



ValleyWorks Career Center
Business Plan
FY2005 – FY2006

Submitted June 1, 2004

Table of Contents

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Page</u>
Mission	2
Vision	2
Values	2
Analysis of Current ValleyWorks Position	3
Business Services Profile/Analysis	3
Business Services Gaps	6
Business Services Strategic Goals	7
Job Seekers Profile/Needs Analysis	8
Job Seeker Needs Being Met	10
Job Seeker Unmet Needs	11
Job Seeker Strategic Goals	12
Training Services Profile/Analysis	13
Training Gaps	13
Training Strategic Goals	14
Local Plan Goals	14
Strategic Goals	16
Appendices	23



Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

The mission of the ValleyWorks Career Center is to build and promote workforce potential to support regional business growth and economic prosperity.

Vision

In five years we will be the premier career center in the state by providing comprehensive, quality workforce development services to businesses and job seekers in the Lower Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Area. We will accomplish this by implementing continuous quality improvement through the application of technology, development of staff and the formation and utilization of strategic alliances to meet the changing environmental and economic needs.

Values

The ValleyWorks Career Center's core values, which guide management, operations and the interactions with all customers and stakeholders, are as follows:

- **Leadership** – The ValleyWorks management team will empower employees to do their jobs effectively and in a manner that helps meet their customer's needs and those of the community.
- **Integrity and Professionalism** – In all interactions with customers, ValleyWorks staff will act respectfully, ethically and professionally, providing information and services designed to advance the business interests and promote the welfare of our stakeholders.
- **Open, Honest and Constructive Communication** – We will communicate openly and honestly with all parties, delivering our message in a way that promotes positive results.
- **Service Excellence** – We will strive to provide high-quality, appropriate services in a timely, measurable and cost-effective manner.
- **Accountability** – We accept professional responsibility for our decisions and actions.
- **Teamwork** – We will encourage and model positive and productive working relationships with each other and our stakeholders to achieve measurable outcomes.
- **Learning** – We will continually seek to improve how we conduct our business.

Analysis of Current ValleyWorks Position

The Lower Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Area consists of three regions (cities and towns):

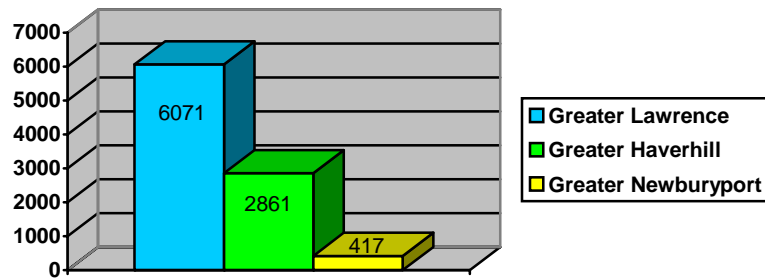
Greater Lawrence = Andover, Lawrence, Methuen and North Andover

Greater Haverhill = Amesbury, Boxford, Groveland, Georgetown, Haverhill and Merrimac

Greater Newburyport = Newbury, Newburyport, Rowley, Salisbury and West Newbury

The Lower Merrimack Valley region has a population of 318,556. Population over age 16 is 239,986 according to Census 2000, from the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission. The labor force for the region is 156,046.

Illustration #1
ValleyWorks Customer Base



Data obtained from OSCCAR and Adhoc Reports (Period ending 3/31/04)

ValleyWorks Career Center provides a full range of one-stop services for regional businesses and job seeker customers.

Business Services Profile/Analysis

Currently, ValleyWorks is providing services to meet the workforce development needs of 416 employers in the Lower Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Area, which represents five percent of the total companies in the area. Fifteen percent (15%) of the business customers we serve are from the Critical and Emerging Industries. Beyond the Critical and Emerging Industries, 30% of companies working with the career center have been targeted because they meet the needs of our jobseeker customer.

The following chart is a representation of employers in the Merrimack Valley, with the career center's current and potential penetration:

Illustration #2

ValleyWorks Employers Regional Representation

Totals	LMV Workforce Area Total Businesses	VWCC Employers Served FY04	VWCC Entered Employments FY04
	8271	416	1817
	We are serving 5% of the total area employers		

CRITICAL INDUSTRIES

Construction 23	LMV Workforce Area	VWCC Employers Served FY04	VWCC Job Seeker Entered Employments FY04
	11%	3%	2%
	888	13	36

23

Healthcare 621, 622, 623	LMV Workforce Area	VWCC Employers Served FY04	VWCC Job Seeker Entered Employments FY04
	9%	6%	9%
	780	27	165

Communications 515, 517	LMV Workforce Area	VWCC Employers Served FY04	VWCC Job Seeker Entered Employments FY04
	1%	0.5%	0.11%
	45	2	2

Manufacturing 32, 33	LMV Workforce Area	VWCC Employers Served FY04	VWCC Job Seeker Entered Employments FY04
	4%	14%	13%
	328	59	240

EMERGING INDUSTRIES

Trucking & Warehousing 48, 49	LMV Workforce Area	VWCC Employers Served FY04	VWCC Job Seeker Entered Employments FY04
	2%	3%	5%
	175	11	97

Medical Instruments & Supplies Mfg. 3391	LMV Workforce Area	VWCC Employers Served FY04	VWCC Job Seeker Entered Employments FY04
	0.12%	0.2%	1%
	10	1	16

Food Products 311	LMV Workforce Area	VWCC Employers Served FY04	VWCC Job Seeker Entered Employments FY04
	2%	2%	1%
	206	9	11

OTHER

Professional and Technical Services 541	LMV Workforce Area	VWCC Employers Served FY04	VWCC Job Seeker Entered Employments FY04
	13%	9%	2%
	1055	36	36

Retail Trade 44, 45	LMV Workforce Area	VWCC Employers Served FY04	VWCC Job Seeker Entered Employments FY04
	11%	9%	8%
	926	37	149

OTHER	LMV Workforce Area	VWCC Employers Served FY04	VWCC Job Seeker Entered Employments FY04
	47%	53%	59%
	3858	221	1065

KEY:

LMV Workforce Area = All businesses in Lower Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Area.

ValleyWorks Employers Served FY04 = Total number of businesses that ValleyWorks has provided service(s) for in fiscal year. This column is a percent of total ValleyWorks customers served in first nine months, FY04.

VWCC Job Seeker Entered Employments FY04 = Total job seekers Entered employment in first nine months, FY04.

* Data compiled from ES202 report, OSCCAR (period ending 3/31/2004) report and Adhoc reports

A full range of services is available to all business customers. See **Appendix A** for a detailed listing of these services.

The two business services most frequently used to meet business needs are Job Listings and General Employer Services. Currently, 280 employers have listed 937 job openings with ValleyWorks. Seventy percent (70%) of employer customers use ValleyWorks Career Center for General Services. One hundred and four companies have used our Business Information Services.

