



Making Work Work



Tools for Turnover Reduction

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Three years ago, the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce was gratified and honored when we were selected to partner with our local Goodwill Industries office as one of three locations to coordinate in the development of a model under the Making Work Work project funded by the Hitachi Foundation. We were fully aware that the goal of improving retention and advancement of employees, particularly entry-level in smaller businesses, was a challenge faced by many employers locally, as well as nationally. We looked forward to being a leader in creating a tool, which could be a guide for workforce development for years.

Under the direction of Jim Mabus, our Manager of Workforce Development, we were able to gain broad community support and participation from local businesses to work with Goodwill Industries in developing guidelines and strategies that can be replicated nationally. The companies, which participated in Shreveport, are already reaping the benefits of the findings, as they began implementation on an experimental basis while they were collaborating with each other in the development of the national model.

We urge you to thoroughly review the following report with the intention of conveying the recommended practices to your local business community. The Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce supports the findings and has made plans for broad application in our city.

Very truly yours,

Richard H. Bremer
President



ACCREDITED
U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE





Foreword from George W. Kessinger, President and CEO of Goodwill Industries International, Inc.

Goodwill Industries recently adopted its 21st Century Initiative to serve 20 million individuals and their families by the year 2020. We are confident that we will rise to this challenge, but we are also clear that to do so we must grow our ability to build mutually beneficial relationships with employers.

For years we have focused our services on our clients by providing the training and support services they need to enter the labor market and to earn a paycheck. We increasingly realize, however, that the quality of our services depends not on focusing solely on our clients nor solely on our business partners, but on focusing holistically on the quality of the match we make between the two. Our clients want good jobs and employers want good employees. We strive to build the systems and relationships that make it easier to match and meet the needs of both of these customers.

We are pleased to present the findings from the Making Work Work project, which was generously funded by the Hitachi Foundation. We encourage service providers, businesses, and local chambers of commerce to come together and use the tools provided—take the assessments, make a plan, and implement changes. They can track and measure the benefits that emerge, such as decreased employee turnover and improved employee morale, and find they are becoming an employer of choice.

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Introduction

Businesses often grapple with the age-old question, “How do we reduce employee turnover?” The answer is particularly important to small- and medium-sized businesses where losing one employee could mean losing a substantial portion of the total staff.

Employee turnover costs money. Although estimates of the cost of turnover vary, most business owners agree that minimizing turnover benefits the bottom line. Additionally, reducing turnover is important organizationally, since persistent turnover can negatively affect company morale.

But saying that turnover is bad for the bottom line is much easier than knowing what internal strategies can be taken to keep employees. Certainly, making a competitive wage is important, but for some companies, paying top dollar may not be a realistic option. These companies need to use less costly, yet effective, strategies to retain their employees.

About the Making Work Work Project

From 2001-2004, with a generous grant from the Hitachi Foundation, Goodwill Industries International, Inc., the largest nonprofit provider of employment and training services in North America, facilitated the Making Work Work project. The project brought together three local Goodwills, three local chambers of commerce, and 22 small- and medium-sized businesses. Together they developed a model to improve employee retention, particularly that of entry-level employees.

The project sought to answer these questions:

- 1) Which internal business practices affect business retention?
- 2) What creative strategies can businesses adopt to strengthen those business practices?
- 3) If adopted, will these strategies reduce turnover and promote employee retention?

In a nutshell, the Making Work Work project developed a model for retention and then asked businesses and Goodwill employment and training service providers to use the model to change how they conducted business in an attempt to reduce employee turnover.

For the businesses, adopting this model meant changing some on-the-job business practices. For employment and training service providers like Goodwill, it meant changing pre- and post-employment strategies for clients, in hopes of improving their retention once they were placed on the job.

The results of using this model were overwhelmingly positive. Ninety-five percent of participating employers reported that the strategies they implemented had either a significant impact (50 percent) or some impact (45 percent) on the retention and/or advancement of workers placed, particularly those in entry level positions. A total of 3,800 employees were affected by the new strategies.

For the local Goodwills, it wasn't as clear that the changes they made to their client pre- and post-employment strategies improved the retention of individuals they placed in jobs. However, all agreed that the relationship building that occurred between local businesses, the local chambers, and Goodwill, was valuable to building stronger linkages in the employment, training, and job placement network.

Twenty-two (22) businesses participated in the Making Work Work project. The businesses ranged from several "mom-and-pop" shops with fewer than ten employees, to several regional employers with over 1,000 employees, with most businesses falling in the range of 20-50 employees. The businesses represented four broad industry sectors: Sales and Service/Hospitality; Business/Financial Services; Manufacturing/Distribution/Transportation; and Government/Nonprofit.

How to Use this Publication

Based on these positive findings we have developed this guide and tools for retention in hopes that more businesses, employment and training service providers, and local chambers of commerce will use them to implement part or all of this process, on their own, or through a facilitated team, as was the case with this project.

