Rice Lake Community and Business & Industry Leaders  
Forum Notes  
July 17, 2008  
Attendance - 24  
Board members: Paul Vine, Lori Laberee, James Schultz  
Administration: Bob Meyer, Craig Fowler, Diane Vertin, John Will, Kim Olson, Trudy Kroeger  
Community and Business Leaders

1. Craig Fowler welcomed the group, introduced the board members, and thanked Dennis Holtegaard.
2. Paul Vine introduced Bob Meyer.
3. Bob Meyer:
   a. talked about his philosophy, noting that the vision will be determined by the audience
   b. believes in strategic planning
   c. referenced the forum/reception schedule
   d. referenced the placement rate
   e. noted that we are going to listen to you, identify any gaps, and set goals to address those gaps
   f. referenced the Washington Quarterly brochure (WITC was ranked 7th in the nation)
   g. referenced the timeline for 09-10
   h. identified the President’s Cabinet members present at today’s forum
   i. referenced the Strategic Goals and AQIP projects handout
   j. noted that we are looking for “what do we do next?”
   k. reference that we will also do some key industry forums (health, education, manufacturing, information technology, and agriculture)
   l. went through the process, noting that we will bring a plan together to the Board of Trustees (in February)
   m. noted that in late February we will take the plan back to the President’s Cabinet to put some more detail on it
   n. noted that in March we will present the plan as a cohesive plan
   o. noted we will take your input seriously; however, not everything will make it on the plan
   p. noted the major trends will make it into the plan
   q. reference the core trends
   r. thanked everyone for coming and encouraged them to speak up

4. **Input was given by community and key leaders to the following questions:**
   - **Question 1:** What are you willing to share about your business or community plans for the future (that might impact WITC’s planning)?
   - **Question 2:** What educational, training, or recruitment issues do you face in accomplishing those plans?

   a. Programmable Logic Controller (PLC) Growth and Grads → training hard to obtain
   b. Finding employees with PLC logistics skills
      i. Control and Logistics – need to find training and experience in that field
      ii. 3M in Cumberland – same issue with maintenance group and logistics (PLC skills – working with the computer systems that the maintenance staff need to work with)
   c. I.T. → All employees involved
      i. Information Systems – everyone one of our employees are involved with support access and training is important for us
d. **Healthcare partnerships strong**
   i. Healthcare partnership with WITC is good
   ii. Marshfield Clinic – we are continuing to grow; Medical Assistant is important
   iii. Healthcare – they do plan to grow and build a new hospital. The demand is there for new health professionals

e. **Basic medical knowledge for healthcare employees**

f. **HVAC mechanics/techs → younger people are not as interested in field**
   i. Johnson Truck Bodies (RL) – technical aspect: they are looking for HVAC or refrigeration mechanics (it’s difficult to find good technicians in this field). Many are approaching the age of retirement. There might be travel involved for on-the-road servicing. Johnson Truck Bodies would like to better integrate themselves into the community (ex. doing joint consortiums), getting out in the public to recognize who they are, and getting students interested in coming to their company and how to go about doing that.

g. **Better integration with local educational institutions**

h. **I.T. staff needed → trying to find employees who like northwest Wisconsin**

i. **Entire staff needs to be brought up to speed (I.T.) → blend online and classroom learning**
   i. Chequamegon Communications – thanked Dennis Holtegaard. They need IT staff going forward (more technical). One of the things they have trouble with is “Northern Wisconsin” and what we have to offer (people look for more “city” things to do). Can we produce some IT Techs who also like the outdoors? Our entire staff need to be brought up to speed for the IT industry. A blend is needed between training and hands-on learning (which is a benefit), which is what the campus has to offer. (Note: The blend could be IPV training right in the office, online, etc.) They want to get everyone at the same level. [Bob Meyer – convenience access to education, if it’s effective, we will push that; however, where there is a skill development that needs to take place – that needs to happen too.]

j. **Drafting skills; woodworking skills; math; Computer Numeric Control (CNC)**
   i. Mastercraft Industries (custom cabinets) – they would like to double their inventory; based on the customization (need a lot of drafting people – commercial and residential); they need math skills and the ability to read blueprints. The other area is CNC operations.

k. **Electrical Mechanical Technicians**

l. **Food processing/process control (Quality Assurance)**

m. **Machine operators**
   i. The areas they will be having a challenge with are electrical mechanical technicians. They struggle with process control (quality assurance – things you have in place in regard to quality products); they need a food emphasis/machine operators

n. **CNC experience**

o. **Lean manufacturing**
   i. Shell Lake Woodcrafters – as they look to the future they need CNC expertise (is becoming a more important part of woodworking); and lean manufacturing.

p. **Supply chain analysis**
   i. 3M in Cumberland – supply chain analysts (need people with those skills). A number of them will be retiring in the next 5 years.
q. How do we market this area to recruit employees \( \rightarrow \) emphasis on geographic area; positives to draw and retain people
   i. The recruitment process and how do we marketing this area? How can we work with WITC? Emphasis on marketing the “area” to draw in for the skill set they are looking for. [Bob Meyer talked about Momentum West – to include all counties in western Wisconsin.]

r. I.T./Financial analysis
   i. US Bank – IT and financial analysis

s. 40+ people intimidated by online? \( \rightarrow \) How do we inform them?
   i. Intimidation is a factor for 40 year olds who didn’t get an education in their 20’s. Hard to go back to get skills. We need the marketing focused on how you can get educated while utilizing online offerings. [Bob Meyer – “Futuremakers” is a marketing effort at the state level. Somehow we need to market the value of the technical college.]

t. Continue ESL Offerings
   i. Continue your English as a Second Language (ESL) offerings, which is growing in this county

u. Surgical Technology program (CVTC’s has closed)
   i. Lakeview Medical Center - Surgical Technology Program (CVTC closed their program)

v. Dental Hygienist program
   i. Board member - Dental Hygentist program (is offered at CVTC); we have 11 counties. His son is a dentist and feels there is a need here.

w. Telecomm software up-to-date in Telecom program \( \rightarrow \) hardware/equipment needs not as strong
   i. Telecommunication programs – important to the companies to have someone come out on the top of their game with the latest and greatest skills (do we work with manufactures to get some good deals on new machines?). [Diane Vertin noted we partner with CISCO.] [Bob Meyer – partnerships are important and to have the right people on advisory committees.]

x. Student internships stepped up \( \rightarrow \) quality training based on agreed upon curriculum plan

y. WITC staff to industry for advanced training \( \rightarrow \) staff internships

5. **Question 3:** In your view, how can WITC best serve your business/community?
   a. Student Internships. The feasibility of having students coming into the workplace and learn. Have 1 or 2 students that we would work with on a curriculum that was agreed to by both (WITC and company) to work on some specific areas.

   b. Staff internships. How is WITC staff developing some of those skills into the facilities to further develop those needs? In-house training. WITC staff to come to facilities on (managerial, IT, technical).

6. Bob Meyer thanked everyone. He noted that we’ll try to incorporate as much as we can in our strategic plans. This will be pulled together in late October to identify some common threads. Craig Fowler mentioned the reception at Turtleback this afternoon.