

## **Facilitation**

### **For creating Committee Recommendations**

- 1. Your facilitator has volunteered to help assure that your time is well spent and productive.**
- 2. The facilitator will remain neutral to the agenda and be non-judgmental about discussion**
- 3. Facilitation will help assure that everyone has an opportunity to participate and contribute. To help this process the group is encouraged to honor the “rule of three”, whereby the last speaker waits until two more people have spoken before speaking again.**
- 4. Differences of opinion are to be expected and help create a better product. We are looking for everyone’s ideas-there are no wrong answers. The facilitator’s job is to help participants find common ground.**
- 5. All of us are well served if we leave our ego at the door and bring our passion for breaking the cycle of poverty.**
- 6. The entire group is responsible for enforcing these rules.**

## **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION WORKSHEET GUIDELINES**

- 1. Each worksheet should contain only one recommendation.**
- 2. The statements on the form may be completed in any order and it is not necessary to complete every bullet.**
- 3. A committee recommendation worksheet can be updated throughout the next three meetings as final committee recommendations are developed.**
- 4. If necessary, work on recommendations is encouraged to continue between large group monthly meetings.**
- 5. Please provide a contact person for each uncompleted committee recommendation so that PPA staff can help provide support and follow-up between meetings.**
- 6. Once a committee believes that it has developed a strong committee recommendation and has provided sufficient detail, it should be turned in to the Committee Chair or e-mailed to [schristopher@fanning.uga.edu](mailto:schristopher@fanning.uga.edu).**

**If you have any questions you can contact Jim Geiser or Delene Porter at 706-542-1108.**

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION WORKSHEET

Fill in as many blanks as possible. Fields with an \* are required in case we need to contact you for clarification. Thanks for your interest and input!

Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone\*: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail\*: \_\_\_\_\_

### I. List the Learning(s) that this recommendation is addressing

- **WRITE THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION\*\* (limit focus to one subject or action item, more than one recommendation may be needed to address a particular learning ):**
- **Identify any research, or other kinds of information that was used to craft this recommendation. (add additional sheets as necessary)**
- **Identify additional research or information that could help clarify this committee recommendation. List potential sources if possible.**
- **Indicate people or groups that we need to talk to help clarify this committee recommendation. List any recommended locations.**
- **What kind of action or resources would be necessary to implement the recommendation?**

- **Indicate what forces and influences are likely to occur that will support or oppose implementation.**  
**Forces that support (please list):**

**Forces that oppose (please list):**

**\*\*As information is received and/or clarified, these potential recommendations may change or be discarded.**

## **Workforce Committee**

### **Learnings as published in Poverty in Athens: What We Have Learned posted on [www.prosperousathens.org](http://www.prosperousathens.org)**

- 1. Athens' workforce is not competitive and lacks needed skills.**
  - There is a deficit of “soft” skills (i.e. interviewing, timeliness, communication and commitment). Soft skills are considered by some employers as the most valuable skills.
  - There is a deficit of “hard” skills (i.e. reading, writing, math, technical skills).
    - Language barriers including literacy and English as a Second Language limit job advancement.
- 2. Sufficient resources are lacking to meet the training needs of the workforce.**
  - There is a need for increased vocational and technical training resources for adults and teenagers.
  - Lack of transportation, lack of child care, lack of job skills, lack of employment information, lack of immigration documentation, substance abuse and life-work balance issues can be barriers to seeking and gaining full employment.

## **RECURRING THEMES AND CHALLENGES**

**Learnings as published in Poverty in Athens: What We Have Learned  
posted on [www.prosperousathens.org](http://www.prosperousathens.org)**

- 1. The notion that there exists a welfare system that “pays people not to work” is a myth. Welfare reform has required that low income families with dependent children must be transitioning to employment in order to receive benefits.**
  - The total number of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families cases in Clarke County has decreased by 40% over the past two years.
- 2. High levels of poverty are a burden to those who live in poverty and work to undermine the economy of the entire community.**
- 3. Our institutions and systems have failed to develop collaborative strategies that adequately address the challenges of poverty.**
  - There is a culture of poverty in Athens that passes from generation to generation.
  - There is little innovation in developing new programs, opportunities and collaborations to break the cycle of poverty.
- 4. A good education is one of the major factors in helping to overcome poverty.**
  - An incomplete education—lack of high school diploma, GED, literacy in English, workforce skills, etc.—is a serious challenge to decreasing poverty in Athens.
  - Persons who drop out of school have few job options in Athens-Clarke County.
- 5. Athens has an unskilled workforce that is a barrier to economic development.**
- 6. There is a lack of effective coordination and collaboration among faith-based organizations, non-profits, schools, universities and government agencies.**
  - There are serious problems getting information to the public about existing assistance programs.
  - There is a lack of specialized support for immigrant populations.
  - There are gaps in services.
- 7. Effective strategies to address racism and class issues are lacking.**
  - In Athens-Clarke County the consequences of poverty fall mostly on African Americans and, increasingly, on our growing Latino population.
  - There is a hesitancy, by all races, to have honest dialogue about the impact of race and class as they relate to poverty.
- 8. There are disincentives built into various systems that make it difficult to break the poverty cycle.**