Businesses can use this publication by taking the self-assessments; implementing an action plan based on the assessment results; and tracking their results. The Resource Guides located on the CD-ROM at the end of this publication can be used to inform the action planning process.

Employment and training service providers can use this publication in two ways. First, they can take on the role as the convener of employers in their local areas to help bring together employers to talk about turnover; learn from one another; and encourage accountability to this process. Additionally, they can take the self-assessments in Appendix 2 that are applicable to service providers; implement an action plan; and measure results. The Resource Guides located on the CD-ROM at the end of this publication can be used to inform the action planning process.

Local chambers of commerce can actively inform businesses interested in reducing turnover about this research. They can convene businesses to talk about this issue and guide them through the self-assessment, action planning and results-tracking process. If it is the chamber's first time to actively work with individual employers on retention, they may want to contact the local Goodwills or the Center for Workforce Preparation of the U.S. Chamber, which served as conveners of this demonstration project. (Contact information is at the end of this publication.)

"Small businesses have a hard time focusing on any one issue for too long because the leaders wear so many different hats. The Hitachi Project helped small businesses in our community focus on worker retention by making a plan based on the needs of their company and then coming together on a regular basis to report to each other on how things were going. The accountability built into the process was powerful and added significant value to these small firms."

Chamber of Commerce
Shreveport, LA

Issues that Lead to Turnover

During the information-gathering phase of the project, several key on-the-job issues emerged. Certain core practices are needed within organizations to keep employees on the job.

- Workers need clear information about what is expected of them on the job
- Workers need continued training to ensure maximum productivity
- Workers need effective supervision
- Workers need timely and accurate feedback
- Workers need positive recognition for their contributions

If a worker's needs are not met, he or she is likely to begin looking for another job. So what can be done?

Strategies to Combat these On-the-Job Issues

Corresponding employer strategies were identified to combat the issues mentioned above. Resource Guides containing comprehensive information on best practices for each of the strategies listed below are available on the CD-ROM included at the back of this publication.

Strategy 1: Conduct a Comprehensive Orientation for All New Employees

Most employers provide some sort of orientation for new workers, yet most do not provide the kind of orientation new workers truly need to be successful on the job. In addition to information, research shows that connecting new workers to a "buddy" or mentor in the workplace, particularly for the first 30 to 90 days of employment, can make a critical difference.

Strategy 2: Provide Opportunities for Staff Training and Development

Given advancing technology and the ever-changing workplace, all workers — particularly new employees — need ongoing training to improve their skills and remain productive on the job. Most employers provide little or no support for upgrading employees' skills, either through on-the-job training, training through outside sources, or tuition reimbursement.

"As a result of the Hitachi Project, I learned that my relationship with my employees is the single most important factor that impacts productivity. The changes we implemented to focus on retention were not rocket science — they were basically a set of common sense management tools to make me more effective as a manager of our most valuable resource. And it worked. If you can reduce turnover, you positively impact your bottom line. It's that simple."

Employer, Somerset, KY

Continued...

Strategy 3: Institute a Leadership Training Program for All New Supervisors

The most critical relationship affecting worker retention is that with an immediate supervisor, yet many good front-line workers are promoted to supervisory positions with no formal training. This often creates difficult situations for the workers they might supervise.

Strategy 4: Develop and Utilize an Effective Performance Review System

Workers benefit significantly from a structured performance management system that provides ongoing information about expectations, as well as regular and balanced feedback on performance. Best practices suggest that such a system needs to be frequent, accurate, specific and timely.

Strategy 5: Offer No-Cost or Low-Cost Incentives for Good Work

While competitive compensation and benefits are very important, they are not the only factors that motivate employees to perform on the job. Often no-cost and low-cost incentives can make a tremendous difference in employee retention, particularly to relatively low-wage, low-skilled workers. Businesses need to evaluate their practices of providing positive reinforcement for a job well done.

“The Hitachi Project fundamentally created a shift in how we interact with clients regarding retention services. Pre-Hitachi, our interactions were very informal, and almost reactive. As a result of our focus on retention, we are much more systemic in our approach. Our new Life Skills class is creating a qualitative difference in the level of communication both pre- and post-placement. Many more clients are initiating contact with us after they are on the job — which is a good thing in terms of early intervention in problems in the workplace.”

Goodwill Industries of the
Kentucky/West Virginia
Area, Inc.
Huntington, WV

Four Steps to Reducing Turnover

Once the strategies were developed, employers were asked to take Four Steps to incorporate the strategies into their business operations.

Step 1: Conduct a Self-Assessment

Before employers could change anything, they needed to look at their existing business practices to see where they were weak or strong. The self-assessments ask employers to rate (on a scale of 1 to 4) the strength of five practices within their organization that could influence employee turnover. Try the assessments for yourself in Appendix 1. The process is fast and revealing.

Step 2: Choose Strategies and Develop an Action Plan for Each Strategy

The second step meant selecting existing practices that needed improvement and developing action plans to make them stronger.

