



SAN FRANCISCO

Office of Economic and Workforce Development

Workforce Strategic Plan

Final Recommendations

October 28, 2009



Introduction

The Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) oversees San Francisco's workforce system. To provide a direction and agenda, OEWD has produced the following recommendations to the Workforce Investment San Francisco Board to serve as a framework to prioritize activities for the next five years.

In 2008-2009, OEWD conducted an environmental scan to hear from San Francisco residents, businesses and workforce development professionals to understand the capacity and gaps of the existing workforce system. The process included a survey of over 150 businesses and over 300 residents, a survey of over 160 workforce service providers, 7 focus groups with employers and 10 focus groups with residents.

Six major findings about the Workforce Development System resulted from the Environmental Scan. These include:

1. The workforce system lacks the appropriate oversight, strategic priorities, policy and administration to effectively implement an effective and comprehensive workforce development system
2. The workforce system cannot quickly adapt to the dynamic economic trends that influence the city's labor market
3. Workforce and education programs are not closely linked with real career opportunities, career ladders or advancement
4. Workforce services do not effectively serve youth, particularly transition age youth
5. A disconnect exists between what customers expect and what the workforce system provides
6. Few employers and residents know about the workforce system and/or have an unfavorable perception of the quality of services

Recommendations

To address these issues OEWD convened planning meetings with city departments, community based organizations, industry leaders and community leaders. These sessions were held to vet recommendations to provide guidance to the workforce system to effectively respond to the demands of the labor market, support job seekers to secure and retain employment, and improve system efficiency.

Below are the goals and strategies that are recommended to the WISF.

Goal 1: Improve the responsiveness of the workforce system to meet the demands of sustainable and growing industries, providing employers with skilled workers and expanding employment opportunity for San Francisco residents.

Strategies

- Create Sector Committees that engage multiple employers within an industry, education & training providers, public agencies, labor organizations and social service providers to

create responsive solutions, ensuring the workforce system is able to quickly adapt to dynamic changes in the labor market. The Sector Committees will set standards, identify trends, recommend policies and determine workforce strategies to meet employment demands.

- Focus on employer outreach in key industries to gauge their workforce needs and market the services available through the workforce system.
- Produce high quality labor market intelligence that the workforce system and workforce providers can use to design and retool workforce strategies to target key industries.
- Launch Sector Academies that integrate skill development, support services, and job development that prepare and place low-to-high skilled individuals for a range of jobs within a targeted industry.
- Integrate necessary supportive services, barrier removal and other pre-employment services that assist a range of job seekers to complete training and retain employment within targeted sectors.

Goal 2: Re-engage youth disconnected from the education system and labor market to achieve academic credentials, transition to post-secondary education, and/or secure living wage employment.

Strategies

- Create “on-ramp” and “bridge” programs --programs that assist low skilled youth to meet the skills and education requirements for entry into post-secondary education and/or existing vocational training programs who otherwise would not meet the participation pre-requisites. These programs are intensive training/education programs that are contextualized to the workplace and include basic skills training, remedial math and language, life skills training, and intensive “wrap-around” supportive services.
- Develop a continuum of services that reengage and assist at-risk youth to achieve an academic credential, attain postsecondary education and credentials if appropriate, complete vocational training and secure an employer recognized credential/competency, and secure living wage employment.
- Build the capacity of One Stop Career Link Centers that appeal to youth ages 16-24, connecting them to age-appropriate workforce services, training and youth-employment opportunities.

Goal 3: Increase access to workforce services for populations underserved by the workforce development system.

Strategies

- Expand One Stop Career Link Services geographically to high need neighborhoods by establishing neighborhood-based and Satellite One Stop Service Centers.
- Launch “navigator” initiatives that customize existing workforce services provided through the One-Stop Career Link Centers to be more responsive to the needs of specific underserved populations. “Navigator” initiatives re-tool existing workforce services and train staff to provide customized support for target populations such as youth, formerly incarcerated individuals, and individuals with disabilities.
- Fund new services and coordinate with existing programs to focus intensively on targeted hard-to-serve populations. Strengthen coordination of services that remove

barriers to employment and training such as criminal records, limited English Proficiency, lack of a driver's license, substance abuse, mental health, child support and others.

- Develop “on-ramp” programs that incorporate intensive basic skills training, remedial math and language, life skills training, and intensive “wrap-around” supportive services. Focus on assisting individuals that do not meet the prerequisites for education and vocational training programs.
- Integrate intensive comprehensive case management to support workforce clients through job training and employment. Create service partnerships with supportive services.
- Customize workforce services to support under-employed workers to participate in skills training while employed.

Goal 4: Improve the quality of services available to businesses through the workforce system to promote hiring San Francisco job seekers.

- Recognize the "dual-customer" nature of the workforce system by promoting the utilization of services that both reduce the personnel-related operating costs of employers and support the professional development and economic conditions of their employees.
- Strengthen the enforcement of local hiring policies, and improve the workforce system's capacity to assist employers in meeting their local hiring requirements by providing qualified candidates.
- Provide a single point of contact for employers' staffing needs, utilizing tools and technologies that provide effective candidate screening, appropriate matching with available employment opportunities, and efficient referral to employer partners.
- Utilize business feedback and standardized marketing efforts to position the San Francisco workforce development system as the "first choice" in local staffing services.

Goal 5: Streamline and align policy and administration across multiple funding sources.

Strategies:

- Create common policy, goals, quality standards, and performance measures across city agencies to maximize programmatic impact.
- Coordinate service strategies and programmatic linkages between publicly funded agencies.
- Coordinate with other city agencies on funding strategies such as releasing joint requests for proposals and coordinate contracting and reporting requirements.
- Develop information systems that allow performance and client tracking across multiple funding streams.
- Coordinate capacity development efforts across city agencies to improve service delivery, outcomes, and programmatic sustainability.

Definitions of Key Terms

One Stop Career Link Centers. The “One-Stops” are designed to be the primary hubs where job seekers and employers can access services. For job seekers, they provide an array of services including free job search assistance, case management, referrals to supportive services, referrals to job training, training “scholarships,” and job placement services.

Employers may access qualified candidates who are vetted to meet their specific hiring needs, and receive assistance with elevating employee retention rates at their businesses.

On-Ramp/Bridge Services – “On-ramp” and “Bridge” Services individuals who otherwise would not meet the participation pre-requisites to meet the skills and education requirements for entry into post-secondary education and/or existing vocational training programs. These programs are intensive training/education programs that are contextualized to the workplace and include basic skills training, remedial math and language, life skills training, and intensive “wrap-around” supportive services. They are most effective when they are designed in the context of a specific industry, or integrate hands-on and workplace learning.

Wrap-around Services/Case Management: “Wrap-around” services are designed to identify and remove any barriers to education, employment and job retention. “Wrap-around” services are prescribed based on an assessment of an individual’s needs and assets. Working with a case manager or counselor, a client is provided with or referred to a variety of supportive services to stabilize a client’s life circumstances while he/she is in training, looking for a job, or is trying to maintain employment. These services can include child care and transportation, mental health and legal counseling and services, crisis intervention, income support and others.

Navigator Initiative: A “navigator” initiative creates a policies and procedures protocol that guide One-Stop Career Link staff to properly serve target populations with specific needs. These populations may include youth, persons with disabilities, formerly incarcerated individuals, etc. Each “navigator” focuses on a target population and integrates population-specific products and practices into existing One-Stop services. Such products and practices may include an employment and training resource guide that includes programs that specialize serving that target population, training for Center staff to understand the specific needs of a population, and referrals to services provided through other partner agencies.