Within Critical, Emerging and other industries, this is the breakdown of service usage:

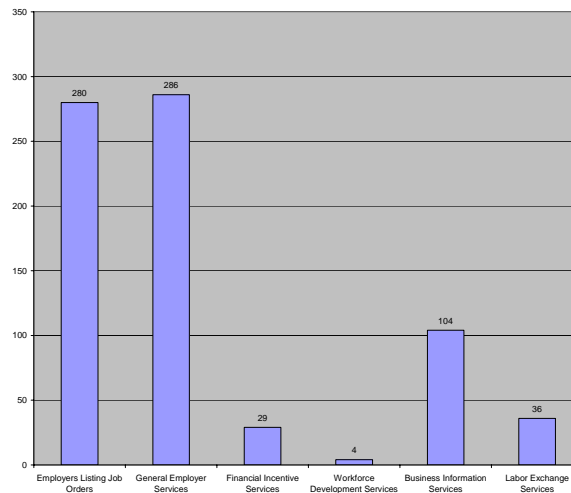
Critical Industries: Job Posting and General Services are most commonly used, followed by Business Information Services, which are utilized primarily by the manufacturing sector.

Emerging Industries: Other than Job Posting and General Services, there is not a significant usage of any service. In Food Products, however, there is a slight increase in use of Financial Incentive and Business Information Services. This may be due to the fact that ValleyWorks held a targeted focus group/breakfast of Food Products industry employers and provided information on Tax Credits, Workforce Training Funds and the Empowerment Zone.

Other Industries: Within the three identified “Other” sectors, General Services and Job Orders are the most popular services used. But Business Information Services are used at a greater rate than within the Critical and Emerging Industries (except for Manufacturing).

Following is an illustration of what services are most popular with businesses:

Illustration #3
Employer Services



* Data compiled from OSCCAR (period ending 3/31/2004) report

The three services least used by business are Labor Exchange, Workforce Development and Financial Incentive.

There are two possible reasons why these services are not as popular with employers:

1. Services are not marketed aggressively enough to employers, or
2. Businesses feel these services provide no added value

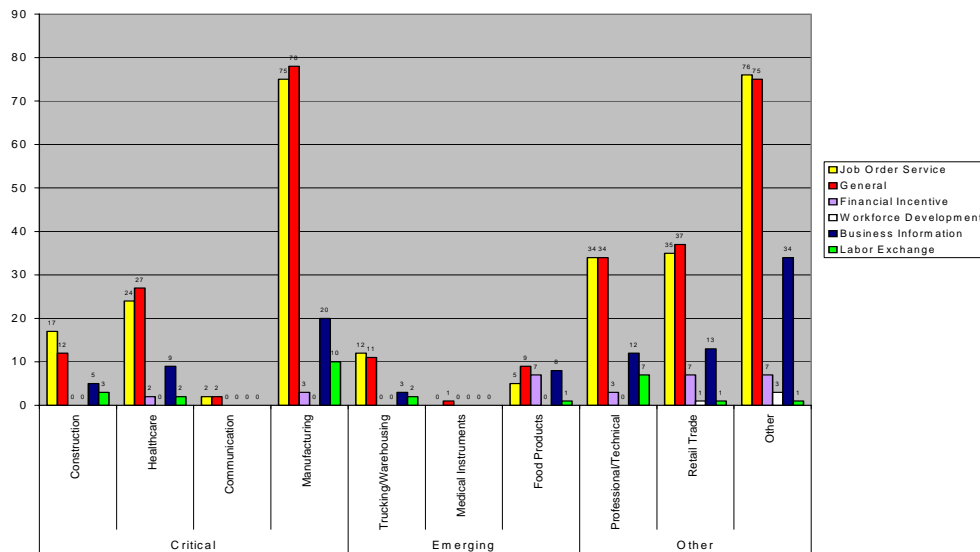
Feedback from employers who have attended focus groups or who have received information packets from ValleyWorks Employer Liaisons has indicated that information on Tax Credits, Workforce Training Funds and the Empowerment Zones has been very helpful. They would be interested in learning more about these areas and attending future seminars.

All employer customers have received at least two services from ValleyWorks. Across the board, there is no difference in the types of services used more frequently, except for the Food Products industry, which uses Business Information Services and Financial Incentive Services more frequently (in particular, information on Tax Credits and Workforce Training Funds). This may be a reflection of the industry-specific focus group held in Q3FY04, and/or the importance of services the career center can provide to help businesses control their costs.

In general, we know there is a difference in the types of services our larger business customers require versus our smaller business customers. Large businesses (more than 500 employees) are interested in controlling their costs and frequently utilize outsourcing to do so. Smaller businesses (fewer than 500 employees) lack the staff available to perform many of the functions they need. An analysis of the services we are currently providing and those being underutilized indicates that the career center can provide services to meet more of businesses workforce development needs.

Industry-related literature indicates that two-thirds of a company's costs are human resource related. As we define their needs further, we will market and offer services that help companies decrease their human resource-related costs. These services include Labor Exchange, Financial Incentive Services and Workforce Development Services.

Illustration #4
Current Business Services by Industry



Business Services Gaps

According to the *MVWIB Labor Force Blueprint*, businesses in the Critical and Emerging industries identified a set of five business needs:

1. Significant portions of their workforce were aging and replacement workers were not readily forthcoming
2. Candidates lack basic skills for entry level job
3. Current gaps in the region's occupational skills training
4. Outdated public perception of the industry
5. Insufficient career ladder opportunities

The analysis in the preceding section indicates that business in the area use the career center primarily for listing their job orders in an effort to gain replacement workers. They do not utilize existing services such as Business and Financial Information Services, Industry Briefings or Targeted Recruitments that could also help them address these needs. In addition, there are services that businesses do not currently have access to via the career center or through its partners that would help them meet their workforce development needs.

More specifically, certain industries have their own additional unique requirements. For example:

Critical Industries

- *Construction:* This industry needs skilled workers who have their own tools, often need licenses and certifications and frequently need to belong to a union or have completed an apprenticeship program.
- *Healthcare:* This industry requires workers who have mastered higher levels of English language and basic math in addition to occupational skills.
- *Manufacturing:* According to *The Blueprint*, the manufacturing environment in the Merrimack Valley is complex and rapidly changing. Workers in this industry can no longer learn a specific set of skills and use those skills for an entire career. These workers now need basic math skills and some required certifications, and need to continually update their skill sets.

Emerging Industries

- *Trucking/Warehousing:* Employees are required to have CDL licenses, and are often required to have additional certifications in areas such as air brakes and hazardous material. A high school diploma or GED, and, for some companies, both gasoline and diesel repair certification are also required. Most important in this industry, however, is experience.
- *Food Products:* This industry prefers employees that have high school diplomas or a GED and a positive work history.

Other Industries

- *Professional/Technical:* There are positions available in this industry. However, the skillsets required do not match those of the available workforce. In addition, entry level and reemployment wages are lower than the expectations of the current labor pool.
- *Retail:* This industry has been selected as there is demand in the area and it is a good entry level job for many of our customers to gain key work skills. This is the fourth-largest employment segment in the region.