Action plans need to include a timeline, actionable steps, and a listing of the people who are held accountable for implementation. Here is a sample action plan used in the Making Work Work project. Once the basic action plan was created, employers used the best practices found in the Resource Guides located in the CD-ROM at the end of this document to assist them in fully developing their action steps.

Action Steps (All action steps should start with a verb)	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Person
1. Implement training of new employee by using a lead employee or mentoring system.	Implemented immediately, as individuals are hired	Mike Tarter
2. Conduct six-month reviews, instead of annual reviews as done previously.	Implemented immediately	Mike Tarter

Step 3: Implement Plan

No plan works until it is implemented! A point person was put in charge of accomplishing the plan and the businesses met quarterly as Business Advisory Committees (BACs) to hold each other accountable for results. Having a point person and a timeline for completion helps to track the accomplishment of action steps.

Step 4: Measure Results

All of the businesses reported that retention had, to some degree, been improved by the changes made. To successfully measure retention efforts, it is helpful to have initial retention rate information against which current data can be compared.



Business Profile at a Glance: G.C. Services, L.P.

Overview:

Calling people to collect on unpaid bills can be stressful work, so stressful that such jobs often have high turnover. G.C. Services is well aware of this issue. A nationwide financial collections call center and service provider, it employs 12,000 people nationwide with 650 employees at the Huntington, West Virginia branch. Participation in the Making Work Work project was particularly important to this organization. Their goal was to reduce their turnover rate by 20 percent.

Strategies:

G.C. Services focused on three strategies: instituting a leadership training program for all new supervisors; developing and utilizing an effective performance review system; and conducting a comprehensive orientation for new employees. At the time they joined the project, their orientation process was minimal and they only offered limited training to those who were promoted into supervisory positions. Furthermore, employees were not reviewed until they had been on the job for 90 days; later review was held at one year.

Results:

Throughout the course of the project all strategies were fully implemented and had an impact on over 500 employees. The Human Resources (HR) department offered employee incentives, such as longer breaks, time off, etc., at each employee's four-month, eight-month and one-year anniversary, based on attendance and performance. Orientation was extended from two to five days. An anonymous survey taken by each new employee after one week on the job provided a means of catching potential problems early. More intensive training for new managers was also implemented. Almost immediately, HR realized that the employees did notice when management recognized their efforts and, because of this, the entire working atmosphere improved. Extending the orientation period gave the new employees much more information and eliminated the previous rushed and overwhelmed feeling often expressed by new hires. Offering the first week questionnaire has provided much good feedback and made the employees feel they are being heard. Expanding the supervisory training has proven successful in identifying areas of supervisory weakness so they can be further trained. Although the goal of reducing turnover by 20 percent has not yet been reached, they have reduced turnover by 10 percent and they feel that the strategies implemented as a result of the Making Work Work project brings G.C. Services closer to their goal each day.

Business Profile at a Glance: Clear Channel Radio

Overview:

Clear Channel Radio's affiliate station in Somerset, Kentucky, is one of five stations that provide radio service in the southeastern region of the state. Clear Channel Radio's goal for participating in this project was to not only reduce turnover but to learn how to better serve their 28 current employees.

Strategies:

Clear Channel Radio chose to implement two strategies during their participation. The first strategy was aimed at improving their orientation for new employees. Clear Channel General Manager, Mike Tarter, worked with his current employees to strengthen the training offered upon hiring individuals with the intent that this would better prepare them for what is expected of them. His second strategy was focused on the improvement of the performance review process that they currently utilized.

Results:

As a result of this project, Clear Channel Radio has now implemented a bi-annual performance review process, as opposed to doing them annually. This has proved to have many benefits. This allows current employees the opportunity to hear how they are doing in their job more often and also allows them the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have. It makes employees feel that their input is valued, while also giving them the opportunity for continuous improvement and support in their job.

Clear Channel recognized the importance of new hires feeling comfortable when entering a new work environment. Therefore, they have implemented a more intensive training and orientation program for employees. This includes selective training for the area in which they will be working, as well as a mentoring program with fellow employees. This has proven to be a win-win situation. It gives new employees the opportunity to learn from people with experience, while also giving the mentor the feeling of being appreciated and trusted.





Business Profile at a Glance: The Times

Overview:

The Times is Shreveport's only daily paper, with a readership of 166,200 daily and 207,900 on Sunday. Established in 1871, The Times serves the area known as the Ark-La-Tex, with distribution in 12 parishes in Northwest Louisiana and three counties in East Texas. The Times is part of Gannett Co., Inc., a diversified international news and information company.



In Shreveport, The Times has 370 full and part-time employees working in ten departmental teams: Advertising, Finance, Circulation, Marketing, News/Editorial, Online, Information Technology, Production, Human Resources and the Executive Office. To continue to be a leader in the news and information business, The Times focused on what drives employee retention and development.

