

Worker Education and Training

Mission

To provide Hoosiers the lifelong learning and training resources they need to improve their skills, employment, quality of life, and standard of living, while providing employers with the highly skilled workforce they need to compete in the modern economy.

Summary of Activities

Worker education and training programs benefit people who are either unemployed or looking for a better job, as well as workers seeking education, training or career information. Employers who need workers, labor market information, or job training funds also benefit.

The **Department of Commerce (DOC)** Training 2000 program has provided funds for new and existing businesses to train and retrain Hoosier workers in basic, transferable, and company-specific skills. Over the past 10 years, over 80 percent of these training funds have been invested in the expansion of existing Indiana companies and retraining existing workers in new technologies.

The **Department of Workforce Development (DWD)** helps both workers and employers. By registering with the Customer Self Service System (CS3), either on the Internet or through a network of local workforce centers, job seekers have access to job listings, education, training, skills assessment, and career planning and counseling. Employers have access to the same network of information, helping them attract and recruit qualified job seekers, access training resources, connect with local schools, and meet affirmative action goals. Small businesses are eligible to receive grants for customized, on-site, job-specific training services for their employees.

DWD personnel are trained to provide readjustment programs to workers who are dislocated by sudden downsizing and plant closings, providing specifically-designed job training and career counseling services. On average, 12,000 to 14,000 workers per year are affected by major dislocation events across the state. DWD also researches and publishes extensive labor market information, identifying a variety of employment trends and statistics.

The IMPACT program administered by the **Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA)** is a welfare-to-work initiative that helps recipients of food stamps and income assistance achieve economic self-sufficiency through education, training, job search, and job training services. IMPACT is designed to address a broad range of barriers to employment, utilizing case managers to develop individualized employment plans, and providing supportive services such as transportation and child care.

External Factors

◆ The local worker training and education system is almost entirely federally funded, and federal resources have recently declined. Reduced resources threaten the ability to maintain services and improve technology to make those services more accessible. The majority of federal funding is contained in categorical programs that can only be used for people who meet narrow eligibility requirements. Some individuals may be served by more than one program. This makes it more difficult to focus resources on local needs.

◆ Each federal program has a unique set of data collection and performance standards and measures, making comprehensive measures difficult to achieve.



- ◆ Welfare rolls have declined dramatically over the last five years. However, those persons remaining on welfare often have the most significant challenges and barriers to gainful employment, requiring a more intensive package of services to achieve lasting self-sufficiency.
- ◆ The record low unemployment rate and resulting worker shortage will be keenly felt by businesses, as a large percentage of workers will reach retirement age in the next 5-10 years.
- ◆ The labor shortage requires employers to focus on upgrading and retaining their current workforce, but relatively little funding is currently available for incumbent worker training.
- ◆ Indiana's immigrant population is growing rapidly, creating a growing need for training in workplace diversity for employers and workers. Many new immigrants would also benefit from education and training ranging from basic English proficiency to the advanced skills needed to obtain high skill, high wage jobs.

Evaluation and Accomplishments



- ◆ Approximately 56,000 individuals who were registered in CS3 last year secured new or better employment.
- ◆ The number of job placements through IMPACT increased from 3,982 in 1993 to 27,349 in 1997.
- ◆ The *Advance Indiana* initiative makes funding available from four sources (3 state, 1 federal) to businesses to match their investments in training their incumbent workforce. DWD is currently conducting "Return on Investment" analyses to determine the value of this investment.

Plans for the Biennium

The O'Bannon-Kernan Administration will create the "Skills 2016" workforce development program, a joint partnership between the DOC and the DWD. This initiative will reallocate existing state and federal workforce training dollars as well as include new legislation that results in additional training dollars for DWD's portion of the Skills 2016 training fund. Three programs will make up Skills 2016. The Skills 2016 Grant Fund, administered by the DOC, will focus training investments primarily in high-skill, high growth occupations. The Skills 2016 Tech Fund, also managed by the DOC, will provide training for employees in the information technology sector. The Skills 2016 Advance Indiana Fund, administered by DWD, will place an emphasis on training that results in skill credentials and productivity enhancements.

