

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION**  
**Workforce Policy and Service Delivery Branch**  
**Technical Assistance Bulletin 239**

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**Subject:** Developing an Employer Services Plan

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This Technical Assistance (TA) Bulletin provides Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with information on:

- identifying employers that need help finding and retaining qualified employees and would benefit from enhanced engagement with the workforce system; and
- developing personalized employer services plans to market Texas Workforce Solutions services to those employers.

Initial contact with an employer involves more than addressing the supply and demand issues of the local workforce development area (workforce area) through posting jobs in WorkInTexas.com or providing labor market information. With a more robust, developed, and proactive services plan, Boards can target an employer's specific recruitment needs and retention and training issues while helping them to avoid or manage layoffs.

Developing and implementing a personalized employer services plan fosters employer engagement, leads to a more highly skilled and employable workforce, and establishes and maintains credibility by demonstrating that Workforce Solutions provides both services and solutions.

### **Identifying Employers**

Understanding a workforce area's labor market is the first step to identifying employers that need help finding and retaining employees. Three supply and demand resources are available to help Boards identify occupations where there is a gap between the supply (job seekers) and demand (job openings) in the workforce area.

1. *WorkInTexas.com Supply and Demand Report*
  - WorkInTexas.com generates and issues this report monthly to workforce areas.
  - The report can be used to identify gaps between available jobs in the 23 O\*NET occupational categories and available job seekers in the workforce area.
2. *Help Wanted OnLine (HWOL)* <http://www.wantedanalytics.com>

HWOL affords a better understanding of statewide hiring and labor demand trends—beyond what appears in WorkInTexas.com. It can be used to create very detailed and comprehensive presentations to employers that market the money-saving advantages of using Workforce

Solutions services and the methods available for increasing the skills of their current workforce to reduce turnover.

Additionally, HWOL:

- shows the types of jobs employers are posting, when, where by geography, and where by source;
- provides trend information (time series);
- sorts and filters by industry, occupation, and other options;
- provides contact information; and
- links directly to each job.

3. *Standardized Occupational Components for Research and Analysis of Trends in the Employment System (SOCRATES)*

- Assists Boards in performing regional labor market analysis;
- Serves as a useful tool to determine targeted occupations for local workforce planning under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA); and
- Provides other complementary labor market analysis tools designed for workforce area economic evaluation and generation of career information scenarios.

A variety of tools are available to help Boards identify specific employers that need help finding qualified employees—due to a lack of available skilled job seekers—or need help retaining qualified employees.

- *Texas Industry Profiles (TIPs)* <http://www.texasindustryprofiles.com/apps/eci/empsearch.asp>
  - Identifies individual employers or groups of employers by region, industry, and employer size;
  - Includes employer name, address, a point of contact, and number of employees as well as a brief company description; and
  - Aids in the identification of employers that can potentially help address gaps between a workforce area's supply and demand.
- *TWIST Report 115*

This unemployment insurance (UI) claimant report contains information about UI claimants and their previous employment, including employer name, job title, and the reason for separation. TWIST Report 115 can be filtered to find individuals who were fired or quit their last job, identifying employers that, because of that separation, might now need to fill a vacancy.
- *Job Openings Filled (JOF) Report*

This WorkInTexas.com report tracks the number of openings received and the number of those openings subsequently filled, and can be filtered to identify:

  - specific groups of employers, e.g., small employers with high numbers of openings;
  - employers that may need extra attention in filling job openings; and
  - employers that may be good candidates for customized or skills training.

- *TexasCARES*  
TexasCARES is a multimedia career information system that provides a wide variety of occupational information for the state, including the fastest-growing occupations, occupations adding the most jobs, and occupations that fall into one of the governor's targeted industry clusters. TexasCARES can be used to identify employers that need help finding and retaining qualified employees.
- *Job Fairs and Other Employer Gatherings*  
Job fairs, employer conferences, local chamber of commerce and rotary meetings, industry associations, and other employer gatherings are resources to identify employers that can benefit from Workforce Solutions' programs and services and are easy ways to meet employers that are either new to Texas or expanding their businesses in Texas.
- *Economic Development Organizations*  
Economic development organizations in the local community focus their efforts on new business recruitment and the retention and expansion of existing businesses. They are excellent resources for identifying employers that can benefit from Workforce Solutions services. Coordinated workforce development and economic development strategies can result in high-quality job opportunities for job seekers.

### **Developing an Employer Services Plan**

An employer services plan can be short and simple or very comprehensive and in-depth, and includes elements addressing an employer's immediate needs and projected future needs. The combination of workforce area labor market wisdom, knowledge of partnerships with training and service providers, and in-depth understanding of which services to bundle for maximum impact can ensure a plan's success.

The Texas workforce system provides two basic types of services to consider when creating an employer services plan:

1. *Recruiting services* account for the majority of services provided to employers, and include:
  - posting and filling, or assisting with filling, job vacancies;
  - providing labor market information; and
  - assisting with other recruiting needs (e.g., interview rooms, job fairs, assistance with employment policies, laws and rules).
2. *Retention and transition services* expand the flexibility of the Texas workforce system and include:
  - skills assessments and upgrades;
  - on-the-job training;
  - layoff aversion;
  - rapid response; and
  - economic development assistance activities.

Recruiting services account for the majority of services provided to employers. They are relatively straight forward in provision, and are one of the cornerstones upon which the

workforce system is built. Retention and transition services offer an expanded opportunity for Boards to address employers' workforce needs. Boards previously had flexibility in the use of WIA local activity funds for incumbent worker training, and although that flexibility has been restricted to incumbent worker training as part of a layoff aversion strategy, Boards can use the Skills Development Fund and Skills for Small Business (Skills) to address the needs of employers.

Leveraging available Skills grants for employee retention and training can be a win-win for the Board, as promoting Skills as a service provided by the Board requires only minimal work in promotion. The Board's role is to identify businesses as candidates for participation in a Skills project and to complete the Board Review and Comment Form. A Board's facilitation of a Skills proposal ensures that projects are developed in conjunction with the local economic development strategy.

One way to identify employers as Skills candidates is to compare the needs of local employers with the skills training programs offered at local community or technical colleges. If a connection is found and the employer is interested in the training opportunity, either staff or the employer may contact a Skills grant representative at [Skills@twc.state.tx.us](mailto:Skills@twc.state.tx.us) or (877) 463-1777.

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