Strategies:

The Times chose to conduct staff training and implement a succession planning process developed by the Gannett South Group Newspapers. This program identified the primary skills and attributes necessary for each key position in the company. A training and development process was created. Internal participants were provided with the skills necessary to advance to the next level of performance and be promoted to the next level job. Over an eighteen-month period, each employee was also exposed to diversity training as it relates to personal and professional growth, and its impact on teamwork and the bottom line. Each new employee was given a performance review after 90 days and each department participated in an employee survey over an 18-month period. The survey helps the leadership team discover employee issues and ideas to be addressed and has had a positive impact on retention. A middle management operating committee was also established to enhance interdepartmental communication, promote and reward innovative ideas, and develop future leaders for The Times Directors' Operating Committee.

Results:

The turnover rate at The Times in 2003 was 8.4 percent, which reflects an improvement of more than 50 percent over a 24-month period. From the new succession planning process, two-thirds of the participants have been promoted to the next level position and the remaining individuals are in line for promotions. In addition, for the tenth consecutive year, The Times attained Gannett's highest recognition for its efforts in recruitment, retention and development, and community involvement.



One of the most significant project outcomes was the relationship that developed between Goodwill and the businesses on the Business Advisory Councils (BACs). Each site brought the businesses together as a BAC for quarterly meetings to discuss the progress of the project. There was very little turnover among members of the BACs in all three communities, with only three businesses not completing the project. Several principles helped conveners make the BACs successful:

- Make each BAC meeting valuable to businesses through facilitating linkages between businesses and discussing important, pertinent topics.
- Develop close relationships between the businesses and the meeting convener.
- Keep BAC meetings short and when possible, serve food.
- Maintain regular contact between meetings.
- Don't make things too formal; keep it fun, but with substance.
- Be responsive.
- Be professional.
- Let members network and promote their products and/or services to each other.
- Give out a meeting schedule ahead of time so people can plan in advance.
- Don't cancel meetings.



Lessons Learned

The Business Perspective:

All project partners cite significant lessons learned about improving retention and morale during the three-year project

- **Create a “family environment.”** Workers need to feel wanted and appreciated — to have a sense of ownership in the company’s success. Businesses that participated in the project described the importance of building a “family environment” in which their employees knew that they were cared for, they could enjoy their work and each other, and everyone would feel valued. Some businesses may not be able to offer more money and higher benefits, but they can offer personal support and take a sincere interest in their employees.

- **Be proactive about retention.** Business owners and managers are busy people, and most small business owners don’t have a system or a structure to support worker retention. Although the majority of businesses recognize that employee retention is critical, it is sometimes neglected. Businesses must plan and take responsibility for employee retention. But employers shouldn’t bite off more than they can chew. They should pick one or two strategies to improve worker retention and focus on those strategies. They should be prepared to change tactics if something isn’t working, and vary techniques depending on the age, skill, and maturity of their workforce.

- **Communication is critical.** Regular, honest communication is critical. Whether it’s sharing information to keep workers informed, providing feedback (both positive and negative) on a regular basis, or walking through the office and saying hello to everyone — communication signals a willingness to share and be open. What business owners say is often not as important as how it is said. Presentation is important.

- **Retention is not rocket science — it’s common sense.** Employee retention focuses on pretty fundamental principles of how people work and communicate together effectively. For example, small things can make a big difference. Most employers admitted that they had never really thought much about their behavior in the workplace and how their workers perceived them. Many described the Making Work Work project as a tool that helped them learn more effective strategies for managing and interacting with their workforces.

- **Sharing ideas is powerful.** Without exception, the businesses involved felt the most valuable aspect of the Making Work Work project was getting together with other businesses on a regular basis to share ideas. They felt that articulating to the group what was working, and what wasn’t working, helped to spur their creative problem-solving skills. Creating retention action plans (see Step 2 above) kept them focused, and reporting progress to the group of peers held them accountable.

Lessons Learned

The Goodwill Perspective:

Goodwill staff offered similar thoughts regarding lessons learned as a result of the Making Work Work project.

- **Retention has to be a priority.** Helping clients keep and advance in a job after placement is critical to ensuring their long-term self-sufficiency, however, the focus of employment and training programs in the past has been on job placement. The challenge is making retention a priority at all levels of organization, and then finding the time and resources to dedicate to it.
- **Employer partnerships are extremely valuable.** Goodwill relationships with employers are valuable in helping their staffs understand and appreciate the modern workplace. Working closely with employers provides staff with keen insight into the importance of making good matches between client skills and job requirements. It also helps staff gain new appreciation for the human resource, business operations, and management functions of business organizations.
- **Pay attention to long-term benefits.** Projects like the Making Work Work project sometimes result in long-term benefits that aren't always clear from the outset. While a project may initially have required significant investment of Goodwill staff time and energy that were hard to justify, over time the project may result in critical business partnerships that can reap long-term benefits. It can also enable the Goodwill to enhance its profile as a valuable contributor of services the community.
- **Be clear about roles and responsibilities.** The Making Work Work project was a partnership between Goodwills, businesses, and local chambers of commerce. The local chambers helped Goodwills initially recruit businesses for the project, but after that there was a less clearly defined role for the chambers. In some sites this was not problematic because the chamber had a workforce focus and clearly defined its own role. However, when bringing together many different entities that have never worked together before, having as clearly defined roles as possible is important. Likewise, understanding that such projects are a lot of work for the organization convening and facilitating the process is also important.





