

SECTION 7



In 1998, Congress signed the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to impact the national economy through a “customer-focused” workforce development system. WIA guidance indicated that the primary customer of our workforce system is the business community. Businesses create the jobs needed for ultimate success in the local and/or global economies. As a demand-driven system, these should be the jobs on which our local workforce system focuses its efforts.

In July 2014, Congress passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), recognizing that effective education and workforce development opportunities are critical to the country’s growth and economic recovery. WIOA intends to move the workforce system forward, to prepare workers to meet 21st century workforce needs, and to help businesses find/develop the skilled employees they need to thrive in the ever-progressing global economy.

A successful career development system must support actions that promote business growth and global competitiveness. It must be centered on the skill sets needed by local businesses, and must provide the means for workers to obtain those skills through education, training and job succession. Successful talent development includes wage progression through rapid attachment to the workforce, continual skill gains, and lifelong learning.

Our workforce system today includes both traditional education and work-based training options as components of a comprehensive set of services to businesses. Service provision to a worker is no longer limited to a physical location, but may be offered at the employer’s worksite, at a training center, from a mobile unit, or even via the internet.

In today’s technological environment, companies are establishing a global footprint, enhancing competition and opening new markets. Our workforce, economic development, and education systems must reflect the current reality of global competition. We must continue to address local industry needs, while helping our businesses compete in the global market.

Although WIOA did little to revise the current “siloe” funding methods for our workforce system, the Act does call for innovation in service delivery. Our rural economies are vastly different than those of our metropolitan neighbors. It is our hope, as the guidelines and regulations unfold, that we will see the flexibility we need to truly focus on the real talent development needs of our local businesses.

The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) plays an important part in the overall scheme of workforce development and economic viability. The connection among workforce development, workforce education, economic development, and business and industry is

critical. Workforce development is the “people” part, also called the “currency” of economic development. Workers are the lifeblood of business success.

CareerSource Heartland promotes the development of local partnerships and strives to provide seamless services to businesses and jobseekers. Bringing entities together as partners stimulates development of a common focus for the benefit of our community, while eliminating duplication of services. In challenging times, this stretches and leverages valuable resources for economic viability. It is extremely important for businesses, secondary and post-secondary educators, economic developers, community entities, and workforce professionals to collaborate. Working together, we can create the workforce that our local economy demands!



HEARTLAND WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD, INC.
D/B/A CAREER SOURCE HEARTLAND
Local Workforce Development Area 19 serving
DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties

BUSINESS OPERATIONS PLAN

Rev. November 2021

CareerSource Heartland
5901 US Hwy 27 S, Suite 1
Sebring, Florida 33870
863-385-3672

www.careersourceheartland.com



Index

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. Purpose	1
II. CareerSource Heartland Board Focus	1
III. Local Workforce Development Strategy	1
IV. Business Operations Team Components	2
V. Services for Employers	3
VI. Outreach Strategy.....	5
VII. Objectives	6

I. Purpose

This plan is applicable to all CareerSource Heartland staff and provides guidance for the provision of workforce development services relating to our Business Operations component.

II. CareerSource Heartland Board Focus

The **vision** of the CareerSource Heartland (CSH) Board helps to portray our overall workforce development focus: *“CareerSource Heartland will become an innovative leader in identifying and developing a skilled talent force in our community.”*

Our **mission** is to *“CareerSource Heartland connects employers with skilled talent to promote and enhance career development opportunities to achieve economic prosperity in our community.”*

The CSH Board of Directors established the following Strategic Imperatives that embrace the Florida Chamber Foundations “Six Pillar Concept” for economic viability:

1. Develop and maintain a regional talent development strategy through diversified public and private-sector partnerships.
2. Develop and recruit talent to support economic development priorities in the region’s targeted and emerging industries.
3. Support and encourage technological enhancements and innovation in industry.
4. Identify and improve factors that influence the area’s Business Climate.
5. Support local strategies that enhance business development and value-added job creation.
6. Balance growth management with economic development to preserve quality of life.

Our role is to understand what is necessary from a workforce perspective to enhance the economic viability of our local area and to apply the Board’s visioning process to create a positive effect on the local need. Our Business Operations staff must understand the strong connection between workforce development and economic development and work within that context. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) restricts the team from performing economic development functions. When working with businesses, the team must only focus on workforce development activities. The Business Operations staff’s focus is to help CSH implement and improve local workforce strategies.

III. Local Workforce Development Strategy

WIOA indicates that the primary customer of our workforce system is the business community that creates the jobs our workers need (demand-driven concept). The Business Operations Team plays a vital role in performing outreach to our businesses and collaborating with our Economic Development, Chambers of Commerce, Education, and other key partners to enhance the economic viability of our communities and within the designated four-county

area. By working together with our partners, we gain valuable insight into targeted industries and can help shape the workforce pipeline that our local economy demands.

