



**Board of Directors and Chief Elected Officials Consortium Meeting  
November 10, 2016  
Strategic Planning Discussion - SWOT Analysis**

**Board Member Participants:**

Andrew Breeding, Sysco  
Gary Keener, Dabney S. Lancaster Community College  
Janice Shanks, Everbrite  
Jeff Stapel, Shickel Corporation  
Jo Lee Loveland Link, Volvox, Inc.  
Jonah Windham, Vine Cottage Inn  
Linda Hershey, Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Mike Lowe, Sullivan Mechanical Contractors  
Samuel Insana, Neuman Aluminum Impact Division  
Steve Burnette, Hollister Incorporated  
Amy Judd, Lord Fairfax Community College  
Brian Brown, City of Buena Vista

**Chief Elected Official/Alternate Participants:**

Amanda Glover, Augusta County  
Claire Collins, Bath County  
Sam Crickenberger, Rockbridge County  
Pablo Cuevas, Rockingham County  
Bradley Polk, Shenandoah County  
Carolyn Dull, City of Staunton  
Terry Short, Jr., City of Waynesboro

**Board Member Participants continued:**

Corey Berkstresser, Lee Hi Vesuvius, Inc.  
George Homan, Friendship Industries  
Jackson Green, Goodwill Industries of the Valleys  
Jeanian Clark, Lord Fairfax Community College  
John Downey, Blue Ridge Community College  
Julie Goodlick, VEC, Fishersville and Harrisonburg  
Katy Parrish, Waynesboro/Region Six Adult Education Manager  
Kevin Hutton, Massanutten Technical Center  
Marco Pineda, Virginia Department of Labor and Industry  
Patrick Barker, Frederick County EDA  
Todd Cook, Virginia Department of Labor and Industry

**Guest Participants:**

Terri Bartnicki, Goodwill Industries of the Valleys  
Faith Simmons, Virginia Department of Labor and Industry  
John Loveland Link, Volvox, Inc.  
Rick Slusher, Virginia Employment Commission Northern Region  
Roger Mello, Page County Public Schools/PC Technical Center  
Clay Stein, Goodwill Industries of the Valleys  
Eric Fitzgerald, Rockingham County Public Schools  
Sinclair Hubard, Dept. for Aging and Rehabilitative Services



Question	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p><b>What are the strengths and weaknesses of education and training in the region?</b></p> <p>Group consensus was that if someone had an education and training need and knew who to ask for help, people would bend over backwards to help them. The group then discussed the deeper issue of what is the state of the workforce development in our region right now.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community colleges and vocational education and training providers are responsive to business needs</li> <li>Businesses are aware that education and training opportunities exist</li> <li>Career Coaches are well placed to provide career guidance for vocational training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical skills shortages, students do not have hands on vocational skills</li> <li>Students do not appear to understand career pathways and apprenticeship opportunities</li> <li>Productivity squeeze – limited time for education and training</li> <li>Emerging labor force lacks soft skills</li> <li>Workers lack motivation</li> <li>Training often exists but it is not utilized by people who need a job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop training programs and sell to businesses</li> <li>Develop career pathways models and provide to middle and high school teachers and counselors</li> <li>Develop soft skills and customer service training</li> <li>Career Coaches could do a more thorough job of informing young people of local career opportunities and career pathways</li> <li>Bundle foundational skills education with occupational training</li> <li>Employer commitment to increase employee attraction and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Length of time required for training is not working for people who need income</li> <li>Changing work ethic - people work to live instead of live to work</li> <li>Importing labor in lieu of developing the existing workforce</li> <li>Lower standard of employees, employers need them to show up to work</li> <li>Deficient inventory of high skill workers</li> <li>Not all employers embrace career pathways</li> <li>Funding for training is not sustainable</li> </ul>