Lessons Learned

The Chamber Perspective:

- **Turnover costs money.** From the chamber perspective, turnover costs money. That is the bottom line. Anything that can be done to help businesses quantify their actual turnover costs, and reduce them, is beneficial.
- **Focus is critical.** Since owners and managers in small- and medium-sized businesses are so busy, they need structure and support to help them improve their business practices. The Making Work Work project offered this structure and support. It provided a forum and a process that allowed businesses to focus on one issue — retention — away from the office. As a result, it actually helped improve business practices.
- **You can lead a horse to water... Businesses have to be motivated to change.** Different employers participated differently, depending on how they embraced the project and their willingness to change. Having businesses come together on a regular basis to share information was a great motivator.
- **Accountability matters.** In the Making Work Work project, the businesses developed a retention plan, and were subsequently responsible to the BAC for their own progress. The process provided subtle, yet successful accountability.

Implications

The Making Work Work project, though small in scale, has tremendous implications in terms of policy and practice regarding worker retention for businesses, chambers of commerce, and employment/training providers.

- **Retention needs to be embraced as an investment, not a cost.**

Finding the time to implement the retention strategies was the single biggest issue for both employers and Goodwills participating in the process. While all parties involved agree that retention of workers is critical and pays huge benefits, they all admit it gets quickly put on the back burner in favor of other pressing priorities. Retention activities are fundamentally still embraced as a cost as opposed to an investment. Leaders need to reassess their commitment to retention and dedicate organizational resources as needed.

- **Retention requires a shift in thinking.** Historically, the focus of employment and training organizations has been helping clients find jobs, with marginal attention paid to retention after placement. At best, client follow-up has focused on 30-, 60- or 90-day reviews, despite research that has clearly demonstrated the first six months on the job as the most critical. Similarly, most employers have focused on the recruitment and hiring aspect of human resources within the company. Regular feedback, performance reviews, ongoing training, and other strategies to support workers — particularly entry-level workers — vary greatly. Building (and maintaining) systems to support long-term retention strategies will require a shift in organizational priorities.

- **Retention is simultaneously simple and complex.** One employer involved in the project said, “This is not rocket science – it’s common sense. I just haven’t been doing it!” On the other hand, retention is not a one-size-fits-all proposition, and many factors within and without the employer’s control affect why workers leave. Each workplace has its own unique set of requirements and workers, and a customized plan such as the one developed for the Making Work Work project is a logical vehicle to use to identify and address those individual needs.

- **Retention planning requires structure and support.** Some kinds of planning are fairly commonplace: business plan development, succession planning, strategic planning. But not many organizations know how to approach the issue of retention, in part because it is simultaneously so simple (e.g., just take care of your workers) and so complex (e.g., how can I ever understand what motivates all my different workers?) The Hitachi process was very effective in developing a simple model based on crosscutting issues identified by project participants. This framework provided a limited number of options from which both businesses and Goodwills could choose to focus retention efforts. The Making Work Work process allowed for sharing of information among colleagues and provided for accountability in the reporting process. The model should be continued and replicated across the country so thousands of other small businesses, and employment and training organizations, can reap similar benefits.





Project Partners

Goodwill Industries International, Inc. (GII) is a network of 207 community-based, autonomous member organizations that serve people with workplace disadvantages and disabilities by providing job training and employment services, as well as job placement opportunities and post-employment support. The GII Member Services Center was instrumental in pursuing funding for this project and providing overall program management and support.

Three local Goodwills facilitated the Making Work Work project in their communities. The project managers at these sites carried much of the responsibility for this and developed the retention model, convened the business participants, and facilitated the change process required of both their own organizations and the businesses.

North Louisiana Goodwill Industries Rehabilitation Center, Inc.,
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Vice President of Workforce Development Romney Donnelly
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Goodwill Industries of the Kentucky/West Virginia (KYOWVA)
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Goodwill Industries of Kentucky, Inc., Somerset, KY

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The Center for Workforce Preparation (CWP) is the only center dealing with workforce issues that is affiliated with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. CWP has been instrumental in establishing the U.S. Chamber as a leader in workforce development strategies by working to ensure that the employees of its members are fully equipped to compete in the 21st century economy. CWP was instrumental in linking local chamber organizations to this project, and publicizing and disseminating the findings to chambers active in workforce issues.

www.uschamber.com/cwp

Three local chambers of commerce participated in the project by linking employers who were interested in retention and advancement to the project, serving on the Business Advisory Councils and facilitating the project through its course.

Continued...