Business Strategic Goals

ValleyWorks is redefining its approach to business services. We are doing this by expanding our Business Services Unit, marketing our current services more aggressively, and developing additional services to meet the current and future needs of area businesses. This will be done by developing the breadth and depth of our business relationships through the following strategic goals:

Increase the number of business relationships with employers in the area with emphasis on the critical and emerging industries.

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Market all career center services to 300 Critical and 100 Emerging companies, with particular emphasis on Financial Incentive, Workforce Development Services and Labor Exchange Services	Begin Q1FY05	Ongoing
Identify 50 additional companies in the Critical and 25 additional companies in the Emerging Industries, with a particular emphasis on construction, trucking and warehousing, healthcare and food products, through ALMIS software program	Q2FY05	Q2FY06
Implement an industry forum with representatives from 25 companies in Critical & Emerging Industries to meet twice a year (Oct., May) to provide input on employer needs	Q2FY05	Ongoing
Increase by 25% use of Financial Incentive & Labor Exchange Services	By Q4FY05	By Q4FY06
Increase the number of service types accessed per company from two to three for businesses within the Critical Industry segment.	100 businesses	150 businesses
Increase the number of service types accessed per company from two to three for businesses within the Emerging Industry segment.	40 businesses	50 businesses
Increase the number of service types accessed per company from two to three for businesses within the Other Industry segment (includes Professional/Technical, Retail Trade, Other)	200 businesses	300 businesses

Expand delivery of Workforce Development Services

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Survey our current customer base (416) to determine customer satisfaction with current services	Q1FY05	Q1FY06
Survey our current customer base to determine workforce development needs	Q1FY05	Q1FY06
Survey 75 newly-identified companies from the Critical and Emerging Industries to determine workforce development needs	2 nd quarter	2 nd quarter
Hold an industry-specific focus group with businesses from construction or healthcare	Q3FY05 (healthcare) Q4FY05 (construction)	NA
Hold an industry-specific focus group with businesses from food products, manufacturing, trucking/warehousing or medical instruments and supplies	NA	Q1FY06 (food), Q2 (manf.), Q3 (trucking), Q4 (medical)
Implement two new services per year to current menu of services to meet the targeted needs of our customers.	July 1, 2004 = OJT; Jan., 2005 = Apprenticeship programs (partner with DOL, unions)	July 1, 2005 = Customized Training, special marketing efforts; Jan., 2006 = Job shadowing/mentoring

Develop skill sets required by businesses

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Work with WIB to develop Job Readiness Certification program that reflects national standards by Oct. 1, 2004	Begin Q1FY04 – Ongoing	Updated annually
Implement Job Readiness Certification program to ensure all job seekers meet the expectations of business customers for employees who can demonstrate the ability to learn a job	Begin Q3FY05 – Ongoing	Updated annually
Work with 20 employers to determine skills and competencies needed for current positions and future job openings	Begin Q2FY05 – Ongoing	Updated annually
Work with WIB and vendors to ensure training programs develop skills and competencies needed by employers	Begin Q3FY05 – Ongoing	Updated annually

Job Seekers Profile/Needs Analysis

As of March 31, 2004, ValleyWorks Career Center served 11,670 individuals. Out of this 9,349 are from the Workforce Investment Area, which represents 6% of regional labor force. Eighty percent (80%) of the customers served by the career center are from the Workforce Investment Area and 20% are from outside of the region. In the Workforce Investment Area there are a total of 2,861 or 24.5% from the Greater Haverhill area, 6,071 or 52% from the Greater Lawrence area, and 417 or 3.5% from the Greater Newburyport area.

ValleyWorks job seekers range from the highly skilled professional to the individual with minimal occupational skills to those lacking basic skills. Seventy six percent (76%) of the VWCC job seeker base has a High School degree or higher, which closely reflects the regional workforce profile. Fifty-three percent (53%) are White, 38% are Latino, 4% are African American and 3% are Asian. The region is 83% White and 17% Latino. Fifty one percent (51%) of the job seekers are female, which again mirrors the region. Six percent (6%) are under 18 years old, 9% are 19-21 years old and 55% are 22-45 years old.

Each job seeker segment has different barriers. Some may lack certification or licensing, others may be homeless or in subsidized housing. The barriers most often reported for the individuals within the customer base for the career center include: lack of self sufficiency, no high school diploma and poor work history.

The segments of our customer base and the needs they come to the career center with are:

Basic Needs Adult: Most often members of job seeker segment are recent immigrants or individuals who have historically been underemployed or economically disadvantaged. This segment's needs include:

- Basic English language skills
- Access to support services (i.e. food stamps, childcare, immigration, transportation, housing, financial assistance)
- Medical and psychological services to address undiagnosed or untreated issues for themselves or a family member
- Basic education, high school diploma or GED
- Support systems for family members
- Occupational skills training and certifications
- Work readiness skills
- Transferable job skills

Transitional and Technical/Professionals are individuals who have been underemployed or displaced after long-term employment. They are highly specialized in industries with declining workforce requirements (i.e. telecommunications, manufacturing, software, computers, financial services) and seeking to maintain a comparable wage as they seek reemployment. Their needs are:

- An understanding of the current labor market and job search requirements and techniques, assistance in career planning (networking, resume writing, transferable skills)
- Updated job skills and certifications or retraining in skills needs to attain individual goals
- An ability to understand and apply current workplace etiquette
- Financial management assistance because layoffs have threatened the financial security of a family
- Family support to understand the effect of unemployment on family members
- Adaptive accommodations to address special needs
- Securing financial assistance for additional training, certification and credentialing in new career skills
- Increased opportunities to apply transferable and newly-gained skills

Youth are individuals aged 18-22. This population needs:

- Assistance in goal setting, securing resources and support systems, and attainment of short term goals
- Basic education skills and knowledge including High School diploma or equivalent
- Steady and relevant work experiences
- Occupational skills or entry into post secondary education
- Support systems in the absence of family, for emotional support and personal security
- Services from DSS, DYS, DTA, Probation, the courts and assistance in accessing them
- Assistance in seeking support for mental and medical illness (undiagnosed or untreated)
- Assistance in coping with and eliminating violence in their current living situation from significant others, friends and family members
- Life skills: budget and personal finance management, family relationships and parenting, planning, negotiation and mediation skills

Job Seeker Needs Being Met

Depending upon the needs of the individual, ValleyWorks addresses the needs of each segment in a variety of ways, as outlined below:

The Basic Needs Adult:

- Referral to Department of Education-funded programs for language and adult education
- Group programs, Individual Training Accounts, Trade and National Emergency Grant training to develop workplace skills
- Referrals to support services provided by community services such as child care, food stamps, Mass Health, Mass Rehab, Immigration Services, Community Based and Faith Based Organizations, Psychological Center, Northern Essex Mental Health for psychological services
- Supported Work programs, which provides work readiness skills for Transitional Assistance customers
- Job Placement services to help them enter employment

