

Tulsa Regional Labor Market Study

Key Recommendations

October 2002

Economic Development Emphasis

1. Business attraction marketing in all business sectors.
2. Couple business attraction with image building and tourism campaigns.
3. Pro-business, profitable operating environment.
4. Availability of quality, well-educated labor.
5. Greater diversification in manufacturing.
6. Substantial flexibility to accommodate additional office employers with sophisticated operations.
7. Attractive environment for sophisticated, profitable office and manufacturing operations.
8. Expanded marketing to attract midsized to large “high-end” (250-1,000 employees) administrative & financial support centers in:
 - Insurance
 - Financial & Business Services
 - Healthcare
 - Communications
 - Manufacturing Distribution
9. Market call center & dislocated worker talent pool.
10. Expand general and high-level courses related to these industries at four-year and two-year institutions to support economic growth.
11. Focus business development & recruiting on high-tech professional operations including:
 - Engineering
 - Software Development
 - Diversified Technology Intensive Operations
12. Success for this focus depends on development of more technology centered programs at universities, colleges and technical centers.
13. Many of the area’s employers rely on more traditional human resource policies. The Chamber is urged to help companies identify and implement new, updated human resource practices that will help with recruiting and retention efforts. Methods include:
 - Developing alternative work arrangements such as:
 - Job sharing
 - Special training programs for the disabled
 - Alternative transportation systems such as van-pooling
 - Improved working environments
 - Expanded tuition reimbursement programs
 - Additional daycare options may also be explored particularly during off shifts.
 - Assessing telecommuting for specific jobs
 - Flextime
 - Training for general business & lifelong learning skills
 - Partial days off
 - Effective employee suggestion systems
 - Frequent recognition/rewards
 - Referral bonuses

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- Assistance should be given to employers needing to recruit professionals and managers from outside the community, including:
 - Quality of life materials
 - Home search services
 - Spousal employment opportunities
 - Fast track mortgage application and review
 - Discount hotel rates
 - Maintaining a list of area relocation specialists available to local companies
 - Create a centralized resume database of spouses of relocated professionals/executives
- 14. The region should seek to become a regional medical center, focusing on improving existing services rather than developing new programs.

Education, Training & Workforce Emphasis

1. Major universities are urged to consider developing into premier research institution(s) emphasizing science or engineering.
2. Expansion of engineering programs is urged to include more programs and graduate studies.
3. An expansion of business programs is urged.
4. Area universities are urged to strengthen the following programs:
 - General Business
 - Finance & Accounting
 - Multi-media (Communications & IT interface)
5. Immediately expand evening undergraduate & graduate business programs at local universities, including the following courses:
 - Computer Software
 - Programming
 - Network Administration
 - Insurance & Finance Basics
6. Expand Internet and distance learning courses throughout the region, including:
 - Targeted to high schools and private homes.
 - Courses can be for credit or for non-credit.
 - Courses must be of the highest quality.
7. Consideration may include courses and programs offered in other states and exported elsewhere, such as Texas (through the Texas State Technology Centers).
8. Adult basic skills programs should be considered for presentation on regional cable networks.
9. It is important to improve the image of vocational-technical education for students who are not college bound.
10. The area's technology centers are urged to continue their business and technology focused training. Specifically:
 - Expand machine trades programs by making concerted efforts with industry consortia and the Chamber to attract more students into manufacturing technologies.
 - Expand technical and occupational programs at TCC.
 - Concerted efforts also need to be made to attract students into these programs.
11. Educational programs on career opportunities particularly in the skilled trades and technical fields need to begin as early in the educational process as possible, such as fifth or sixth grade.

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12. A marketing program should be developed that is aimed at middle and high school students and their parents that stresses the benefits of manufacturing and technical, non-four year college careers.
13. At least one guidance counselor at each of the area's high schools be devoted to educating students on manufacturing and technology related programs available at the technical centers and at Tulsa Community College.
14. Guidance counselors as well as teachers need to be educated in the financial benefits and the career alternatives of vocational and technical careers. If they are fully aware of the opportunities in technical fields, they can provide knowledgeable direction to students.
15. If there are budgetary restrictions to development of a complete career and educational guidance counseling program at area high schools, it is urged that the technology centers or Tulsa Community College develop a counseling program for the area public schools and provide contracted outsourcing services to the school districts.
16. It is urged that manufacturing and office support co-op and internship programs with local educators and businesses be expanded and emphasized, including summer programs.
17. An expansion of existing manufacturing apprenticeship programs at area companies is urged.