



MWCA 2006 BEST PRACTICES RECOGNITION NOMINATION FORM

WIB Name/WSA: Workforce Development, Inc., WSA 8

Submitted by: Jakki Trihey, on behalf of Randy Johnson, Executive Director

Attach a description (no more than two pages) describing the initiative.

Please return via e-mail or fax to Anne Olson by **Thursday, July 27.**
aolson@mncounties.org or (651) 224-6540

 (Leave this section blank -to be completed by judges)

Judge # _____

Criteria for Selection of Outstanding Best Practices	Maximum Points	Points Awarded
Overview describing the innovative best practice	25	
Jobseeker impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for jobseekers)	25	
Community impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for non-jobseekers)	20	
Identification of those involved, including collaborators	15	
Leveraging/alignment of outside resources	10	
Ability for use or replication by others	05	
TOTAL:	100	

Through the years, the SE MN WIB has been reorganized a number of times. Recently, we reorganized our Board one more time – this time to ensure a demand-driven system. This reorganization maximizes WIB efficiency and effectiveness while more directly reflecting the business/industrial needs of the ten-county area.

Currently, the SE MN WIB conducts its business primarily within subcommittees, which are organized into two main categories: **Industrial Sectors** which reflect the most dynamic, growing industries in the ten-county area, and **Human Resource Taskforces** which deal with the top human resource challenges faced by businesses in our area.

Industrial Sector Subcommittees include:

- Healthcare
- Hi-Tech and Bioscience
- Service & Trades
- Manufacturing

Taskforce Subcommittees include:

Basic Skills & Emerging Workforce
Literacy & Diversity in the Workplace
Incumbent Worker Training & Retention
Access & Re-Entry

At the time of reorganization, board membership was expanded to 60% private business representation; the officers of the Board also represent private business. Two permanent committees are in place to address specific operation issues – a Management Committee and a One-Stop Operating Consortium made up of Workforce Center and community member partners. This ensures that the discussion of day-to-day operations within the One-Stop Centers are removed from the WIB center stage, allowing the Board to focus on emerging trends in the workforce at large.

In addition, there are ad hoc committees which meet as necessary to address legislative and personnel issues, Requests for Proposals or local Community Advisory Councils for Workforce Centers.

Each Industry Sector and Human Resource Taskforce Subcommittee is charged with the responsibility to be a Champion, a Convening Agent, a Change Agent and an Accountability Agent. Multiple performance standards are built into the accountability role of each Subcommittee. At each meeting, subcommittee members are expected to present and review fiscal year data on the target population enrolled in training and the completion rates for those exiting a training program. This data must also include the aggregate placement rate, wage at placement and ROI for all industry-related placements made. By analyzing this data, subcommittees are able to make informed recommendations for future WIB direction.

The current organization of the SE MN WIB has led to a number of benefits. By becoming demand-driven, the SE MN WIB has been able to address workforce trends in a proactive manner. Collaboration between Industry Sector Subcommittees, local employers and higher education has led to the development of several pre-vocational “academies” helping low-wage incumbent workers and disadvantaged populations prepare for entry into higher-skilled healthcare and manufacturing positions. The Services & Trades Sector Subcommittee recently supported the development of a Customer Service Seminar for Youth. Working collaboratively, we are able to positively effect the economic development of the region by meeting the needs of employers as well as guiding participants into stable positions with career laddering opportunities.

Another benefit is the fact that representatives from key area industries are participating on the SE MN WIB, helping to drive and make decisions that impact the entire region. Literacy programs supported by the SE MN WIB have been driven by employers’ needs for a literate workforce and their commitment to providing literacy training on-site. These programs have allowed incumbent workers with low literacy levels to receive language

training in the workplace, which helps them retain their current position while increasing their opportunity for future career ladder. The development of a healthcare academy to assist foreign-born medical personnel as they transition their licenses and/or credentials to the State of Minnesota came from employers' needs for additional healthcare workers and has generated legislative funding. In addition, nationally recognized SE MN WIB youth programs now integrate job search skills and targeted industries/positions into their activities, leading to a well-developed younger workforce.

The sector-based, demand-driven focus of SE MN WIB has led to new partnerships and leveraged resources. The Center for Integrated Health Science Education and Practice (CIHSEP) at Winona State University is a collaboration of many partners all focused on healthcare excellence and employment. The similar economies of Southeast Minnesota, Western Wisconsin and Northeast Iowa have led to a recent tri-state partnership to develop a manufacturing grant project. Bringing new employees into high growth industries is certainly a focus of the demand-driven system.

Additionally, the SE MN WIB focuses on retaining incumbent workers. To that end, we have recently linked with HRA's and local Economic Development agencies to help promote first-time home buying programs as a method of retaining workers in moderate-income occupations.

All of this work positively effects the economic development of this region.

The reorganization of the SE MN WIB has allowed us to achieve our mission (to develop and advance the workforce of SE MN) more completely than ever before, in one of the most rapidly changing economies across the country. We believe that other WIB's following this type of restructuring will have similar results.