

## **Partnership with Initiative Foundation: Quarterly IQ Magazine “Adrift: Navigating the Economy of Joblessness”, Fall 2009**

Stearns-Benton Workforce Council/Employment & Training Council

- **Overview describing the innovative best practice**

In September 2009, it was apparent to the Workforce Council that they needed a strategy to inform employers and job seekers that there were/are resources and activities that would help support them during the recession - to help give them hope. The Workforce “U” Committee of the Council, SBETC management, and Initiative Foundation staff met to explore jointly sponsoring the late Fall/early Winter edition of the IQ Magazine, a quarterly publication of the Initiative Foundation. The content would be how to “navigate” the economy and job loss and could reach organizations and individuals in the 12-County region served by the Initiative Foundation and by Rural Minnesota CEP, Central Minnesota Jobs & Training, and SBETC. The issue was published in early November. Issue enclosed.

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

The intent of the issue was to extend a hand to the job seeker who had lost a job or was anticipating losing a job as well as his/her significant others – family, friends and neighbors. Individuals going through the experience provided content. The intent was also to extend the other hand to the employers who were facing tough decisions and action in order to save the company. Content was provided by a regional employer who had downsized.

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

Readers/subscribers to the magazine include 17,000 community leaders plus many more through the website [www.iqmag.org](http://www.iqmag.org). Copies of the publication were sent/placed in waiting and reception areas throughout the region. Comments shared by community members with Council members, Initiative Foundation staff, and SBETC staff have included, “Best issue ever!”, “I want more copies to give to my neighbor.” More copies were distributed as a result. And it got people talking about what was happening in their businesses, families and communities.

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

Stearns-Benton Workforce Council’s Workforce U Committee employers, SBETC staff and Initiative Foundation staff spent about 4 hours in a joint session to brainstorm on content. Multiple hours of work by writers and contributors to develop, write, edit. Contacts and content provided by regional employers, representatives of education, other WSA staff. Truly a regional effort by job seekers, employers and service providers. Feature stories were:

- ✓ Workforce “U” Delivers Skilled Workers: Program Raises Standard on Preparing Workforce
- ✓ Cover Story: Adrift – Navigating the Economy of Joblessness
- ✓ The Deepest Cuts: How To Deliver Bad News to Good People
- ✓ Pointing Up: The Stars Are Aligned for Three Industries. Are Jobs on the Horizon?
- ✓ Transformers: Jobless Find New Professions within Themselves
- ✓ Where To Begin (Again): Workforce Centers Reveal Paths to Reemployment

- **Leveraging/alignment of outside resources**

SBETC provided an issue sponsorship fee to the Initiative Foundation but the magazine is also supported by advertising and other resources. Contributors were identified at no cost.

- **Ideas for replication/lessons learned**

A solid investment in a great partnership between the Workforce Council, several Workforce Service Areas, and the Initiative Foundation to meet a regional need.

Attachment: IQ Magazine, Fall, 2009