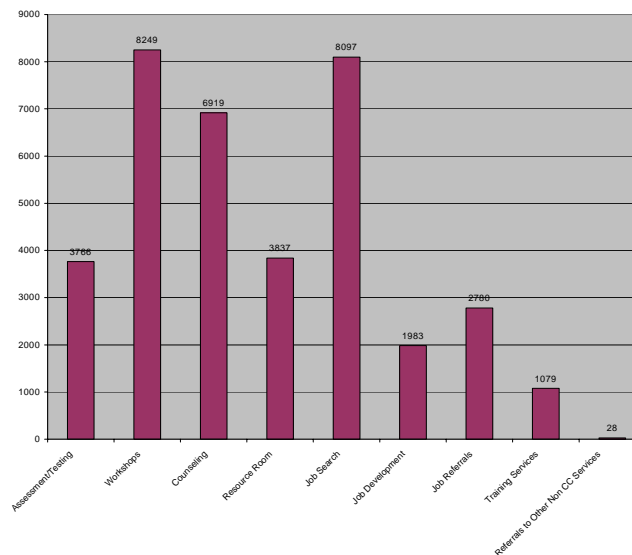
Transitional and Technical/Professionals needs are met through:

- Inform workers about labor market, job search techniques and workplace etiquette
- Support for retraining and certification
- Job development and placement
- Assistance in career planning (networking, resume writing, assessment and transferable skills)
- Support in securing financial assistance for additional training, certification and credentialing in new career skills
- Identification of and referral to opportunities for retraining to attain individual goals

Youth:

- Referrals to occupational skills training
- Enrollment in programs that encourage attainment of high school diploma
- Initial work experiences
- Attainment of work readiness skills
- Job coaching and job development
- Advocacy for meeting basic needs and access to support services

**Illustration #5
Job Seeker Services**



*Data compiled from OSCCAR Report (Period ending 3/31/04)

Job Seeker Unmet Needs

The Basic Needs Adult:

According to *The Blueprint*, there is a gap between the basic skills required by employers and the basic skill sets of many of our current job seekers. These basic skills required by businesses have risen dramatically over the past 10 years. Candidates for entry level employment are generally expected to have: verbal and written skills, basic mathematics education and a broad array of 'soft skills,' including teamwork, education, communication, positive work ethic and an ability to accept supervision. The unmet needs are:

- Basic language skills and educational needs are not met because community ESOL and ABE providers lack capacity to meet demand
- Basic work readiness skills programs are only available for those on public assistance, so those not on transitional assistance will need to find alternative ways to develop skills
- Support and psychological service needs are not met due to lack of coordination among agencies
- Job seekers lack the opportunity to develop skill sets necessary to move from entry level jobs to similar or higher positions

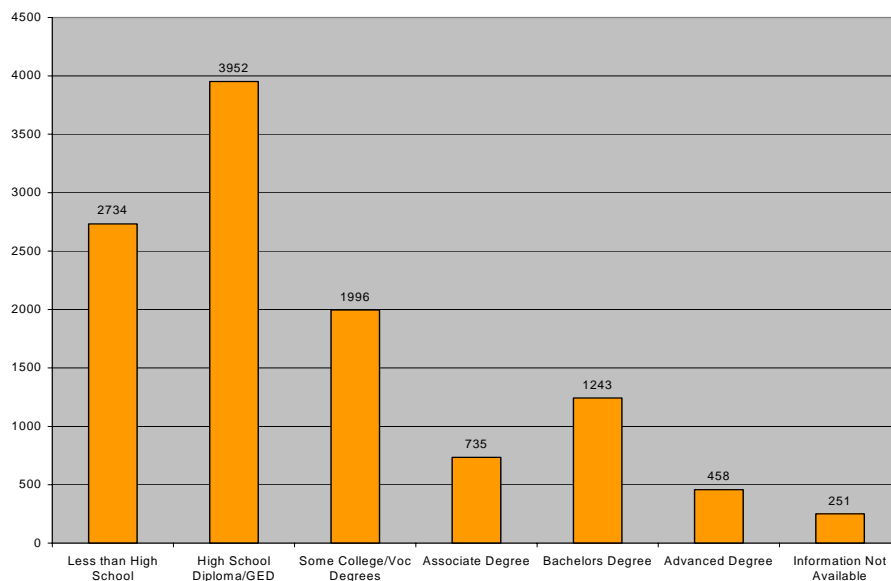
The Transitional and Technical/ Professionals unmet needs are:

- Perceived image of transitional and technical/professional workers limits job opportunities
- Adaptive equipment or accommodations for employees makes it difficult for workers
- Financial management knowledge while job seekers transition from unemployment to employment
- Support for family unit during transition
- Opportunities to apply transferable and newly-gained skills

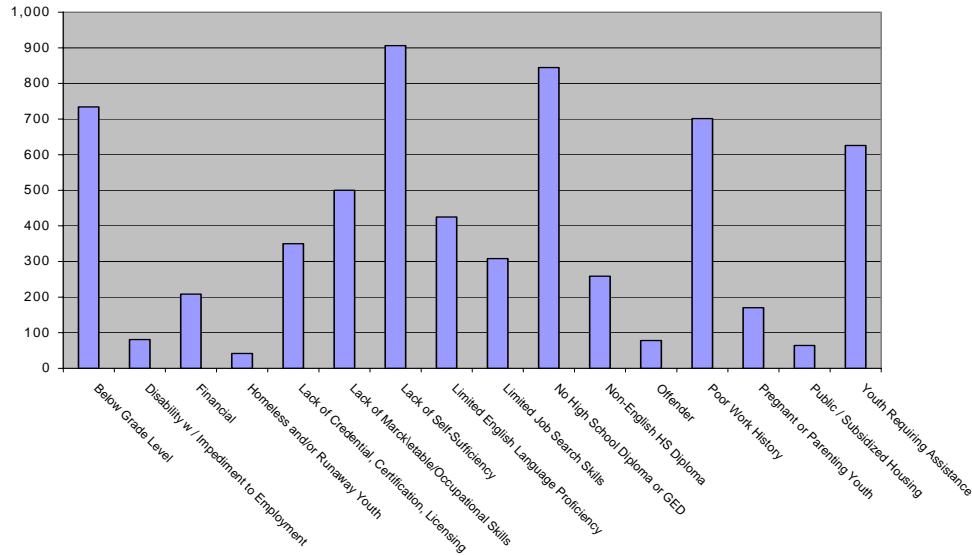
The Youth unmet needs are:

- Support for basic needs in the absence of parental or family support
- Attainment of high school diploma or equivalent credential
- Acquisition of life skills
- Career and life goals
- Work readiness skills

**Illustration #6
Job Seeker Education Profile**



**Illustration #7
Job Seeker Barriers**



Job Seeker Strategic Goals

Create Job Readiness Process to assist job seekers in meeting the expectations of business customers

