



Newark/Essex County Workforce Development Board
BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
STRATEGIC PLAN 2016

Mission Statement

The mission of the WDB Business and Economic Development Subcommittee is to coordinate workforce development and economic development in order to align training and placement with job openings.

We will achieve this mission with the following actions:

- Solicit feedback from the business community on its workforce needs.
- Educate businesses on the workforce system's improved services.
- Promote, target, and clarify incentive, grant, and training, placement, and transportation programs available to businesses who hire our residents.
- Identify and help remove systemic barriers to employment and job creation.
- Analyze labor demand statistics to anticipate growth and influence economic development policy.

Our most important metric to gauge success: lower Newark and Essex unemployment rate so it is at or below the state average.

5 Key Strategies

Since with the 2015 WIB retreat we have identified five areas of focus for this year to achieve our mission statement:

1. Develop a content library of training, placement, incentive, and transportation resources to help employers hire Newark/Essex residents.

2. Promote these resources through a customizable package of these resources through stakeholder websites.
3. Identify and promote a work readiness credential.
4. Troubleshoot Jobs4Jersey's (or it's replacement's) inability to reach a critical mass of area employers.
5. Develop a mechanism to communicate en masse with Newark/Essex employers

For each of these areas of focus we have established and recorded the following:

1. What has already been accomplished?
2. What are the identifiable action steps yet to complete?
3. Who will execute each step – Committee Member, Subcommittee, Staff, or Meeting Agenda?
4. When will it be executed?
5. What existing resources will be used for execution?
6. What kind of funding is necessary for execution?
7. Which action steps will we execute first?
8. Which actions steps will be pending approval or resource allocation?
9. Which action steps are the most important?

We have established that each of these steps are:

1. Within our mission
2. The plans for them are complete except to:
 - A. Delegate tasks within the committee using signup genius
 - B. Identify funding sources and pursue funding where necessary. Identify grant writers who will also execute the program seeking funding.

C. Wait for tasks that are dependent on earlier steps or outside stakeholders.

3. They are flexible enough to respond to threats or changes in opportunities

We will use the strategic plan that we have created as a source document to focus our plans for execution. Our committee and the executive board will have access to our plan. We will monitor our progress monthly at either committee meetings or general board meetings and adjust our expectations to meet realities.

Key Strategy One: Content Library

Develop a content library of training, placement, incentive, and transportation resources to help employers hire Newark/Essex residents.

The following items have been completed

1. Identify initial lists of training, placement, incentive, and transportation programs.
2. Identify initial list of testimonials.
3. Identify initial list of stakeholders who could use our content library.
4. Spreadsheet contact info and descriptions for training, placement, and incentive programs, as well as testimonials.
5. Identified work readiness credential as a strategy to counter objections to the Newark/Essex workforce system.

The following items still need to be completed. All of these items can be completed by committee members on a volunteer basis.

1. Spreadsheet contact info and descriptions for transportation programs.
2. Spreadsheet contact info and descriptions for testimonials.
3. Get Testimonials from workforce system clients.

4. Spreadsheet contact info for webmasters and business agents at stakeholders who we will ask to promote our content library.
5. Validate contact info and that descriptions are employer facing with the programs themselves in:
 - a. Training.
 - b. Placement.
 - c. Incentives.
 - d. Transportation.
6. Continue to expand each list following the steps above.

7. Classify each program by:

- a. Job creation type (relocation, expansion, startup, large scale employment opportunity)
- b. Location (City, County, State, Region)
- c. Sector (Public, Private, Service, Industrial, Retail, Hospitality)
- d. Whether program applies to WDB Target areas and which areas those are.

The most important step and first step we can do here is delegate all of the above items to ensure they are complete by the June BEDC meeting. We will do so immediately using sign up genius

All completed items are attached as appendices.

Key Strategy Two: Marketing Assets of the Workforce and Workforce System to Employers

Market the Newark/Essex workforce and workforce system as an asset of the local economy by promoting the programs in our content library to employers through a customizable, query driven package of resources through stakeholder websites.

The following items have been completed:

1. Identify initial list of stakeholders who could use our content library.
2. Screenshots of how we want our content library to appear on stakeholder websites.

The following items will be completed through the following methods

1. Delegated to subcommittees.
2. Decided in meetings by means of debate and consent.
3. Seek funding for and outsource.
4. Use existing stakeholder resources for.

This process is dependent on, and will begin, when all of the items in Key Strategy One-Content Library are completed by our June committee meeting.

1. At our June BEDC Meeting we will split into subcommittees to take on the following. Each of these steps are dependent on the previous step's execution. This step is the first step and also the most important step in this process.
 - a. RFQ SUBCOMITTEE: Draft an RFQ for the following services. This step is the first step and also the most important step in this process. These services will be the only item that we will seek funding for in this action item:
 - i. Site design.
 - ii. Graphic Design.
 - iii. Communication protocol—how data is sent to stakeholders and employers.
 - iv. Ability to update content (wordpress or other)
 - v. Development of a program ranking system.
 - vi. Development of a shepherd program.
 - vii. Site maintenance—troubleshoot, review, evaluate, and update.
 - viii. Management of incoming Data.
 - ix. The use of keywords and search.
 - x. migration of our content library content to this system
 - xi. A web services professional should be brought into this committee and subcommittee to spearhead the process.
 - b. FUNDING SUBCOMITTEE/EXISTING RESOURCES: Identify areas of discounted services and funding opportunities:
 - i. Reaching out to local stakeholders who can execute this RFQ at greatly reduced costs without sacrificing quality, such as NJIT, Rutgers, Hour of Code, or Interns.

