



MWCA Best Practices

SUBMISSION FORM

WIB Name/WSA: **Ramsey County Workforce Solutions (WSA 15)**

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Spotlight Newsletter

For the past two years, the Workforce Solutions' Business Services Unit has produced a quarterly newsletter called, *The Spotlight*. This newsletter is a two-page form that focuses on a different industry or occupational cluster each quarter and is sent to internal job counselors and job counselors on the Job Connect distribution list. To date, nine issues have been published and distributed. Topic examples include: Healthcare, Manufacturing, Welding, Transportation, Janitorial Services, Temporary Job Services, Financial Industry and others.

Each issue contains general information about the industry or occupation(s); resources to learn more about the industry, training opportunities, labor market information about the occupational need and interviews with industry or occupational representatives. Some issues have contained personal stories about workers in the industry or occupation. Typically the issues are e-mailed and have a colorful look to them so individuals receiving the copy will be more likely to read it. Business Services' staff writes the copy and is polling job counselors for ideas for each issue.

The impact this has is a bit hard to assess but feedback given to BSU staff is very positive and appreciative of the information. Job Counselors can make copies of the newsletter and give it to their individual program participants or use it as part of a job search class or whatever way they think will be beneficial. We assume there is impact for the counselors because it gives them a quick and up-to-date look at industries that are in need of workers and resources to gather information on their own.

Workforce Solutions' BSU staff collaborates with MN DEED Labor Market Information (LMI) staff for statistics and guidance on how to best focus once a topic has been selected. LMI staff contributes to the articles, which helps give a clear overview of occupations and industries. The newsletter in turn focuses on the local application of industry or occupational information and news. This gives the publication the major reason to use it and share it with job seekers. BSU staff collaborates with private sector representatives from the industry about which the occupation(s) are being written and there by developing relationships within that industry or business.

Workforce Solutions underwrites the cost of producing and distributing the newsletter. Business Services staff is paid out of all the program funds so counselors for MFIP, WIA and universal job seekers get a benefit of reading the *Spotlight*. As a best practice, any WSA can produce a newsletter for its staff and local job counselors. WSA's would be welcome to use the template we have developed and add their own area relevant information. This makes the *Spotlight* eminently replicable.