



LA CROSSE COUNTY



Western
Technical College
BUSINESS AND
INDUSTRY SERVICES

Western Wisconsin
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT
BOARD

Tri-State Workforce Survey

Goal


- Collaboration
- Reaffirm/Update [7 Rivers Alliance WISE Plan](#)
- Determine areas of highest need relating to our employers and their workforce
- Understand what employers are doing to combat workforce challenges
- Understand other economic challenges/opportunities business are facing
- Provide framework for organizational workplan(s)



Who was surveyed?

- 72 responses with representation from Jackson, Chippewa, Crawford, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Sauk, Trempealeau, and Vernon Counties.
 - 40+ from La Crosse County

Industry	Responses
Accommodation/Food Service	1
Agriculture	1
Arts/Entertainment or Recreation	1
Childcare	1
Construction	4
Education	4
Finance/Insurance	4
Food/Beverage Production	5
Healthcare	12
Manufacturing	16
Mining	1
Non-profit	5
Real Estate	1
Retail	1
Science/Technology	1
Transportation/Distribution/Warehouse	1
(blank)	13
Total	72



What we learned (non-workforce related)

- 89% of businesses said the current business climate is “good” or better
- 74% of businesses said that national or global economic conditions are impacting their business.
 - Lack of suppliers, cost and availability of materials/services, inflation, rising interest rates, market volatility, wage competition
- 36% of business are planning new products or market destinations.
- Remote workforce:
 - 35 of 72 – 0%
 - 21 of 72 – 1-10%
 - 7 of 72 – 11-20%
 - 1 of 72 – 21-30%
 - 1 of 72 – 91-100%

What we learned – (non-workforce related)

- How does your product come into/leave your facility?
 - 53% – Truck
 - 5% – Rail
 - 2% – Barge
 - 7%– Air
- Does your business have adequate access to capital?
 - 79% said “yes”
 - 13% said “no”
- The bulk of our companies do business locally/regionally, few do nationally or internationally.
- Sales growth/decline?
- Facility footprint?
 - 39% said their current facility supports current AND future operations
 - 53% said their current facility is adequate but they could benefit from more space

Sales	Responses
-24 to -1% (decline)	3
0% (stagnant)	18
1 to 9% (growth)	15
10 to 24% (growth)	21
25 to 49% (growth)	3
Blank	12
Total	72

What we learned about Workforce

- Are workforce or economic conditions forcing your business to retract or downsize? – 29% said “yes”.
- How would you rate your workforce?
- Industries in the “Fair” or “Poor” categories: Accommodation/Food Service, Ag., Arts/Entertainment, Construction, Education, Finance/Insurance, Food/Bev. Production, Healthcare, Manufacturing.

Rating	Responses
Good - I have an adequate number of well-trained employees	19
Fair - My current employees get the job done, but I could benefit from additional employees and/or training	45
Poor - I need more employees and/or my employees need more education and training	8
Total	72



What we learned about Workforce

- Greatest needs are entry-level and skilled labor positions, compared to Mid-level/Senior-level management.
- Skills of greatest need:
 - 1.) Industrial/Technical
 - 2.) Leadership***
 - 3.) Computer Skills
 - 4.) Healthcare
 - 5.) Hospitality/Service
 - 6.) Safety

***Others include soft-skills, accounting/taxes, customer service, food (cooks, food science, etc.)

What we learned about Workforce

- What challenges are having the largest impact?
 - 1.) Compensation competition
 - 2.) Training/education
 - 3.) Other – 2nd and 3rd shift, location, work ethic/motivation
- Where are businesses currently recruiting from?

Answers	Responses
K12 Pipeline	23
Technical College Pipeline	40
University Pipeline	32
Other Similar Business	27
3 rd Party Recruiting Organization or Online Service	38
Apprenticeship Pipeline	13



What we learned about Workforce

- Do businesses pay tuition/fees for training? – 82% said “yes” or “partially”.
- Do businesses pay standard wages while employee is attending training during work hours? – 86% said “yes”.
- Have businesses found resources to assist/perform training for employees? – 78% said “yes”.
- Have businesses considered hiring disabled or differently-abled workers? – 81% said “yes”.
- Do businesses employ ESL workers? – 58% said “No” or “We have not considered it”.



Conclusions

1. Sales and investment are strong, but businesses are challenged by supply chain, inflation, availability of materials, and other national/global struggles.
2. Our businesses embrace promoting from within – requiring more leadership training opportunities.
3. Our businesses greatest needs are entry-level and skilled workers – industrial/technical, computer, healthcare, hospitality/service.
4. Compensation competition is the single greatest challenge employers/hiring managers are facing.
5. Our businesses are generally open to paying for training/education.
6. The WISE Plan is still relevant!



What's next?

- Develop community-wide plan, largely based off the WISE Plan that identifies organizations who can champion specific initiatives.
- Identify opportunities and bring to employers (examples include ESL workers, disabled/differently abled workers, etc.)
- Continue to work with education/training organizations to adapt to needs of area businesses (upskilling and reskilling)
- Promote our region!!