- ii. Seeing if WDB budget, or other WDB funding sources can support this development.
- iii. Looking at other WDB resources, as well as City Hall/NCEDC/County
 - 1. Hosting
 - 2. Ongoing Maintenance of Content
 - 3. NCEDC will launch a site that promotes the data in our content library, albeit not necessarily customized to employers with different criteria.
- iv. Identifying a grant writer and potential grants that can fund this step.
- v. Following up on the funding, its execution, and completion.

c. MARKETING SUBCOMITTEE

- i. Spreadsheet contact info for webmasters and business agents of initial list of stakeholders who could use our content
- ii. Initial marketing of content library to the stakeholders.
- iii. This marketing subcommittee will also begin assembling contact information of employers who can hire Newark/Essex residents for Key Strategy Five

2. DEBATE AND CONSENT At our June meeting we will debate and settle on process for the following:

- i. The concept of a single individual “shepherd” for employers with different criteria.
- ii. How programs will be ranked to employers with different criteria (within that criteria).
- iii. Identifying where data will go for each stakeholder.
- iv. Identifying different ways stakeholders will be able to use our content library and how we will keep them updated.

We will discuss progress at our July meeting and begin implementation in August.

Key Strategy Three: Work Ready Credential (WRC)

The following items have been completed

1. Identifying the use of a “Work Readiness Credential” as a way to counter objections that employers have of the Newark/Essex workforce and workforce system.
2. Identifying one WRC, the National Work Readiness Credential, which has been used successful in places including Long Beach, CA
3. Identifying flaws in using the NWRC with the Newark/Essex target population and addressing those flaws with NWRC, who will adapt the credential to exclude college level math and English
4. Testing the NWRC on a pilot group of job applicants in the Hire Newark Program.

The following items will be completed via debate and consent at our July meeting:

1. Analyze the initial pilot with the Hire Newark program
 - a. How did program attendees who received the credential fare in their new jobs compare with those who didn't?
 - b. Mitch: Maybe have employers or casework from Hire Newark program address BEDC?
2. Come up with other ways to analyze the pilot program
 - a. What results are we looking for?
 - b. What will we do if NWRC does not show those results?
3. Pilot with other populations
 - i. Training providers
 1. Training providers affiliated with BEDC

2. Brainstorm list of other amenable providers
 - ii. Employers
 1. Employers affiliated with BEDC
 2. List other amenable employers
4. Apryl: Reach out to NWRC administrator on YIC committee to address BEDC on strengths and weakness of NWRC
5. At May or June meetings ask committee members to research alternatives to NWRC so we can be sure we want to align or don't with this credential.
6. Joe: Reach out to Strive program to see how their workers are being certified and have Strive representative address BEDC at July meeting.
7. Brainstorm different ways the certification can be paid for
8. Brainstorm funding sources for target population for whom there is no clear source of certification funding
9. Brainstorm how we can combine/"stack" with GED, Accuplacer or change the NWRC so employers can gauge work readiness and education level.
10. Establish a plan to roll out this credential with timing and benchmarks.
11. Establish a plan to market this credential to employers.
12. Assign tasks to individuals or committees.

Key Strategy Four: Exert influence on placement systems used by One Stops so they are more aligned with employer needs

Nothing has been done on this strategy yet.

The intention with this strategy is for the workforce system to be able to place its population with employers in a way that is viewed as a benefit to employers instead of a burden.

The timeline for execution is dependent on the timeline of the July launch, what elements of Career Connection are included in the July launch and whether we can have any impact on transition plans prior to the July launch.

1. Davetta will invite Kirk Lew and Catherine Starghill to address our committee on plans for Career Connections at the May retreat.
2. A subcommittee will be created to investigate how Career Connections will be used by, and what procedures are (and aren't) in place by
 - a. Onestops
 - b. Employers
 - c. Other stakeholders
 - d. Training Providers
 - e. Educational Institutions
3. The subcommittee will interview the management team of Career Connections and the developers of Career Connections to get a broader understanding of what was done to make this program more employer facing than Jobs4Jersey.
4. The subcommittee will determine how flexible the system is and how it can be adapted for the needs of Newark/Essex
5. The committee will determine how other placement programs can be integrated into the workforce system:
 - a. Job fairs
 - b. Resource fairs
 - c. Positive Recruitment Sessions
 - d. External site like Career Builder, Monster, LinkedIn, Craigslist
6. The committee will discuss the best way to market placement in general.

Key Strategy Five: Build email database of potential employers of Newark/Essex Residents

In order to market our programs, the WRC, and any future programs we need to build a database of employers.

Completed so far: an initial list of sources for contact information.

To complete in August:

- Expand on list
- Contact list owners
- Discuss how to ask for permission of members
- Discuss where to host list
- Discuss how content will be pushed out/classifying of employers