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			retention through long-term education and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand summer workplace and after school programs to offer hands on experience to students</li> </ul>	
<b>What are the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Region has been successful in receiving federal grants for OJT and Apprenticeship initiatives</li> <li>Abundance of workforce programs available through the SVWDB, three community colleges with diverse programs, and technical schools</li> <li>Service providers are responsive and committed</li> <li>Collaboration with regional Economic Development Authorities provide strength and opportunity</li> <li>Program manager for Virginia Jobs Investment Program lives in region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of skills in high school students</li> <li>Lack of involvement in the SVWDB and workforce system</li> <li>Lack of information sharing within organizations</li> <li>Guidance counselors don't get it and don't engage in educating parents and students of all career opportunities (bachelor's degree or bust mentality)</li> <li>Lack of knowledge about and access to different types of non 4-year degree programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outreach to guidance counselors</li> <li>Enhancing knowledge of career opportunities among young people</li> <li>Develop a one page summary of all programs available</li> <li>Develop marketing materials to promote workforce development</li> <li>Create a central point of contact or gateway for workforce development activities for businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possible lack of future grant opportunities (federal and state level)</li> <li>Technical skills gap is going to continue to increase</li> <li>Inability to compete for economic development investments due to lack of skilled workforce</li> <li>Young people move away when there are no jobs</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training programs can be layered and used to leverage additional program and funding opportunities</li> <li>• Local K-12 school systems are recognizing that career readiness includes technical knowledge and skills that align to employer needs (Example: Rockbridge County Public Schools have a for credit apprenticeship program)</li> <li>• Valley Career Hub is a collaborative effort among the business, education, and economic development communities in the Shenandoah Valley to broaden awareness of high-demand, high-growth, high-wage careers in our region and promote local training opportunities for these careers. www.valleycareerhub.com</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Misconception about in-demand career opportunities and education and training required for those careers</li> <li>• Too many organizations involved, need one point of contact for workforce development</li> <li>• Community Colleges and technical centers not communicating on program development resulting in duplicate programs and confusion over options</li> <li>• Effectiveness of Virginia’s policy of administering federal workforce funding through the community college system needs to be explained to Chief Elected Officials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce development intersecting with an entrepreneurial mindset</li> <li>• Engage more youth</li> <li>• Assist companies with succession planning – companies are behind in planning for retiring workforce</li> <li>• Build a pipeline for talent development</li> <li>• Engage others who are not currently at the table</li> </ul>	



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<p><b>Assess our capacity to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment and the employment needs of employers?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity of organizations that support workforce development in region (SVWDB, community colleges, technical schools, state agencies, service providers and Shenandoah Valley Partnership)</li> <li>• Willingness and ability of stakeholder organizations and agencies to collaborate</li> <li>• Apprenticeship and other grants provide funds to break down barriers</li> <li>• SVWDB brand is well known and respected</li> <li>• Planning District Commission’s transportation initiatives assist people with transportation barriers to employment</li> <li>• Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center and the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services are huge assets to our region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient knowledge of all areas of need</li> <li>• Lack of a clearinghouse for data to support employers and educators</li> <li>• Reduced funding results in less funding to address barriers to employment (60% of Title I funding goes to training and restrictions on other funds limit support to people with barriers to employment)</li> <li>• Not utilizing an integrated resource team that includes employers to address barriers to employment</li> <li>• Lack of sufficient human resources to implement programs (grants often don’t</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tap into bilingual college student population for assistance with language barriers</li> <li>• Communicate about skilled trades opportunities</li> <li>• Expand apprenticeship program to other occupations where applicable</li> <li>• Provide Business Services Team with data resources to support employers</li> <li>• Look globally for successful workforce development models to expand opportunities</li> <li>• Refocus on urban area opportunities where loss of employment has happened</li> <li>• Expand education and training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State budget shortfall and unknown impact of cuts</li> <li>• Technology advancement is changing employment needs and traditional jobs are going away</li> <li>• Aging workforce is creating a void in skilled workers</li> <li>• Unemployment rate is low and employers are trading employees</li> <li>• Employers need employees who can pass a drug test</li> <li>• Jobs require experienced workers, but workers can’t get the years of experience needed</li> <li>• Underemployed workers don’t have time to upskill because they are working</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-12 educators awakening to the concept of education as a conduit for economic and workforce development (Example: Rockbridge County Public Schools has entrepreneurial program at the middle school level)</li> <li>• A focus on credentials in lieu of degrees</li> <li>• Shenandoah Valley Partnership (regional economic development organization) is a strong partner with a committed Education and Workforce Committee and an evolving Career Hub initiative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>include funding for staffing)</li> <li>• Silo mentality of K-12 systems (teach to SOLs and see college as only option to a good career)</li> <li>• Diversity of languages in the region creates language barrier to employment</li> <li>• Need stronger advocates for economic development in the region</li> <li>• Too many agencies involved in overlapping services.</li> <li>• Agencies provide a narrow focus on training and assistance.</li> <li>• Limited services are available to the service industry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opportunities in rural areas through distance learning</li> <li>• Seek opportunity to bridge transportation gaps through distance learning centers</li> <li>• Seek opportunities for new careers and new career pathways</li> <li>• Build on the Shenandoah Valley Partnership’s Education and Training Database model.</li> <li>• Agencies become more creative and adaptive and willing to work outside the existing boxes and actually provide the assistance needed.</li> <li>• Create a pipeline of able body employees for employers</li> <li>• Develop a partner’s manual that could be distributed to</li> </ul>	