Activity	FY 05	FY 06
Work with WIB in developing and implementing program that uses Work Readiness Standards	Implement program by June 30, 2005	
Secure funding to implement program	Oct., 2004	NA
Identify and train three staff members to deliver program	April, 2005	NA
Orient all career center staff to program and process	May, 2005	NA
Pilot program with targeted segment of 20 career center customers	June, 2005	NA
Survey customer satisfaction with pilot program to ensure 80% satisfaction rate	August, 2005	Q4FY06
Review pilot program and revise as needed	Sept., 2005	Q1FY06
Develop, distribute program marketing materials for job seekers and businesses	Oct., 2005	
Ensure 80% of job seekers have met job readiness standards by passing certification exam (pass/fail)	Pilot Program	Job Readiness Program

Add five additional services that assist job seekers in marketing themselves to employers

Activity	FY 05	FY 06
Expand number of self-assessment tools available for job seeker customers from five to eight	Dec., 2004	NA
Profile four customers each quarter in employer marketing packets, newsletter and Web site	Complete 16 profiles by Q4FY05	Complete 16 new profiles by Q4FY06
Offer four Professional Networking Group's <i>Workshop Speaker Series</i> sessions to general job seeking population	Quarterly, beginning Q1FY05	NA
Provide WOTC tax credit information to all eligible basic needs adult and youth job seekers as an incentive to hiring	Q3FY05	Ongoing
Provide video taped mock interview sessions for all job seekers	Q3FY05	Ongoing

Increase opportunities to link job seekers with community resources to support their job search process

Activity	FY 05	FY 06
Host a community resources fair for ValleyWorks staff	Q2FY05	NA
Host a community resources fair for ValleyWorks job seekers	Q3FY05	NA
Develop a community resources referral process and guide for ValleyWorks job seekers	Q3FY05	NA
Build three partnership opportunities which assist community resources in developing capacity for addressing housing, adaptive accommodation and psychological support services	Complete Adaptive accommodation by Dec. 2004, start Housing by end of Sept., 2004	Complete Psychological, Housing by end June 30, 2006

Training Services Profile/Analysis

ValleyWorks referred a total of 1,076 job seekers to training through the Workforce Investment Act, National Emergency Grants, Trade, DTA Employment Service Programs and Building Essential Skill Through Training (BEST) between July 1, 2003 – March 31, 2004. Of those, 286 were trained for jobs in Critical Industries, 24 were trained for jobs in Emerging Industries, 500 were trained for jobs in professional/technical, seven were trained for jobs in retail trade and 156 were trained in other industries (note: there were 103 that did not have identifying CIP codes).

A total of 400 individuals satisfactorily completed training, 65 did not complete training and 611 are still active in training programs.

The provision of training is subject to an objective assessment of skills, education, marketability and the development of a career management plan. By completing a comprehensive assessment, the Career Services Advisor determines the job seeker’s appropriateness for an Individual Training Account. Currently, the training must be directly linked to in-demand job opportunities or careers. While attending training, job seekers are provided with on-going counseling support to ensure that they are receiving the services needed to reach their goals, including successful job placement, as established in the case management plan.

Training Gaps

Job seeker training needs are identified in the job seeker section.

- The first gap is that many of our customers lack the basic skills (math and reading, writing and speaking English) to meet the entrance level requirements of existing training programs.
- The second gap is a lack of variety of training models that address the different learning styles of our customers (On-the-job training, apprenticeships, internships, customized training).
- Another gap is the availability of training slots for basic skills training programs, such as ESOL and GED. There are also waiting lists for many of these programs.
- There are not enough training programs targeted towards occupations in the Critical and Emerging Industries.
- There are not enough programs that offer both basic education and occupational skills training

Presently we do not offer on-the-job training and customized training. We need to develop better relationships with unions and apprenticeship programs. Based on data collected (see Training section above), there needs to be better alignment with appropriate training programs to meet the job needs in the Critical and Emerging Industries.

Training Strategic Goals

Increase basic skills training opportunities so our customers can meet entrance requirements of occupational skills training programs

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Work with interested training partners to identify training gaps and increase capacity	July 1, 2004	Updated annually

Increase capacity for different models of training

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Work with WIB, vendors to develop additional 10 training programs in Critical & Emerging Industries	July 1, 2004	Updated annually
Develop procedures to offer OJT and customized training services	June 30, 2005 = OJT	June 30, 2006 = Customized training
Work with five Community Based Organizations (CBO), businesses to increase opportunities for internship programs	Oct. 1, 2004	Updated annually
Develop relationships with four labor unions to increase apprenticeship training opportunities	Oct. 1, 2004	Updated annually
Work with the WIB to obtain necessary funding for incumbent worker training	July 1, 2004	Updated annually
Work with the WIB to increase number of programs that offer both basic education and occupational skills training (VESL, GED/voc skills)	July 1, 2004	Updated annually

Increase number of training programs available in the region

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Work with WIB, vendors to develop additional 10 training programs in Critical & Emerging Industries	July 1, 2004	Updated annually
Work with the WIB to obtain necessary funding for incumbent worker training	July 1, 2004	Updated annually

Increase and expand current training programs to prepare customers for opportunities in the Critical and Emerging Industries

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Work with WIB, vendors to develop additional 10 training programs in Critical & Emerging Industries	July 1, 2004	Ongoing
Work with the WIB to obtain necessary funding for incumbent worker training	July 1, 2004	Ongoing

Local Plan Goals

The primary way to measure our success will be through outcomes. We will look at historical data and future projections for the Critical and Emerging Businesses we are serving both now and after years one and two. We will also compare the number and variety of business services offered both now and after years one and two.

Our marketing efforts will also be measured in terms of the number of employers advertising with ValleyWorks, the number of employers participating in job fairs and recruitments and sponsorship opportunities. Revenue generated from these activities will also be measured.

For Job Seekers, we will collect and analyze data from reports (OSCCAR, Ad hoc, statewide performance) and focus groups. Employment verification letters and follow-up contact also helps us measure success.

We will also measure the number and frequency (usage) of workshops given over the next two years.

The charts below illustrate the desired outcome and measurement for success for each of the identified performance criteria.

