Mimi Crandall welcomed the group and introduced Lori Laberee.

Lori Laberee introduced Bob Meyer.


Input was given by key leaders in response to the following questions:

1. What are you willing to share about your business or community plans for the future (that might impact WITC’s planning)?
2. What educational, training, or recruitment issues do you face in accomplishing those plans?
3. In your view, how can WITC best serve your business/community?

a. Graphic Arts
   From a local standpoint, one person noted that he has a number of staff who have received computer skills training from WITC (computer skills training up to graphic arts). Two of his staff were sent to Fox Valley Technical College in Appleton to get trained in flexographic printing. It was requested that we continue our computer training as well as Business Administration.

   We should talk to Bretting Manufacturing (Paul or David Bretting). There is a future project for about 25 employees in a new “napkin” business.

b. Renewable Energy Degrees/Partnerships
   Northland College is trying to prepare for the future of Northern Wisconsin and shares with WITC the goal of expanding and improving partnerships (Accounting, Nursing, Teacher Education). We need to have a coming together of state and local partnerships in the area of renewable energy degrees and the research involved in this area toward biomass. Bob Meyer noted we may want to partner in this area.

c. Flexible System for Workforce Needs
   Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board (NWWIB) and Northwest Wisconsin Concentrated Employment Program, Inc. (NWCEP) try to see the future to assist with the workforce needs. They helped put the WITC Welding Boot Camp together. Out of the 20 Welding graduates, 12 have been placed. WITC needs to develop a more flexible instructional delivery system.

d. Pre-employment Skills/Occupation Shortages
   It was recommended that WITC provide pre-employment skills because people aren’t always ready to go to work; they need to know what is really needed on the job.

   In the utilities area there is an aging workforce and there will be a shortage of workers. In cooperation with Tech Prep, NWWIB is sponsoring an “Industries on Demand Day” conference that targets high school sophomore students to make them aware of what occupations will have the biggest shortages and give students employment options to consider.
e. **Basic Finance**
   Banks are seeing a lot of customers that do not know about finance (how to balance a check book, take out a loan, get a credit card, or what it means to be in debt, etc.). Something needs to be done beginning at the high school level.

f. **Require ADN Students to work as CNAs**
   There are some really good nurses that some from WITC. However, sometimes they don’t show up for work. They have to be mentally and physically able to do Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) work. It was suggested that working for at least three months as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) should be a requirement for nursing.

g. **Onsite Training for Companies**
   A gentleman from an aggressive growing company (700 to 1400 employees) noted that North Central Technical College (NCTC) would bring instructors into the company, twice a week for two hours a day, to deal with basic management skills. Most would move on to taking night courses to get their degrees. WITC needs to provide options for bringing the training into the companies.

h. **Safety Training/Visit the Small Communities to Help them Meet their Needs**
   Safety forklift and lift training is needed (EA10 and OSHA). Bob Meyer was encouraged to get someone out to visit with the small communities to see if WITC can meet their needs. It was noted that Don Marcouiller was good at doing this and Bambi Pattermann has done a good job. WITC has done very well in the past and the hope is that this effort continues.

i. **Bilingual Degree/Courses**
   One person noted that they are seeing more and more of a Spanish-speaking labor force. The Supervisory Management program should be looking at bilingual degree/courses.

j. **Internships Provide Hands-on Experience**
   It was recommended that WITC require an internship with its programs to help students get some hands-on experience and have a better chance at getting a job upon graduation. It helps the businesses in the communities to see and work with the student before they hire them. The Accounting program was used as an example.

k. **Radiology Technician Demand**
   There will be a future demand for radiology technicians from nursing retirements. The Memorial Medical Center in Ashland had vacancies for eight radiology technicians; however, there weren’t enough training opportunities.

l. **Community Outreach**
   The needs to be some focus and outreach integration to the tribes. It was suggested that WITC should get into the middle schools (8th grade level) and inform them about how college is desirable, etc.

m. **Flexibility for Community Aid**
   Using the example of Blue Cross Blue Shield, we need flexibility to provide community aid if needed. The one college concept is good, but we need to meet the needs of the Ashland area and be flexible.

n. **One College Concept**
   Relative to the one college concept, we never want to lose being well-positioned to meet the needs of the community.

o. **Continuing Education Classes**
   One person would like to see WITC continue to offer continuing education courses such as taxidermy, art, and photography.
p. **Cornucopia Wisconsin**
   It was noted the Cornucopia is used as a center to offer lots of continuing education courses.

q. **Flex Lab**
   One person noted that the flex lab is commendable for those who still need to work full-time and for fitting courses into student schedules; however, not everyone is cut out for it (this student didn’t realize how difficult it was). Bob Meyer noted that we will need to have a pedagogical discussion about this in that future that will include faculty.

r. **Technical Education**
   It would be good if people had online access to the use of technology (e-learning).

s. **Skills Trades**
   Another growth area is skills trades (construction).

t. **Awareness of Scholarships**
   One person noted that his company offered 12 – 14 scholarships; however, they don’t get very many applicants, maybe 5 were received. There needs to be more education in the high schools (with the guidance counselors) about the scholarships that are available. Bob Meyer noted that we can relay those concerns to the CESAs.

u. **Presentations Needed for American Indian Students**
   WITC has to help American Indian students get into certain programs. One person would like to see the technical college do some presentations to get students into career paths. Bob Meyer noted that any way we can communicate the value of our partnership would be good.

v. **Presentations - WITC Opportunities**
   WITC needs to present to school boards on technical college opportunities. Presentations to the elementary and middle schools are important.

w. **Advisory Boards**
   Advisory boards are good as they keep WITC aware of what the needs are for employers. Bob Meyer noted that it helps shape curriculum and makes our programs responsive.

x. **Partnerships**
   One person told Bob Meyer that there are all kinds of ways to partner and that he doesn’t have to do it alone.