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			schools, employers and community partners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide WIOA services to students with and without disabilities while they are still in K-12 to provide opportunities and direction at an earlier age.</li> <li>• Increase use of programs like Plugged In or Project Search (Project Search is statewide but has only been implemented at Augusta Medical)</li> </ul>	

Following review of the SWOT Analysis, two additional questions were presented to the group. Thinking in the context of being a revolutionary agent for change and increasing strategic board leadership, feedback was collected on the following questions.

**To increase strategic board leadership, I really wish we would.....**

- Positively influence the culture and work ethic of high school students preparing to enter the workforce.
- Seek total commitment from the Board of Directors and Chief Elected Officials.
- Find a way to communicate to schools what our employers need. Printable PDF that is easily updated.



- Engage the Board of Directors more in strategic discussions by using a Consent Agenda to free up time for strategic discussions.
- Use working committees who meet outside of regular board meetings to brainstorm, prepare ideas and strategies and bring them to the board for consideration.
- Get feedback from stakeholders and people who receive services to gain a better understanding of needs and barriers.
- Use technology to find out where stakeholders and service providers are getting their information.
- Engage employers more to understand their needs by hosting a Workforce Summit with feedback sessions. To avoid duplicating the efforts of other organizations, tap into Valley Business Summit or other similar events to identify employer needs.
- Bring intentionality to areas of greatest populations.
- Create 1 page publication to provide awareness of services to employers, schools, and career seekers.

**The group was asked what other questions need to be considered.....**

- Can we restart the business services team?
- Can we require elected officials to participate and allocate workforce services based on participation of elected officials?
- Who is missing at the table?
- How do we communicate what the Board does?
- How do we show value to employers for their participation on the Board?
- Is the public education system broken and how can we be a revolutionary agent of change?
- How do we offset lack of funding?
- Can we impact the troubling high school graduation rates?

**Additional Comments:** On December 6, 2016, the SWOT Analysis was emailed to SVWDB Board Members, Chief Elected Officials and Workforce Partners for review and additional comments.

**Board of Director Comments:** John Albert, Brian Brown, Rob Goldsmith, Samuel Insana, Katy Parrish, Janice Shanks and Robin Sullenberger commented that they were in agreement with the SWOT Analysis and had nothing to add. Carrie Chenery's comments were added to the SWOT Analysis.

**Chief Elected Official Comments:** Claire Collins, Amanda Glover, David Ash and Sam Crickenberger commented that they were in agreement with the SWOT Analysis and had nothing to add. Noah Simon's comments were added to the SWOT Analysis.

**Workforce Partner Comments:** John Jackson and Julie Goodlick's comments were added to the SWOT Analysis.