Huntington Regional Chamber of Commerce
CEO Ken Busz
www.huntingtonchamber.org

Somerset-Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce
Executive Director Jack Keeney
www.spcchamber.com

Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce
Workforce Development Manager Jim Mabus
Special thanks to Jim, whose vision and diligent effort enhanced the effectiveness of this project in the Shreveport/Bossier area.
www.shreveportchamber.org

Without the active participation of the employers on the business advisory councils in each local area, this project would not have happened. These employers gave significant time and energy because of their interest in working to reduce turnover.

Huntington, WV, Business Advisory Council members:

Victors Dry Cleaners, Joanna Svingos-Smith, Owner
First Sentry Bank, Mary McComas, Director of Personnel
Paris Signs, Tony Wheeler, Owner
Atomic Distributing, Arlene Hall, Vice President
Goodwill Inc., Connie Chaney, Director of Human Resources
Holiday Inn Hotel, Richard Monga, General Manager
G.C. Services, Helen Arigan, Human Resources Manager
Camden Park, Jane Boylin, Owner
Small Stuff, Inc. Joe Coleman, Owner

Somerset Kentucky Business Advisory Council members:

Fresh Start Vegetable Processing Plant, Grady Steele, Plant Manager
Goodwill Industries of KY–Somerset Center, Karen Cogdill, Manager
Goodwill Industries of KY–Lakeview Center, Joyce Noble, Manager
Somerset Custom Houseboats, Molly Rose, Human Resources Manager
Clear Channel Radio, Mike Tarter, General Manager
Danville Office Equipment, Dennis Spangler, Store Manager
Monumental Life Insurance, Randy Kidd, Regional Manager

Shreveport, LA, Business Advisory Council members:

The Times, Barb Deane, Human Resource Director
Manpower, Greg Procell, Vice President/General Manager
Bossier Federal Credit Union, Laura DeHabermann, Vice President of Lending
Bossier Press Tribune, Barbara Prudhome, Office and Circulation Manager
Randy Brown, Sales Manager
The Uniform Place/Golf Circle, Carolyn Satori, Owner
Brookshires, Ron Oran, District Manager of District Four
Eagle Distributors, Mark Ellis, Training Coordinator



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With an endowment from Hitachi, Ltd. in Tokyo, Japan, the Hitachi Foundation was established in 1985 to improve the quality of life for economically isolated people in the United States and to help Hitachi learn how to better fulfill its responsibilities as a corporate citizen doing business in the United States. The Hitachi Foundation generously provided Goodwill Industries International and several other grantees with funding in 2001 for the Making Work Work Initiative. The Hitachi Foundation systematically invests in path-breaking practices for use by business and nonprofit organizations to mutually address community problems. These practices alleviate conditions that perpetuate poverty and also help to strengthen business. www.hitachifoundation.org

Appendix I: Business Self-Assessments

On-the-Job Strategy 1: Comprehensive Orientation

Please rate the strength of your practices regarding your current orientation program:

1 = Poor 2 = Adequate 3 = Good 4 = Outstanding

Orientation combines various learning methods (reading, face-to-face)

1 2 3 4

Orientation involves current employees

1 2 3 4

Orientation conveys employer expectations

1 2 3 4

Questions are encouraged during orientation

1 2 3 4

A written Employee Handbook is provided during orientation

1 2 3 4

A "buddy" or mentor is assigned to new employees for the first 30-60 days

1 2 3 4

If your organization does not have staff orientation or you scored below 15 on this scale, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.

On-the-Job Strategy 2: Staff Training

Please rate the strength of your practices regarding your current staff training:

1 = Poor 2 = Adequate 3 = Good 4 = Outstanding

Training is tied to business goals

1 2 3 4

Training is encouraged of all employees

1 2 3 4

Training providers are chosen carefully

1 2 3 4

Training is conducted during work hours and in an appropriate setting.

1 2 3 4

The impact of training is measured

1 2 3 4

Compensation is linked to knowledge skills and performance

1 2 3 4

If your organization does not have staff training or you scored below 15 on this scale, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.



Appendix I: Business Self-Assessments

On-the-Job Strategy 3: Supervision/Leadership Development

Please rate the strength of your practices regarding your current supervisory development: 1 = Poor 2 = Adequate 3 = Good 4 = Outstanding

Supervisors work with individual employees to maximize performance
1 2 3 4

Supervisors identify and solve personnel problems effectively
1 2 3 4

Supervisors provide new employees timely and accurate feedback
1 2 3 4

Information is freely shared so employees feel a part of things
1 2 3 4

Employees always have the supplies they need, when they need them
1 2 3 4

Supervisors receive supervisory training
1 2 3 4

If your organization does not have a leadership/supervisor development process or you scored below 15 on this scale, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.

On-the-Job Strategy 4: Performance Review Process

Please rate the strength of your practices regarding your current performance review process: 1 = Poor 2 = Adequate 3 = Good 4 = Outstanding

The review process is based on observation of employee performance
1 2 3 4

Feedback to new employees is frequent
1 2 3 4

Feedback to new employees is based on specific performance objectives
1 2 3 4

Feedback to new employees is timely; close to performance in question
1 2 3 4

The review process enhances communication between employee and supervisor
1 2 3 4

The review process includes a plan to improve employee performance
1 2 3 4

If your organization does not have a performance review process or you scored below 15 on this scale, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.