Economic development is the engine that drives our local economy. Workforce development is a prime component, “the people/talent part,” or “currency”, of economic development. Businesses cannot grow or remain productive without workers. Workers are their lifeblood. The labor force is the product that we deliver. To be effective, we must understand the workforce market and know what businesses need. It is our job to know our workforce inventory, make sure our job seekers have the proper preparation (education, job training, employability skills) and help connect our business community with our most qualified workers, in the most efficient and user-friendly way possible.

TALENT-F★CUSED

Our principal objective is to create a successful career development system; one that supports business growth, innovation, and global competitiveness. This focus must center on the skill sets needed in the local labor market and how workers can obtain those skills through education, training, and job succession. CSH assists in workforce preparation to promote wage progression through rapid attachment to the workforce, continual skill gains and personal development activities. The Business Operations Team must expand our local workforce system’s capacity to be demand (market)-driven, responsive to the needs of local businesses, and contribute to the economic well-being of the community. By doing so, we will help promote workforce quality, enhanced productivity, and economic competitiveness for our entire four-county area.

IV. Business Operations Team Components

The Business Operations Team is responsible for providing regional workforce development support on behalf of CSH. The team consists of Business Representatives (BRs), Veterans Representatives, Business Services Assistants, and a Business Operations Manager (BOM). The composition of the team may increase or decrease as resources allow. The BRs, Assistants, and Veterans Representatives report to, and are supervised by, the BOM. The BOM reports to the organization’s President/Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

This team is the outside sales force of our organization. Their responsibilities include developing new business relationships and evaluating the workforce needs of businesses. They are CSH’s principal representatives to the business community and therefore must present a positive image of our organization. Team members are expected to present a uniform message to businesses regarding available services.

Through interaction with the businesses and community partners, the team gleans vital information related to workforce market demand. Business team members are expected to develop expertise on targeted industries within our region and stay abreast of business trends. They are expected to answer business inquiries on a variety of issues ranging from tax incentives to fair labor practices and know where to refer businesses for employment-related community resources. They are responsible for providing and maintaining current inventory of marketing materials and for creating internal materials such as flyers, customer notifications and other outreach resources.

The Veterans Representatives responsibilities involve working with businesses (including federal contractors), federal agencies that employ veterans, and certain community associations to develop employment opportunities for veterans. The Veterans Representatives provide support to and coordinate business outreach efforts with the team.

The CSH CEO supervises the organization's Chief Programs Officer (CPO) who provides oversight of Center Managers (CM) and respective workforce development programs. These programs and staff have both a direct and indirect impact on the success of our Business Operations. The BOM, CPO, and CMs routinely coordinate the activities of their respective staff members to ensure seamless service delivery.

Service delivery to businesses equates to meeting the workforce needs of the customer. This includes filling job orders with the most qualified candidates, assisting with the coordination of work-based training, assisting with developing job descriptions, providing labor market information, and providing all available CSH services needed by the business. The team's challenge is to learn the businesses well enough to identify their needs, then to deliver services that will be valued by the respective employers.

V. Services for Employers

Local businesses face significant challenges on a daily basis with shortages of qualified labor, the need for more highly skilled workers, relevant labor market information and the ability to retain quality staff. Our intention is to become the direct line of communication for all business workforce needs and increase market share over the traditional recruiting and hiring mechanisms used by most employers. Our goal is to become the workforce center of excellence for our four counties. This can be attained through the increased delivery of valuable services to our business customers. Valuable services are those that the individual business deems important and assistive. The Business Operations Team's challenge will be to continually assess employers' needs and deliver timely results that meet those needs.

BUSINESS-DRIVEN

A broad menu of services must be made available to businesses to not only address the employers' existing workforce needs, but also to anticipate and prepare for future needs. Following is a partial listing of activities the Business Operations Team must consider to provide effective outreach to the business community, with others provided at the discretion of the BOM.

1. Increase the penetration level to the businesses, their understanding and knowledge of available services, and the different incentives available for employers to recruit, train and retain employees. This is enhanced through a successful marketing program, which consists of presenting our message to the business customer. Key components of marketing may include advertising, public relations, and direct contact. Emphasis should also be placed on the use of the state's public on-line-labor exchange system.

