforce strategies.

Jobseeker impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for jobseekers)

By sharing local workforce trends and data, employers began making changes that had a positive impact on employees. For example, several local employers increased their shift differential rates, increased their start rates, re-evaluated their sick and vacation policies they offered or did not offer at hire, and much more, all having a positive impact for job seekers. The WorkForce center was able to use the data to also educate job seekers on what is common in the area and what to prepare for. This is a win/win/win initiative for employers, job seekers, and the WorkForce Center.

Employer/Community impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for non-jobseekers)

Employers were able to obtain relevant local data to help in their talent recruitment and retention strategies and policies. Several employers responded with gratitude as they were seeking workforce data that was not presently available in our labor market information and as a result, this will be an annual survey that seeks relative workforce data. This also aided the local labor market analyst as the data supplemented what he supplied.

Identification of those involved, including collaborators

Led by the Winona WorkForce Center and supported by the Winona WorkForce Development board and its Employer Engagement Committee. The Winona WorkForce Center partnered with 50+ employers in the area to supply responses to pressing workforce topics/practices. The Winona WorkForce Center also engaged the local labor market analyst in the process to be able to tie in relative regional and State data to increase the comprehensiveness of the results.

Leveraging/alignment of outside resources

The survey itself builds employer understanding and interest in the services offered at the WorkForce Centers. The more employers see the value of the Centers, the more engagement there is. More employers seek services now from the Winona WorkForce Center than just posting a job or having a job fair. Partnerships have grown with the local SHRM group, the Chamber, Project FINE, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, and the regional 7 Rivers Alliance because of this and other efforts like employer events on key workforce topics. These efforts supporting employers have a positive effect on job seekers.

Ideas for replication/lessons learned

The survey was created in google docs to allow for easy duplication and completion. The survey was kept at a length that employers would complete (10 minutes). Feedback was requested to ensure future surveys were of interest and that the type of questions were on track. It does require involvement of someone who is good with data and presenting the information in a manner that is easy to follow and understand.