

Sector Strategy Initiative

Report

Ensuring that local industry employers have the skilled talent needed for our local community is vital to the economy of Stanislaus County.

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Sector Strategy Initiative

Report

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Summary



Focus of the initiative

Stanislaus County Workforce Development has contracted with Opportunity Stanislaus to lead the Sector Strategies Initiative, a community of businesses working together with government, non-profit and the private sector to build and contribute to economic success.

This initiative will address common challenges such as:

- High cost of on-boarding
- Skilled labor shortage
- Expanding the diversity of the workforce
- Employee training

The Sector Strategies initiative focuses on four industry sectors

Manufacturing • Logistics/Warehouse • Health • Agriculture

Our mission is to build a strong community of businesses that will help to determine local business needs, assist in developing a skilled workforce and strategize solutions.

By industry employers coming together and sharing common critical issues, educational partners can strive to meet employer needs at a greater level.

Significance of a Sector Strategy Initiative

Working within our community to establish and maintain talent pipelines by training local talent to be prepared for in-demand occupations. Teaching competencies needed by employers within the identified industries provides employment opportunities with sustainable wages or career ladders to self-sustaining wages for local workers and their families. It is in everyone's best interest who lives and works in Stanislaus County to ensure that local industry organizations thrive. Industry representatives, educational partners, workforce development entities and other community stakeholders have come together to develop a local sector strategy initiative to identify and implement actionable strategies to strengthen the local industries talent pipeline.

Introduction

Opportunity
Stanislaus surveyed over 130 employers from all four identified industries. They were asked to identify critical positions that were difficult to fill and the necessary skills needed for them



Identified critical positions

Manufacturing

- Maintenance & Electrical Mechanics
- Machine Operators
- Fabricators, Millwrights or Welders
- Supervisors or Managers
- Production Workers
- General Laborers

Warehouse/Logistics

- Class A Driver
- Sales
- Warehouse Operator
- Order Selector
- Lift Driver
- Maintenance Mechanic
- Sanitation

Agriculture

- Ag & Diesel Mechanics
- Sales & Merchandisers
- Truck Drivers
- Supervisors or Managers
- Quality Control
- General & Farm Laborers

Healthcare

- Certified Nurses Assistance
- Registered Nurse
- Medical Assistant
- Technical or Imaging
- Call Center
- Physicians
- Dentist
- Hygienist

Highlight of all surveys

- One common theme pushed to the forefront. Job Applicants are lacking the necessary Soft Skills needed to become and remain employed.
- 70% of employers surveyed reported job applicants are lacking industry knowledge or experience for the jobs they are applying for.

Findings

Common Critical Skills

130 Business' surveyed, shared these common critical skills that they believe are needed and lacking in job applicants and employees.

Problem Solving
Dependability
Team Work
Communication
STEM skills
Critical Thinking
Honesty
Time Management
Soft Skills

Manufacturing

- Attention to Detail
- Strong Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Teamwork
- Dependability
- STEM Skills (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)
- Flexibility
- Problem Solving

Healthcare

- Customer Service
- Strong Communication
- Leadership
- Operations
- Management

Warehouse/Logistics

- Adaptability
- Strong Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Time Management
- Project Management
- Team Work
- Calm Under Pressure
- Problem Solving
- Honesty

Agriculture

- Adaptability
- Strong Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Interpersonal Skills
- Dependability
- STEM Skills (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)
- Time Management
- Problem Solving



Sector Strategy Summits were held for each of the four industries. Survey Data was shared and current state of Industry Business' were identified and possible solutions were discussed. These were the common factors across the board for all industries

- All 4 industries are vibrant and provide many good paying jobs in our County.
- There is difficulty competing with Bay Area wages.
- There is a lack of local trained talent who posses the critical skills needed in our area.
- Some hard to fill careers lead to a high student loan debt
- There is a lack of willingness to stay long term by a large number of employees.
- There is not enough positive marketing for these industries as a great career or Career of Choice.
- More upskilling is needed for incumbent workers.

Solutions Offered and Selected by Business Representatives

| SOLUTION | RESPONSES |
|---|-----------|
| Improve Culture and Life/Work Balance to Attract more workers | 17 |
| Provide work experience for high school students to establish important connections | 12 |
| Pay scales to compete locally but also with Bay Area. | 17 |
| Provide Upskilling opportunities for Incumbent Workers | 19 |
| Work Closely with Educational Providers to ensure right skills are being taught. (LEAD) | 19 |
| Market as a Career Of Choice | 7 |
| Establish Career Pathways for all Employees | 8 |
| Look to Assessment testing to hire better candidates | 0 |

Survey Data was shared and current state of Industry Educators were identified and possible solutions were discussed. These were the common factors across the board for all industries



- More communication and documentation soft skills need to be taught.
- Not enough Work Experience for High Schoolers in these industries.
- More entry level training need i.e. CNA, use of Hand tools, machine operation.
- Need more local trainings for hard to fill positions.
- Need more CTE programs that match with industry career needs.
- Need more direction by Industry
- Need more coordination between local High Schools and Trad Schools
- Need better Marketing information for College and Trade Schools about who does what.

Solutions Offered and Selected by Business Representatives

| SOLUTION | RESPONSES |
|---|-----------|
| Listen to Employers | 9 |
| Learn to be nimble, flexible to meet needs of Employers | 8 |
| Work Collaboratively with other providers to ensure all skills are covered | 2 |
| Provide more critical thinking, problem solving and Soft Skills courses | 20 |
| Make sure training costs are affordable enough for local student population | 11 |
| Develop more funding opportunities for training | 8 |
| Make sure curriculum is relevant for current and future needs | 18 |
| Make sure we have ample and relevant CTE offerings in local high schools | 10 |

Question was asked of the same group of Industry representatives as to how can Economic Development and Workforce Development organizations do more to assist their needs.

Solutions Offered and Selected by Business Representatives

| SOLUTION | RESPONSES |
|--|-----------|
| Provide training dollars to those Educational Institutions that are meeting the demands of the Industries | 5 |
| Provide training dollars or Work Based Experience for adults and High School students-for non college students or adults | 4 |
| Be the bridge between industry and education | 18 |
| Provide Marketing and Awareness for Industries as a Great Career Choice | 17 |
| Support Industries in the community-with leaders, elected officials, etc. | 17 |
| Arrange for additional cluster trainings for Technical Skill Occupations. | 11 |