Business Service Plan Goals

	# of Businesses in Workforce Investment Area	# of Businesses Served: VWCC Now	# of Businesses Served: End of Year 1 (FY05)	# of Businesses Served: End of Year 2 (FY06)
Total	8,271	416	819	1,100
Critical	2,041	101	200	300
Emerging	391	21	80	100
Professional/Technical	1,055	36	100	150
Retail Trade	926	37	65	95
Other	3,858	221	335	420

Job Seeker Plan Goals

	VWCC Now (Entered Employment a/o 3/31/04)	Job Seekers Entering Employment, Projected End of Current Year (FY04)	Job Seekers Entering Employment, End of Year 1 (FY05)	Job Seekers Entering Employment, End of Year 2 (FY06)
Total	1,817	2,258	2,500	* 2,000
Critical	443	471	500	425
Emerging	124	133	143	120
Professional/Technical	36	39	50	40
Retail Trade	149	165	200	160
Other	1,065	1,450	1,607	1,255

* Takes into account loss of Lucent, Merck and A Plus Projects

Training Plan Goals

	# of Job Seekers Entered Training	# of Job Seekers Completed Training Successfully (a/o 3/31/04)	# of Job Seekers Completed Training Successfully, End of FY05	# of Job Seekers Completed Training Successfully, End of FY06
Total	# 1,076	* 400	600	600
Critical	286	108	170	225
Emerging	24	19	40	75
Professional/ Technical	500	188	275	200
Retail	7	0	15	15
Other	156	25	100	85

103 did not have CIP codes

* 58 did not have CIP codes

Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal #1

We will integrate the “MVWIB Labor Force Blueprint” into recruitment of employers with special emphasis on Critical and Emerging industries (addressed in Business Section of plan).

Strategic Goal #2

Address needs of basic skills (see Job Seeker and Training sections of plan)

Strategic Goal #3

We will integrate CQI into the operations of the Valley Works Career Center.

What is the current state of CQI?

CQI is used informally in the career center at present. In the past year, the career center has used quality process improvement teams to address such issues as improving customer service flow, defining comprehensive job search, reviewing status and additional resource need for Resource Room, adding workshops to respond to customer requests and developing a safety plan for the office.

What gaps currently exist?

The Career Center Staff need an overall understanding of the philosophy, goals and process (outcomes) of CQI. Implementation plans for process and structure of CQI initiatives depend on additional funding.

What actions will we take to address gaps?

The following is a broad overview of our plan to implement CQI into overall career center operations. A more detailed plan will be developed with the consultant.

Hire CQI consultant

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Work with management staff to develop strategies in providing CQI to staff	July 1, 2004	NA
Start process to hire consultant	by July 30, 2004	NA
Hire consultant	By Aug 1, 2004	NA
Begin needs assessment	Aug. 1, 2004	NA
Develop comprehensive implementation plan	Done by Sept. 30, 2004	NA

Train management and staff in overall philosophy of CQI in Baldrige methodology

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Secure funding from WIB or outside resources to support efforts in CQI training	By Dec. 31, 2004	NA
Train management using consultant services	Jan. 1, 2005	NA
Train staff using consultant services (philosophy)	Done by Oct. 30, 2004	NA
Train staff using consultant services (process)	Done by Dec. 31, 2004	NA

Implement Baldrige model in phased approach

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Identify three priorities within identified groups (based on customer feedback)	Done by Aug. 15, 2004	NA
Develop comprehensive implementation plan	Done by Sept. 30, 2004	NA
Select, set up quality improvement teams for each of the three areas (leadership, customer/market focus and human resources)	Done by Jan. 5, 2005	NA
Each team to define activities, timeframes and measures of quality improvement	Done by Jan. 31, 2005	NA
Implement teams plan for each priority	NA	Completed by July 1, 2005
Repeat steps as outlined for remaining Baldrige criteria	NA	Completed by June 30, 2006

Evaluate outcome of CQI/Baldrige training

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Evidence of staff ability to articulate vision, mission and values of CQI	Done by Oct. 30, 2004	NA
CQI teams have met their stated goal in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Customer/market focus • Human resources 	Done by June 30, 2005	NA
Obtain feedback from staff, customers and management	Ongoing	NA
Staff members will have taken part in a CQI team	24 staff members	50 staff members
Managers/supervisors have participated in a CQI team	3-4 man./super.	6-8 man./super.

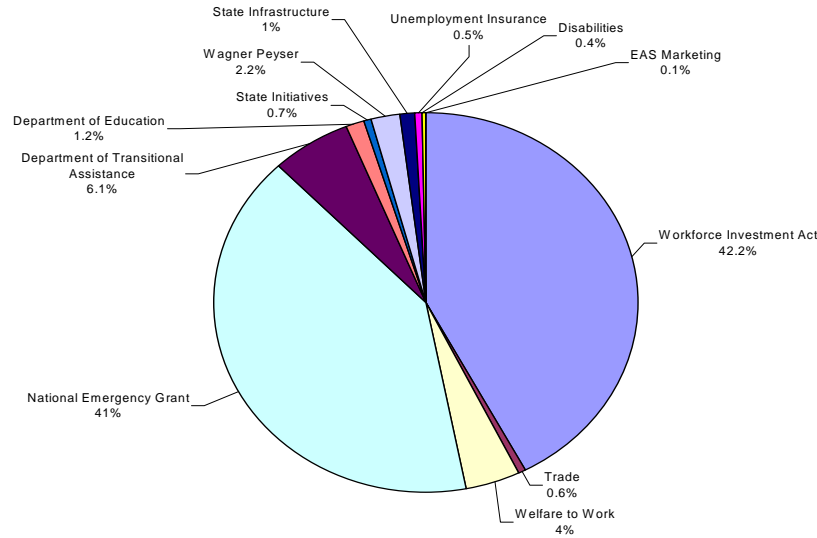
Strategic Goal #4

Diversify Funding Sources and Retool Service Delivery to Meet the Needs of an Increased Customer Base

What are we Doing Right Now?

The total budget for the ValleyWorks Career Center as of April 30, 2004 is \$7,528,871. The chart below indicates that 97.8% of the funds allocated to the career center are “program entitlement funds,” which are regulated by state and federal mandates. In other words, these funds are restricted to pre-qualified customers. National Emergency Grant and Workforce Investment Act funding account for 82.3% of the total budget. If the National Emergency Grant funds are not extended through FY05, the active clients in these grants will be serviced under the Title I Dislocated Worker Funds. In FY05, there will be no Welfare-to-Work funding (4% of total FY04 budget).

**Illustration #8
FY04 VWCC Funding Sources**



The FY05 WIA Title I allocations have increased by 28%. It is anticipated that the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) dollars will be level funded. At this time, the allocations for Wagner-Peyser and Unemployment Insurance have not been determined, but we have been informed there will be a decrease in funding. There will be no carry-in funds for Wagner-Peyser as there has been in past years. Once again, this year we will apply for Rapid Response set-aside funds to hire a Trade Career Service Advisor (CSA).

The primary expenditures of these funds are for staffing, overhead and the provision of core, intensive and training services to:

- Low income adults
- Youth
- Dislocated workers
- Trade certified customers
- Welfare recipients (TAFDC)
- Customers needing basic skills remediation
- Applicants receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI)
- Veterans
- Disabled customers

Staffing Patterns

For FY03, ValleyWorks' budget was \$7,395,821, and the career center (including the Lucent Center) serviced approximately 13,000 customers. The number of staff employed was 75.

The total number of staff employed at the career center (including the Lucent Career Center) is 79. It is anticipated that in FY04 that we will service approximately 16,000 applicants.