Appendix I: Business Self-Assessments

On-the-Job Strategy 5: Informal Reward System

Please rate the strength of your practices regarding your current informal reward system:

1 = Poor 2 = Adequate 3 = Good 4 = Outstanding

Performance that exceeds expectations is recognized and rewarded

1 2 3 4

Your organization takes time to celebrate employee success

1 2 3 4

Your company offers low cost incentives on a regular basis

1 2 3 4

Employees have flexibility in job scheduling, work hours, etc.

1 2 3 4

Employees are given opportunities to grow in their jobs

1 2 3 4

Employees are kept apprised of key organizational issues

1 2 3 4

If you scored below 15 on this scale or do not give informal rewards to staff, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.



Appendix Z: Strategies and Self-Assessments for Employment and Training Service Providers

The strategies for service providers fall into two areas: pre-employment strategies and post-employment strategies. Conducted prior to leaving the training services, pre-employment strategies may have an impact on retention after a client is placed in a job. Post-employment strategies are used by service providers to promote client retention once an individual is placed in a job.

The pre-employment strategies were developed in response to specific issues that seem to negatively affect retention:

- Assessment tools and processes vary from client to client and site to site
- Life/job readiness skills are often weak (but still critical to employers)
- Career development is typically not a part of the job placement process
- The process of matching clients and jobs is inconsistent
- Programs and services may not align with local/regional business needs

Pre-Employment Strategies

(To Be Provided by Goodwill and/or Other Service Provider to ALL Clients)

- Design and implement a common baseline assessment package
- Offer a comprehensive menu of life/job-readiness skills
- Initiate a career development plan for all clients
- Review and strengthen the client/job-matching process
- Link programs to local/regional businesses and economy

The post-employment strategies were developed in response to these issues that seem to negatively affect retention:

- Historically staff and resources have focused on placement, not retention
- All aspects of post-placement tracking need to be strengthened
- Contact with clients/employers is difficult to maintain after placement
- Most providers do not analyze scope or nature of employer relationships

Post-Placement Strategies

(To Be Conducted by Goodwill and/or Other Service Provider for ALL Clients)

- Focus staff responsibility and accountability on retention
- Design and implement effective post-placement tracking systems
- Implement methods to connect with clients/employers after placement
- Build responsive relationships with employers to support retention

Appendix 2: Service Provider Self-Assessments

Pre-Employment Strategy 1: Client Assessment

Please rate the strength of your current practice regarding client assessment:
1 = Weak 2 = Adequate 3 = Strong 4 = Outstanding

Assessing all new clients
1 2 3 4

Collecting information about abilities and interests
1 2 3 4

Using valid and reliable assessment tools
1 2 3 4

Making use of assessment information in the CDP
1 2 3 4

Making use of the assessment information in selecting training
1 2 3 4

Making use of assessment information in job placement
1 2 3 4

If you do not perform a formal assessment, or you scored below a 15 on the scale above, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.

Pre-Employment Strategy 2: Offer a Comprehensive Menu of Life/Job-Readiness Skills

Please rate the strength of your current practice regarding offer life/job-readiness skills training: 1 = Weak 2 = Adequate 3 = Strong 4 = Outstanding

Providing life/job-readiness training to all new clients
1 2 3 4

Teaching the core life skills modules outlined above
1 2 3 4

Teaching the core job-readiness skills modules outlined above
1 2 3 4

Using validated curriculum to teach these modules
1 2 3 4

Using a variety of teaching strategies to teach to respective learning styles
1 2 3 4

Creating a retention plan
1 2 3 4

If your organization does not formally develop life/job readiness skills, or you scored below 15 on this scale, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.



Appendix Z: Service Provider Self-Assessments

Pre-Employment Strategy 3: Career Development Planning

Please rate the strength of your current practices regarding Career Development Plans (CDPs):

1 = Weak 2 = Adequate 3 = Strong 4 = Outstanding

Creating a CDP for each client

1 2 3 4

Creating CDPs that contain career and advancement goals

1 2 3 4

Creating CDPs that contain development objectives

1 2 3 4

Creating CDPs that contain formal/informal education and training options

1 2 3 4

Reviewing CDP regularly to check progress

1 2 3 4

Linking to IDP, assessment and area economic information

1 2 3 4

If your organization does not create CDPs or you scored below 15 on this scale, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.

Pre-Employment Strategy 4: Review and Strengthen the Client/Job-Matching Process

Please rate the strength of your current practice regarding job matching:

1 = Weak 2 = Adequate 3 = Strong 4 = Outstanding

Provide job matching for all clients eligible for placement

1 2 3 4

Based on information from assessments

1 2 3 4

Based on client goals and expectations

1 2 3 4

Based on client experience

1 2 3 4

Incorporate knowledge of local economy/industries

1 2 3 4

Incorporate knowledge of local employers

1 2 3 4

If your organization does not have a job-matching procedure or you scored below 15 on this scale, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.

