

Breakfast with the B.E.S.T. – Stearns-Benton

- **Overview describing the innovative best practice**

In 2007 and early 2008, employers on the Stearns-Benton Workforce Council identified a need to provide low-cost, effective business development services that could be met by sharing the region's business talent. A Committee of Council business members and other representatives from the business committee organize and deliver monthly training sessions that follow annual themes. Each session provides a full, hot breakfast and 1.5 hours of training for \$25.00 on topics business has identified as a need. Attached is a brochure for the 2/10/10 session.

- **Jobseeker impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for jobseekers)**

The focus is on training employers and their employees. The focus is not networking or marketing so as not to duplicate Chamber of Commerce efforts. Employed job seekers attend and dislocated managers have attended this past year to update their skills. Employers are brought into the WorkForce Center and are connected to staff which has resulted in improved employer/staff communication.

- **Community impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for non-jobseekers)**

Since the first session on 3/12/08 through 7/14/10, there have been a total of 28 sessions to a total unduplicated count of attendees for 2008 of 195 individuals, for 2009 of 170 individuals and so far for 2010, of 131 individuals. Attached is a list of topics, presenters, dates and the tally of attendees. For each year, an average of 98% of the attendees rank the training as valuable, relevant, and meeting business needs (see attached evaluation summaries). An employer who regularly sends employees has stated to the Committee that this is a primary staff development tool for them; that they review the scheduled topics and speakers and assign employees/staff accordingly. This creates a different relationship of employers with the WorkForce Center.

- **Identification of those involved, including collaborators**

The Council's Breakfast with the B.E.S.T. ad hoc committee identifies the topics, recruits the speakers, develops the marketing, prepares the speaker and facilitates the sessions. SBETC assists with marketing (emailing notices of sessions and mailing brochures), provides the location, addresses the logistics including the caterer, and manages the income and expenditures. Topics have included:

- ✓ Improving your Human Capital
- ✓ Leadership Succession Planning
- ✓ Leading and Managing Sustainable Profit Growth
- ✓ Social Capital
- ✓ Ensuring a Successful Lean Implementation
- ✓ World Class Safety Program
- ✓ Alphabet Soup of Employee Benefits
- ✓ Building a Start Up Business
- ✓ Identify Theft – How It Affects Your Business
- ✓ Culture & Customer Service – How Creating a Culture of Customer Service Positively Impacts Your Bottom Line
- ✓ Change Management
- ✓ Good Decision Making
- ✓ Saving Money on Workers' Compensation
- ✓ Benchmarking Employee Satisfaction
- ✓ On-Boarding

- ✓ Outsmarting Your Competition
- ✓ H.R. Practices Update- Recent Court Decisions
- ✓ Keeping Employee Morale Strong in Tough Times
- ✓ Your Business Matters: The Magic and Logic of Branding Your Business
- ✓ Low Cost Recognition Strategies That Work
- ✓ Taking Inside Sales Beyond Order Taking
- ✓ How To Create a Culture of Innovation in Your Business

- **Leveraging/alignment of outside resources**

The Council's mission is to maximize all available labor, including regional business talent. All speakers and their companies are recognized in the region and donate their time as do the Committee members organizing this effort. Revenues generated through the fees for the sessions total approximately \$23,000, which covers the costs of the breakfast, materials and supplies.

- **Ideas for replication/lessons learned**

Council members are connected and committed. They are those who make this possible.

Attachments:

1. List of speakers and topics
2. Sample brochure
3. Evaluations