2. Conduct an analysis of existing labor market conditions within the local area to identify skill gaps between an employer's needs and the skills of available workers. If there is a shortage of a qualified labor pool, front-line staff should be made aware to screen for eligible candidates, keeping in mind the possibility of additional skills training. An effective Job Matching program has proven to be an asset to finding the best qualified candidates for filling vacancies and for identifying individuals who may benefit from training opportunities. Every effort should be made to help employers expand their access to potential labor pools consisting of Youth, Older Workers, individuals with disabilities, and other targeted populations.
3. For the employed worker who might lack skills necessary for advancement, an alternative might be skills enhancement training using State Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), Quick Response Training (QRT) and/or local Employed Worker/Customized Training funds for eligible candidates. If an employer has a hard to fill vacancy and can train the right candidate, the use of funds through an On-the-Job Training (OJT) contract might be the best course of action. The BOM will coordinate with the CPO for the most appropriate funding source.
4. Assist businesses with developing effective non-traditional training modalities that can respond to rapid changes in business workforce needs and technology. Coordinate with the appropriate training provider for technical assistance and identification of a program curriculum and instructor, as necessary.
5. Analyze the workforce development needs of new or expanding businesses and offer solutions that can be provided or supported through CSH. This could include developing customized training agreements with employers. Encourage and assist employers with applications for QRT and/or IWT grants through coordination with CareerSource Florida.
6. Understand the nature of businesses operating in our rural area and deliver workforce services in a manner that recognizes the urgency of the marketplace, hiring cycles, and patterns or seasonal staffing needs. This might include educating the employer on special incentive programs (such as Work Opportunity Tax Credit and the Federal Bonding initiatives) or referring the employer to economic development partners for related business incentives.
7. Identify job openings with area employers, obtain the necessary job information (job title, minimum qualifications, pay, etc.) and provide applicable information for job order posting into the on-line labor exchange system. Ensure compliance with state and federal posting guidelines. Provide customized recruitment assistance, including advertising. Effective coordination is necessary between the CPO, CM, and BOM to ensure proper and ongoing feedback is provided to the employer on the status of their job opening(s), including number of referrals made.
8. Host job fairs, including those targeting non-traditional jobs and assisting with job placements.

9. Host business roundtable discussions and business advantage seminars, or similar events, for local businesses. Topics to be determined based on the needs and/or workforce concerns of the business community.
10. Provide outplacement assistance for downsizing and business closures, in support of, and in collaboration with, the local workforce Reemployment and Emergency Assistance Coordination Team (REACT).
11. Confidentially track employer information for trend analysis on services provided. Use this information to follow-up with employers to assess their satisfaction and need for further assistance.
12. Coordinate with local economic development, education, and chamber-of-commerce partners to expand their knowledge of workforce development and to combine efforts toward a unified goal.

VI. Outreach Strategy

The CSH business outreach and service delivery plan, along with the subsequent strategic approach, is a means by which to offer general guidance only. It is not meant to be a precise declaration, nor is it all inclusive. The BOM holds regular meetings with the team and provides detailed guidance, based on the needs of the local businesses and the availability of resources. The CSH Management Team assists as necessary to ensure the Board's focus is being met.

Outreach to new employers and keeping existing employers engaged is imperative to our overall success. Our relationships with local economic development partners assist in this area, allowing CSH to play an integral part in filling the hiring and training needs of businesses.

CSH seeks to develop strong partnerships with local businesses. These relationships help us better identify the overall training and hiring needs of our local area business community. We understand that the ability to serve our employer customer is directly affected by the skillsets of the job seekers registered in our system. Therefore, partnering with businesses is a crucial component of our strategy development. Businesses are encouraged to send all job applicants to CSH to apply for open positions. Doing so saves the businesses time and labor, since CSH conducts screening of all candidates, and refers only those who meet minimum qualification standards. Applicants who are not eligible for referral are provided information and orientation to CSH services receive assistance with their job search. Job matching and recruiting activities occur for all job seeking individuals who are active in the system; therefore, to inactivate individuals who are successfully hired by local employers, CSH asks for basic hire information relating to the posted positions of each employer.



As training needs are identified, our team works diligently with education partners, training providers, and community and government entities to identify sources that will meet immediate needs, and to help develop career pathway systems that will fulfill the employer's ongoing hiring needs.

Outreach activities include making presentations to businesses, business and community groups; working with economic development projects and chambers of commerce; meeting with companies who request information about services and business incentives; serving as the primary resource for information related to labor market data and trends; providing information about the State provided data system which includes a multitude of resources for business customers; notifying businesses of available CSH services; reaching out in person or via email blasts, periodic newsletters, CSH website information, media releases, and social media.

VII. Objectives

In addition to the goals and objectives set forth by the Board, CSH must meet certain performance measures as defined in WIOA. The following performance measures are impacted by how well the Business Operations Team performs its role. Expected performance measures change for each category each year.

1. Employment Rate
2. Median Earnings Indicator
3. Credential Attainment
4. Business Penetration
5. Customer Satisfaction

PURPOSE ► RIVEN