

I. IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION:

State Workforce Agency: Michigan Works
Name of State Contact: Jim Lautenschlager
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Approving State Administrator: John Scott, FPO, Chicago Regional Office

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of Program/Project Nominated: BEST (Business Enhancement Services and Training)
Nomination Category: Prism Award
Month/Year Initiated: June/2001
Is the nomination for: local program
If local, the name of the locality is: Berrien/Cass/Van Buren Counties

III. RESOURCE

Total Start-Up Costs: Direct: 0
Fund Source(s): 0
Indirect: 0

Total On-going Annual Costs: Direct: 0
Fund Source(s): 0
Indirect: 0

IV. SYNOPSIS (Narrative Section)

Name of file: d:\inetpub\wwwroot\surveys\BEST_1.doc

V. CRITERIA INFORMATION (Narrative Section)

Name of file: d:\inetpub\wwwroot\surveys\MICHIGAN_BEST_PROGRAM_1.doc

The Business Enhancement Services and Training process combines Economic Development and Workforce Development tailor services for the local business community that embodies the spirit of meeting the customer needs in a demand driven system. The BEST practices process uses a team approach to work with business, and specifically designs services, processes and training based on the fact finding element to address business challenges in the following and other areas:

- Employee turnover and retention rates
- Absenteeism and attrition rates
- Productivity
- Training needs
- Recruitment needs and success rates
- Organizational climate and labor relations
- How skill upgrade needs are identified and met
- Existing internal communication channels/programs
- A company's history and current market position

After determining that the BEST Employer Enhancement Process is the solution for the company, the team initiates a fact finding phase, followed by a customized workforce enhancement action plan. This plan identifies the resources it will take to implement the recommendation. A unique part of the Action Plan is a Cost Benefit Analysis Model that provides a mathematical calculation which indicates the ROI (Return-on-Investment) received by the business from the workforce system. The BEST process is designed to provide three types of services to business. First, the coordinator of the ERC can convene a team of on-site workforce professionals that can customize recruitment and training services for Economic Development Projects or business growth needs. Secondly, a team of workforce professionals who go on-site to work with employers who are rightsizing or downsizing. Finally, the BEST process has a Best Practices Component that drills down into the employers business practices to specifically address issues costing loss of profit. Efforts are coordinated with State, Local and County Economic Development to meet the needs of area employers. To date the BEST Program staff has worked with Economic Development on 65 plus major employer projects through five Employment Resource Centers. BEST is growing in scope, and size as the economic development and business community see successes over the past two years.



Business Enhancement Services and Training Process



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Overview of Project.....

Employer Services

Michigan HRDI (Human Resources Development, Inc.) has the contract with the Berrien-Cass-Van Buren Workforce Development Board to coordinate five Michigan Works Employment and Resource Centers (ERC's) with a focus to link business with the workforce development system. The overall program is called the Business Enhancement through Services and Training (BEST) process. The BEST process is designed to provide three types of services to business. First, the coordinator of the ERC can convene a team of on-site workforce professionals that can customize recruitment and training services for Economic Development Projects or business growth needs. Secondly, the coordinator of the center can also convene a team of workforce professionals who go on-site to work with employers who are rightsizing or downsizing. Finally, the BEST process has a Best Practices Component that drills down into the employers business practices to specifically address issues costing loss of profit. Efforts are coordinated with State, Local and County Economic Development to meet the needs of area employers. To date the BEST Program staff has worked with Economic Development on 65 plus major employer projects through five Employment Resource Centers. BEST is growing in scope, and size as the economic development and business community see successes over the past two years.

“Differences of perception v/s reality that cause harm to business is what BEST is designed to identify and solve”

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For more information on the program please contact the program coordinator or go directly to our website at <http://www.omw.org/>



Customer Comments.....



Minute Maid recently announced, *“That their PawPaw, Michigan, plant was the only site where they are able to use a **single source** to meet all their hiring needs.”*

John Hayduke, Plant Manager, Green Tree Composites, Inc., *“Extremely pleased with the results of the project and project that the project saved atleast \$40,000.00 with initial start-up costs. Would recommend the services highly.”*



Alro Steel was brought to the BEST program from the Economic Development Partner.”



Michiana Box & Crate, Inc. Gary Chevoic, Owner, *“Estimate a production value of 50 to 75 thousand dollars and would recommend the process to other employers.”*



Scott Aviation, Cheryl Molter, *“The team leaders are now functioning as team leaders and now I am able to work on other projects.” “The employees have developed a mission statement which gives them direction each day.”*

Mick Briede Vice President, Color Tech Inc *“ The BEST Process and services were invaluable in the start up of our newly relocated business. The can do attitude of the economic, workforce, and community development partners removed barriers and provided us with a qualified workforce that exceeded our expectations. We are encouraging other businesses to come to South West Michigan to experience this business first approach to services.”*

POTLATCH Andy Gravner Plant Manager, Potlatch Corp, *“The collaborative effort between Michigan Economic Development, Berrien County Economic Development, Michigan Human Resources Development Inc. and Michigan Works! has proven to be a driving factor in our company being able to find a quality workforce and to successfully compete in the market place”*

Joy Decker Plant Human Resources Manager, Creative Foam Inc. *“ The service provided to our company through the BEST process has proven to be a competitive advantage to us. The partnership has saved us money and identified resources we were not aware of before. Keep up the great work”*



Sheryl Stewart, Human Resources Manager, SBI Nuclear Cook Plant *“ This is an invaluable service to our corporation, it has provided us the ability to recruit and interview off site with prompt response for the center. The partnership between Michigan Economic Development, Berrien County Economic Development, Michigan Human Resources Development Inc. and Michigan Works has far exceeded our expectations. Keep this initiative going”*



Barbara Wielenga, Director of Administration, Special-Lite, Inc.

“Michigan Works! has been extremely instrumental in bringing Special-Lite qualified, diverse applicants. Great employees are the #1 reason we are proud and thankful to be a growing manufacturer in SW Michigan. In 2003, Special-Lite committed to 'grow our company' at our present location in Decatur. This commitment was made following a collaborative effort between our local, regional and state agencies to retain Special-Lite's current jobs and future jobs for the residents of this area. SW Michigan government is working together creating a friendly and welcoming business climate. Thank you to Michigan Works!, the Village of Decatur and Decatur Township, MEDC and Van Buren County's Economic Development Agent for supporting Special-Lite, Inc. and our employees.”



Amy Biggins, HR Generalist, Pemco Die Cast “ Michigan Works

and their partners have provided a valuable service in our hiring and training efforts. This has allowed us to expand our business with a quality workforce. The point person concept is user friendly and I would encourage this initiative to continue”



Don Carra, Marketing Manager, Bloomington Telephone Co.

“Michigan Works partnerships has allowed us to keep pace with the latest technology and training needed to survive in a highly competitive industry. Keep up the good services to area employers”