

Business Engagement Specialist

GENERAL DUTIES:

The Business Engagement Specialist is responsible for the development, delivery, and marketing of programs and services designed to meet the workforce needs of businesses. The Business Engagement Specialist will assist with establishing and maintaining relationships with area businesses, industry representatives, and community and training agencies that lead to career placements and/or workforce retention. Additional duties include, but are not limited to, participating in local and state workforce development planning activities that encourage greater involvement of employers and support sector-based programs and apprenticeship models.

The Business Engagement Specialist will have a strategic role in building regional talent pipelines, addressing skill gaps, and creating meaningful educational and career pathways for a range of workers in key regional industries in East Central Illinois.

The Business Engagement Specialist will be responsible for creating an aligned and coordinated approach to workforce development with a focus on enlisting businesses as a partner in the identification, development, and implementation of and investment in workforce solutions. A successful business-driven approach to workforce development will result in improved outcomes and a well-positioned workforce designed to meet the needs of employers both now and in the future. The Business Engagement Specialist will focus on area initiatives supporting the development of data-driven workforce training and education solutions to address the mismatch between the needs of employers and the skills gap of the current job seekers. The Business Engagement Specialist must have the ability to conduct labor market analyses, measure the availability and characteristics of the local labor force, and develop strategic workforce solutions.

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Establish relationships with regional employers to identify and address their hiring, training, and workforce advancement needs.
- Constitute and fully develop a Business Engagement Team led by key employers to determine competencies for training programs and alignment of priorities for workforce initiatives.
- Develop a fully functional business engagement strategy by focusing on targeted employers and in-demand industry sectors.
- Convey information about demand-driven training and employment services for job seekers and employer-driven training programs, certifications, and skill sets.
- Research and validate labor market and industry sector data and develop associated analytics for planning business expansion, relocation, future hiring, and training needs.
- Facilitate employer-driven hiring events and business roundtables.
- Work directly with employers to meet their needs with customized training, targeted apprenticeships, and lay off aversion resources.
- Support businesses and their employees through company layoffs, providing alternative career pathways.



- Effectively communicate the value-added benefit of utilizing the Workforce Connection's One-Stop Delivery System.
- Advance specific recruitment for new or expanding businesses or facilities that require a large number of specialized workers in a short timeframe.
- Support and advance an integrated approach to business-driven workforce development through effective marketing, public relations, and oral and written communications.
- Support development of a regional business strategy through collaboration with chambers of commerce, economic development specialists, and other key business partners.
- Research and understand the current regional economy, industry sectors; validate labor market information; real-time data; in-demand occupations and undertake demand planning.
- Deliver presentations to governing bodies, business groups, and economic development forums.
- Participate in statewide workforce development partnerships and related associations to effectively promote best practices in advancing workforce development solutions.
- Leverage public workforce funds with innovative private sector initiatives in order to achieve stronger results and to forge sustainable, mutually beneficial public-private alliances.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, CHARACTERISTICS AND ABILITIES:

- Bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, marketing or other related field with at least three years of progressively responsible experience; master's degree preferred
- Demonstrated leadership and decision-making competencies, strategic thinking and effective communication ability, and technical expertise in data management and analyses
- Demonstrated ability to conduct professional presentations
- Ability to develop comprehensive program strategies and business solutions
- Knowledge of local economic and employment opportunities
- Knowledge of local labor market information, including in-demand jobs, occupational skill sets, and wage expectations
- Knowledge of workforce development regulatory environment
- Knowledge of current local employment conditions and business practices in the public and private sectors
- Knowledge of public relations functions (for example releasing information to the media, connecting with civic organizations such as chamber of commerce, etc.)
- Knowledge of social, economic and community issues impacting area businesses and employment opportunities
- Ability to provide technical assistance to businesses concerning the processing of tax credit applications
- Ability to exercise judgement in interpreting data, applying legislation, and making recommendations and decisions when limited guidance is available
- Ability to compile, analyze and evaluate data in or to make suitable determinations and present findings in oral or written form
- Ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing with co-workers, employers, service providers, customers, diverse members of the public, and various community organizations and other governmental, civic, labor and public groups, including being sensitive to professional ethics, gender, cultural diversity and disability-related issues
- Ability to follow written and oral instructions with minimum supervision



- Ability to complete innovative funding proposals and deliver timely outcomes and measurable results
- Ability to work individually and as a team member
- Ability to implement concepts learned from training
- Ability to set work priorities and organize effectively to meet deadlines.
- Proficient in English (spelling, punctuation, grammar)
- Computer skills needed to complete documentation of services, data management
- Ability to obtain program specific certification(s) within twelve months (as assigned)
- Ability to attend program meetings and/or training as required
- Ability to work a flexible schedule to accommodate scheduling needs including periodic evenings and weekends
- Ability to understand the vision, mission, and values of CCRPC and to implement in everyday work
- Valid driver's license and ability to travel

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- Develop individualized business workforce solutions
- Travel to meetings, training, service delivery, and other work sites
- Provide direct engagement with businesses and related associations approximately 75% of workweek
- Travel and/or complete program related functions sitting/ standing at a desk approximately 25% of workweek
- Lift and carry equipment necessary to complete work, approximately 20 pounds

COMPETENCIES:

- **Motivation to Succeed:** The willingness to take self-directed or self-motivated actions to do more than is expected in the job with the aim of improving job performance and finding or creating new opportunities. Actively looks for challenges and is committed to meeting them. Enables others to acquire the tools and support they need to continuously improve their respective performance levels. Shows eagerness to develop. Is proactive in searching for new opportunities for both, himself/herself and for the organization, and follows up on these. Is willing to go beyond the requirements of the job and take on responsibilities that are not considered his/her own.
- **Strategic Focus:** The ability to consider the business, demographic, ethno-cultural, political, and regulatory implications of decisions and develop strategies that continually improve the long-term success and viability of the organization.
- **Collaboration:** Ability to work cooperatively with others, to be part of a team, to work together, as opposed to working separately or competitively. Collaboration applies when a person is a member of a group of people functioning as a team, but not the leader. Acts to promote good working relationships regardless of personal likes or dislikes; breaks down barriers across groups; builds good morale or cooperation within the team, including creating symbols of group identity or other actions to build cohesiveness; encourages or facilitates beneficial resolution to conflict.



- **Communication Proficiency:** Demonstrates the ability to speak to a variety of audiences in an effective and understandable manner; presents complex program related information to internal and external stakeholders; capable of communicating information in a variety of ways based on the audience.
- **Problem Solving/Analysis:** Even in the most complex situations, breaks down problems into their fundamental parts, identifies their root causes, analyzes costs, benefits, risks, and chances for success of potential solutions, and creatively attacks problems in ways that lead to innovative solutions.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

- Typically exposed to office noises and interruptions such as printers, phones, and clients. Office work will be performed in an open cubicle environment sometimes involving distractions
- Time away from the office involves driving to meet with business owners and community groups and may be subjected to noise, weather, and heat
- Frequent near-vision use for reading and computer work
- Evening and weekend availability is required as needs of the program dictate.

DISCLAIMER:

This document contains a description of a general class of positions within the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission Salary Administration Program. The description contains examples of duties and responsibilities that may or may not be considered to be “essential functions” to a particular job or position within this job class. “Essential functions” are to be determined at the position or job level within each department.