Fiscal FY05-FY06 Projections (Customers vs. Staffing)

The center projects it will service 20,000 customers in FY05 and 18,000 customers in FY06. This is based on historical data that has been collected since FY02 regarding number of customers served at ValleyWorks. The rationale for the decrease in customers served in FY06 is due to the loss of the NEGs as well as the improved economic landscape. We envision an even greater decrease in customers as the economy improves.

Gaps and Analysis

Funding: The anticipated budget for FY05, \$5,236,038, a 30% decrease from FY04. At this time, the DCS allocations have not been determined, therefore, the projected budget could decrease. The proposed budget projects staffing of 82 employees, an increase of three from the previous year, as we anticipate servicing an increase of 4,000 more customers.

Office Space: ValleyWorks capacity is currently at 100%. Therefore, we are unable to co-locate with partners who could contribute to the infrastructure. This impacts our ability to provide and expand services to customers that aren't currently available at the career centers. This limitation also prevents us from realizing an added revenue stream, and keeps us from obtaining additional office space. The Haverhill center lease will expire in October, 2004 and decisions and procurement issues will need to be addressed immediately.

Union Issues: Due to the fact that the lead and principal partner have separate bargaining unions, it makes it difficult to cross-train staff for the provision of services that are not covered in their official job descriptions. This makes it difficult for ValleyWorks management to request staff to perform services in different departments.

Lack of Staff: Due to the reduction of Wagner-Peyser and UI funds, DCS has five unfilled positions that will be eliminated in FY05. This is part of the staff that provides employment and UI services to jobseekers. In FY06, due to the loss of the NEGs, the ValleyWorks' staff caseloads will increase as active customers from these projects are transferred to different funding sources. Increased training opportunities to enhance staff skills for working with the diverse populations that seek ValleyWorks services are also needed.

Limitations of State Information Systems: The current method of capturing (MOSES) and reporting (Crystal) customer activity and statistics under the state system is antiquated and inadequate to meet current and future management reporting needs. Limitations on the system prevent us from capturing and reporting critical labor data information, job seeker skills and business services. In addition, some reports must be manually calculated. More specifically,

- Database (MOSES) does not capture all the data required by ValleyWorks
- The "canned reports" are inaccurate, nor are there enough available to meet management reporting needs
- Some reports produced by the report generator (Crystal) are not in exportable formats, thus preventing necessary data manipulation

Limitations of Resource Room Computers: Hardware limitations of the current set of computers in the career center Resource Room impede our customer job search (computers have limited memory, floppy disks often fail resulting in lost data). It is imperative we address this in the near future.

Data Integrity: Data entry accuracy by ValleyWorks staff is inconsistent, therefore, reporting is very difficult in some cases.

Strategies to Address Gaps

Funding: Increase funding for center by seeking alternative sources to bring in additional revenues

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
ValleyWorks to write three external grants	1 grant written	2 grants written
Expand menu of Fee for Services, phase in additions for businesses and job seekers over three-year period	Start Q3FY05	Updated annually
Development and execution of updated MOUs by the WIB, which will include financial resources by the partners	End of FY05	NA
Development of grants by WIB to support ValleyWorks services	Start by July 1, 2004	Updated annually
Increase acquisition of private foundation of direct gifts to the center	Start by July 1, 2004	Updated annually

Office Space: Increase ability to expand existing facilities in Lawrence and Haverhill

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Increase revenues to seek additional space in Lawrence and Haverhill	Q2FY05	Updated annually
Work with partner agencies to provide services at their facilities	Start July 1, 2004	Updated annually
Develop RFP for renewal of Haverhill site	Start July 1, 2004	NA

Union Issues: Increase ability to integrate services among staff

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Continue to have weekly meetings to work with staff to enhance ongoing communication and address workload and staffing issues	Start July 1, 2004	Updated annually
Work with unions to negotiate for ability to redeploy and reassign duties	Ongoing	NA

Lack of Staff: Increase funding for center by seeking alternative sources to bring in additional revenues for staffing

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Develop three grants to increase funding by \$100,000 for additional business services and training staff	One grant	Two grants written
Development of grants by WIB to support ValleyWorks services	Start July 1, 2004	Updated annually
Develop outreach with community-based organizations for volunteer workers	Q2FY05	Updated annually
Increase funding for staff training to enhance staff skills for working with the diverse populations that seek ValleyWorks services.	Q2FY05	Updated annually

Limitations of State Information Systems

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Continue to attend meetings and make recommendations to DCS for ongoing MOSES/Reporting enhancements	Start July 1, 2004	Updated annually

Limitations of Resource Room computers

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Work with DCS to develop plan to secure new computers (via donations or purchase)	Begin dialogue Q1FY05	NA

Data Integrity

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Set up ongoing training of staff on proper data entry techniques, incorporate into CQI training	Start Q2FY05	Ongoing
Develop an enhanced procedure for notifying staff on latest changes to MOSES system	Start Q2FY05	NA
Implement swipe card system to enhance data entry accuracy, resulting in improved data entry efficiencies	Start Q2FY05	NA

Strategic Goal #5

Increase Fee-for-Service Activities

What are we doing right now?

As of March 31, 2004, ValleyWorks has generated \$6,630 in fee-for-service income. This represents:

Type of Service	# of Customers Served	Business/ Job Seeker	Total Revenue Generated, a/o March 31, 2004
Resume Critique	46	Job Seeker	\$920
MBTI Testing	1	Job Seeker	\$100
Workshops	2 sessions	Business	\$350
Room Rental	5 businesses	Business	\$5,260

Employers/Businesses: We currently charge business service customers for room rentals, job fairs, recruitments, and advertising and event sponsorships. Although this year we did not charge businesses to participate in job fairs, in previous years – after a market analysis of what companies were willing to pay for these services – we began offering this service starting at \$250.

Job Seeker: For job seekers, we charge for resume critique, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) testing, and for career center staff to go on-site and conduct workshops.

What are the gaps? How do we analyze gaps?

