



## Southwest Ohio Regional Workforce Development Study Identifies Job Vacancies and Training Needs

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January 4, 2008 – The Workforce One Investment Board of Southwest Ohio, in conjunction with the University of Cincinnati Institute for Policy Research (IPR), today released a job vacancy analysis of the tri-state area, including available workforce training and educational resources. The study, which was conducted in November and December of 2007, targets economic dislocation, including potential closings and layoffs of employees. The IPR surveyed businesses regarding job vacancies and job eliminations, while also surveying training and education providers regarding training programs in the region.

According to Beth Walter Honadle, Ph.D., IPR Director, “The research was focused on helping area employers, education and training providers, policy makers at all levels of government, and the general public better understand the workforce development needs in our labor market.”

Of the 366 employers who participated in the survey, 145 reported having some vacancies. A total of 1833 job vacancies and 183 planned job eliminations were reported. Most of the vacancies reported were for permanent, existing positions that do not require a special license or certificate and for which the companies do not experience frequent turnover. Most vacancies offer fringe benefits. Employers reported that over three quarters of the job vacancies are in positions for which they are constantly recruiting.

Employers identified the top three growth areas where most new hires will be made as: Healthcare, Manufacturing and Sales. Top job titles employers identified for new hires included: Registered Nurses, Nursing Aides, Orderlies and Attendants, and Sales Personnel.

“Employers mentioned repeatedly they are constantly looking for basic skills when hiring new workers,” explained John R. Nelson, Workforce One Investment Board Chair. “A strong work ethic, dependability, good attendance, computer skills, and writing and verbal communication skills are things that businesses weigh heavily when hiring. Employers seem to be willing to train recruits for particular jobs as long as they possess the aforementioned basic skills. Therefore, there appears to be an ongoing need in the region for education and training in specific workforce-ready skill sets, he said.

The IPR received survey information from 56 education and training providers and eight post-secondary institutions in the tri-state region. Training is available in a wide range of areas from adult basic skills and literacy to industry-specific training. The survey findings indicate 43 percent of education and training providers offer industry or skill-specific technical training and 41 percent offer job readiness training. A large majority of the education and training providers have excess capacity available.

However, it should be noted that only two of the organizations responding to the workforce survey reported that they offer training and education services that are specifically targeted to either individuals who are unemployed and last worked in the automobile related industry, or individuals working in an automobile related industry who have the potential of becoming unemployed.

According to Jeff Weber, Workforce One Investment Board Executive Director, “While the region continues to experience job eliminations in the automobile industry, the study results may indicate a gap between existing training and educational resources available locally and those resources that are needed to provide training for displaced auto workers.”

Data collected from the study will be made available to area educators, elected officials, employers, economic developers and chambers of commerce in an effort to insure that workers in a transitional economy are able to connect with retraining opportunities to redirect their career paths into sustainable workforce options.

The Workforce One Investment Board of Southwest Ohio is a three-county regional organization made up of leaders from business, education, labor and government, with the majority of its board members representing the private business sector.

The mission of the Workforce One Investment Board is to set the vision, policy direction and performance expectations for the regional workforce development system. The mission of the Workforce One Investment Area workforce system is to provide an educated and qualified workforce that meets the current and future needs of employers.

The complete study conducted by the University of Cincinnati’s Institute for Policy Research can be found at the Workforce One website: [www.swohiworkforce.com](http://www.swohiworkforce.com)