Appendix 2:

Service Provider Self-Assessments

Pre-Employment Strategy 5: Link Programs to Local/Regional Businesses and Economy

Please rate the strength of your current practice regarding linking programs to the local/regional economy: 1 = Weak 2 = Adequate 3 = Strong 4 = Outstanding

Regularly use labor market information

1 2 3 4

Frequently update the strategic plan

1 2 3 4

Talk with employers about their labor market needs

1 2 3 4

Tailoring services to meet employer needs

1 2 3 4

Conduct community needs assessments

1 2 3 4

Partner with other workforce organizations, such as the One-Stop

1 2 3 4

If your organization does not link closely with businesses or you scored below 15 on this scale, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.



Appendix Z:

Service Provider Self-Assessments

Post-Employment Strategy 1: Focus Staff Performance Accountability on Retention

Please rate the strength of your current practice regarding focusing staff performance and accountability on retention and advancement. 1 = Weak 2 = Adequate 3 = Strong 4 = Outstanding

Provide retention services for all clients

1 2 3 4

Dedicate a staff person's time to retention

1 2 3 4

Evaluate staff on retention results

1 2 3 4

Hold staff accountable for retention results

1 2 3 4

Provide a formal schedule for follow-up support

1 2 3 4

Frequently visit or call clients once placed

1 2 3 4

If your organization scored below 15 on this scale, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.

Post-Employment Strategy 2: Design and Implement Effective Post-Placement Tracking Systems

Please rate the strength of your current practice regarding a post-placement tracking system: 1 = Weak 2 = Adequate 3 = Strong 4 = Outstanding

Collecting post-placement info on all clients

1 2 3 4

Tracking clients for a minimum of one year

1 2 3 4

Collecting wage and benefit information

1 2 3 4

Collecting job duration information

1 2 3 4

Collecting job progression information

1 2 3 4

Collecting employer information

1 2 3 4

If you do not do post-placement tracking or you scored below 15 on the scale above, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.

Appendix 2:

Service Provider Self-Assessments

Post-Employment Strategy 3: Implement Methods to Connect with Clients/Employers after Placement

Please rate the strength of your current practice regarding connecting with clients and employers post placement: 1 = Weak 2 = Adequate 3 = Strong = 4 = Outstanding

Tracking retention outcomes of employers you work with

1 2 3 4

Identifying employers with strong retention practices

1 2 3 4

Identifying projects to work on with employers with strong practices

1 2 3 4

Placing clients with employers with strong retention outcomes

1 2 3 4

Educating employers about best practices that lead to retention

1 2 3 4

Maintaining a BAC

1 2 3 4

If you do not work directly with employers or you scored below 15 on the scale above, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes.

Post-Employment Strategy 4: Build Responsive Relationships with Employers to Support Retention

Please rate the strength of your current practice regarding staying in touch with employers and employees once placed: 1 = Weak 2 = Adequate 3 = Strong 4 = Outstanding

Give 'service for life' cards to clients

1 2 3 4

Give 'service fo life' cards to employers

1 2 3 4

Stay in touch with employees post-placement

1 2 3 4

Stay in touch with employers post-placement

1 2 3 4


Create effective strategies to stay in touch with employers

1 2 3 4

Create effective strategies to stay in touch with employees

1 2 3 4

If your organization does not have a post-employment strategy or you scored below 15 on this scale, this is an area in which you may want to consider making changes



Appendix 3: Project at a Glance

Purpose:

Develop an effective workforce retention model to assist companies with the pervasive and costly issue of turnover and to help employees maintain and advance at work.

Benefits to Business:

- Lower turnover
- Increased understanding of employee needs
- Strengthen retention/advancement support systems

Benefits to Employees:

- Increased job retention
- Increased advancement and other opportunities

Time Frame:

Phase I: June 1, 2001 – May 31, 2002

Recruited businesses to be part of Business Advisory Councils in each local area. Worked as a team, developed retention/advancement model to help businesses and service providers with turnover issues.

Phase II: June 1, 2003 – September 1, 2004

Implemented retention/advancement strategies, measured impact, disseminated results.

Key Players:

Goodwill Industries International, Inc. in partnership with the Center for Workforce Preparation (CWP) of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

The project was facilitated by Goodwill in three communities, working with the local chamber of commerce and a group of local businesses:

- Shreveport, LA
- Huntington, WV
- Somerset, KY

Outcomes:

Development of a retention model consisting of retention strategies for businesses and employment and training service providers and resource guides to accompany each strategy.

Implementation of selected retention strategies by 22 companies and three Goodwill employment and training service providers.

Ninety-five percent of employers reported that the strategies they implemented had either a significant impact (50 percent) or some impact (45 percent) on the retention and/or advancement of workers placed, particularly at entry level.



Key Links

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