- Identify additional services that would generate revenue for career center (fee-for services)
- Work with WIB to develop additional fee-for-service opportunities to maintain or expand One-Stop capacities
- Position ValleyWorks as the small business ‘Virtual HR’ department

How We Will Address Gaps

Increase fee-for-service revenue generated by for career center to \$8,000 in year 1 and \$10,000 in year 2

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Survey companies to determine which human resource services they pay for, what they would be willing to spend for recruitment, job fair, training, retention and personnel administration	Q1FY05	NA
Benchmark other career centers to determine services currently offered that we can easily adopt	Q1FY05	NA
Market ValleyWorks fee-for service activities to companies not served by Rapid Response when laying off less than 50 employees.	Q2FY05	Ongoing
Phase in menu additions for businesses and job seekers over three-year period. These additions may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outplacement Services for businesses • Human Resource Workshops for businesses (Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, ADA, Management Training, Interviewing) • Salary Structure reports for businesses • Create Job Descriptions for businesses • Job Applicant Skills Testing for businesses • Videotaped mock interviews for job seekers • Resume development for professionals (job seekers) 	Start Q3FY05	Updated annually
Work with WIB to develop additional revenue-generating opportunities to maintain, enhance or expand One-Stop capacities	Q1FY05	Ongoing

Provide 'Virtual HR' department services to five small businesses

Action Steps	Year 1	Year 2
Research needs of small businesses (conduct focus group, survey, etc)	Start Q1FY05	NA
Develop strategic plan	Start Q1FY05	NA
Implement plan	Q4FY06	NA
Market services to 25 businesses with less than 50 employees. Services may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resource Workshops for businesses (Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, ADA, Management Training, Interviewing) • Salary Structure reports • Create Job Descriptions 	Q4FY06	NA
Provide 'Virtual HR' services to five companies	NA	5 companies
Assess outcomes, adjust program	NA	Q4FY06

Appendices

Appendix A ValleyWorks Employer Services

General services include:

- contact visits with employer to determine needs
- follow-up contact with employer to determine service satisfaction and quality of referrals
- site visits to employer to gain understanding of operation
- career center facility rentals and sponsorship opportunities.

One hundred four (104) companies have received Business Information Services.

Business Information Services include:

- career center information – Services offered at ValleyWorks Career Center and through the Massachusetts One Stop Career Center system
- labor market information – The demand for jobs and available workforce in area by industry
- salary survey information – The competitive wage rate of specific jobs within the region
- Unemployment Insurance program information – Clarification and tips on navigating the unemployment system
- Workshare Program information – Participation in Massachusetts' WorkSharing Program is your alternative to layoffs that are disruptive for you as an employer, and to your workforce

The following services are least frequently used by businesses:

Labor Exchange

- such as on-site recruitments (when an individual company holds their own recruitment session at ValleyWorks)
- on-site job fairs (when multiple companies come to ValleyWorks on the same day to recruit for positions)
- targeted recruitments (when a single or group of industry-specific companies recruits for open positions).

Workforce Development Services

- providing information and links to apprenticeship/internship programs
- consultation services to assess employer needs (labor market information, pay scales, career ladders, incumbent worker training)
- human resources information (links to labor law issues, such as sexual harassment, drug-free workplace)
- mentoring/job shadowing/school-to-work programs
- workforce seminars (employment trends in Emerging and Critical Industries)
- testing

Financial incentive services are also underutilized and include:

- Building Essential Skills through Training (BEST)
- Grant information
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)
- Workforce Training Funds.

Appendix B ValleyWorks Job Seekers Service Gap Analysis

Customer	What they need	Needs being met	Unmet needs	What needs to happen
<p>Basic Needs Adult: Most often members of the job seeker segment are recent immigrants or individuals who have historically been underemployed or economically disadvantaged</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic language skills • Access to support services [i.e. food stamps, childcare, immigration, transportation, housing, financial assistance] • Medical and psychological services to address undiagnosed or untreated issues for themselves or a family member • Basic education, high school diploma or GED • Support systems for family members • Occupational skills training and certifications • Work readiness skills • Transferable job skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to Department of Education-funded programs for language and adult education needs • Group programs, Individual Training Accounts, Trade and National Emergency Grant training to develop workplace skills • Referrals to support services provided by community services such as child care, food stamps, Mass Health, MassRehab, Immigration Services, Community Based and Faith Based Organizations • Referrals to Psychological Center, Northern Essex Mental Health for psychological services • Supported Work programs, which provides work readiness skills for Transitional Assistance customers • Job Placement services to help them enter employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic language skills and educational needs are not met because community ESOL and ABE providers lack capacity to meet demand • Basic work readiness skills programs are only available for those on public assistance, so those not on transitional assistance will need to find alternative ways to develop skills • Support and psychological service needs are not met due to lack of coordination among agencies • Job seekers lack the opportunity to develop current skill sets necessary to move from entry level jobs to similar or higher positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Job Readiness Process to assist job seekers in meeting the expectations of business customers • Increase capacity to assist job seekers with marketing themselves to prospective employers • Increase opportunities to link job seekers with community resources to support their job search process
<p>Transitional and Technical/Professional Job Seekers: Individuals who have been [underemployed] or displaced after long-term employment. They are highly specialized in industries with declining workforce requirements [i.e. telecommunications, manufacturing, software, computers, financial services] and seeking to maintain a comparable wage as they seek reemployment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the current labor market and job search requirements and techniques, assistance in career planning [networking, resume writing, transferable skills] • Updated job skills and certifications or retraining in skills needs to attain individual goals • Increased opportunities to demonstrate their competency and ability to learn • An ability to understand and apply current workplace etiquette • Financial management assistance because layoffs have threatened the financial security of a family • Family support to understand the effect of the unemployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive and integrated set of workshops designed to inform workers about labor market, job search techniques and workplace etiquette • Support for retraining and certification • Job development and placement • Assistance in career planning [networking, resume writing, transferable skills] • Support in securing financial assistance for additional training, certification and credentialing in new career skills • Identification of an referral to opportunities for retraining in skills to attain individual goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived image of transitional and mature workers limits job opportunities • Adaptive equipment or accommodations for employees makes it difficult for workers to succeed • Financial management knowledge while job seekers transition from unemployment to employment • Support for family unit during transition • Opportunities to apply transferable and newly-gained skills • Financial management knowledge while job seekers transition from unemployment to employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Job Readiness Process to assist job seekers in meeting the expectations of business customers • Increase capacity to assist job seekers with marketing themselves to prospective employers

Customer	What they need	Needs being met	Unmet needs	What needs to happen
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on family members • Adaptive accommodations to address special needs • Securing financial assistance for additional training, certification and credentialing in new career skills • Increased opportunities to apply transferable and newly-gained skills 			
Youth [age 18-21]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance in goal setting, securing resources and support systems, and attainment of short term goals • Basic education skills and knowledge • High School diploma or equivalent • Steady and relevant work experiences • Occupational skills or entry into post secondary education • Support systems in the absence of family, for providing emotional support and personal security • Support services from DSS, DYS, DTA, Probation, the courts and assistance is accessing these services • Assistance in seeking support for mental and medical illness [undiagnosed or untreated] • Assistance in coping with and eliminating violence in their current living situation from boyfriend, friends and family members • Life skills: budget and personal finance management, family relationships and parenting, planning, negotiation and mediation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to occupational skills training • Enrollment in programs that encourage attainment of high school diploma • Initial work experiences • Attainment of work readiness skills • Job coaching and job development • Advocacy for meeting basic needs and access to support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for basic needs in the absence of parental or family support • Attainment of high school diploma or equivalent credential • Acquisition of life skills • Career and life goals • Work readiness skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase opportunities to link job seekers with community resources to support their job search process • Create Job Readiness Process to assist job seekers in meeting the expectations of business customers

Appendix C

ValleyWorks Career Center Business Planning Team

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