## **Workforce Committee**

### **Unedited Learnings as posted on [www.prosperousathens.org](http://www.prosperousathens.org)**

#### **Resources**

- Lack of capacity for actually training people for the workforce
- Disconnect between employer and employee relative to respective expectations

#### **Work Environment**

- There is a data mismatch in certain areas such as healthcare between published data on future jobs as presented by GA and industry expectations for such growth.
- There are many myths that exist in the work environment, e.g. every new plant manager automatically fires all those without a high school diploma.
- Language barriers do inhibit and limit the potential for job advancement.
- There are lots of jobs available in ACC; too few ACC residents are making themselves available to interview for those jobs.
- Parents do not know the new pathways to jobs that schools can make available to their children.

#### **Workforce Skills**

- There is a perceived deficit in “soft” skills
- Solid communication skills are critical for obtaining jobs and advancing in jobs.
- Literacy and ESOL are a challenge for the community -- >20% of the total population of ACC face literacy challenges.
- (No data) We don't know why those people in need of resources don't access those resources.
- Apparent lack of communication, coordination and collaboration among service providers in providing skills to those needing them.

#### **Special Populations**

- More time needed to review data in order to more effectively prioritize the learning.
- (No data) Does usage of temp agencies lead to regular employment or to underemployment?
- Business community prefer applicants with GED vs. community perception that the ZGED is less valued.
- The GED/High School Diploma is vital and can translate to success for the individual if there is access to other services such as transportation, child care, etc.
- There is an underutilization of available GA Department of Labor services.
- New immigrant populations really need specialized support in areas such as obtaining driver's licenses, child care, addressing immigration status, etc.

#### **Learnings by Subcommittee – Thematic List - Draft**

##### **Resources**

- Lack of capacity for actually training people for the workforce.

- Disconnect between employer and employee relative to respective expectations.

### **Work Environment**

#### **Workforce Skills**

- Solid communication skills are critical for obtaining jobs and advancing in jobs.
- Literacy and ESOL are a challenge for the community e.g. statistically, >20% of the total population of ACC face literacy challenges.
- (No data) We don't know why those people in need of resources don't access those resources.

#### **Special Populations**

- Business community prefers applicants with GED vs. community perception that the GED is less valued.
- There is an underutilization of available GA Department of Labor services.

#### **Workforce Environment Learnings – Discussion July 24 2006 Raw data**

- There is a mismatch of data in certain occupational fields – underestimates of need when compared with industry data in certain occupations
- There are numerous myths which pervade the work environment, e.g. the new plant manager firing those without a high school diploma on arrival
- Language barriers to inhibit documentation and limit potential for advancement.
- Having all-black or all-Latino shifts inhibits creating a cohesive workforce.
- There are a lot of jobs available in ACC; too few ACC residents make themselves available to be interviewed for such jobs.
- People seeking jobs do not see a clear pathway to a job despite substantial resources being available in the community to obtain a job.
- Parents do not know the new pathways to jobs that schools make available to their children.

#### **Skills Development Learnings – Discussion July 24 2006 Raw data**

Listed below are the learnings contributed by the Skills Development Subcommittee of the Workforce Development Committee. Items marked with "\*\*\*\*" are the four learnings identified as most significant. Items marked with "\*" were considered worthy of further consideration by half or more of the subcommittee.

#### **DATA:**

- \* Mismatches exist between workforce skills and available job requirements.
- \* Unemployment is low but poverty is high.

#### **NO DATA:**

- \*\*\* We don't know why the poor don't take advantage resources that are made available to them by government agencies and nonprofits. Most organizations reported that their resources are vastly under-utilized.
- \* How do the poor perceive the quality of the services provided to them?
- \* We don't know the workforce-related needs of small businesses because it appears they weren't included in the employer surveys.

#### **RECURRING THEMES:**

- \*\*\* There is a perceived deficit in the workforce's soft skill set.
- \* There is a perceived deficit in the workforce's hard skill set.
- \* High school students need training that includes or simulates job experiences.



\*\*\* There is an apparent lack of communication, coordination, and collaboration amongst agencies and nonprofit organizations that provide services to the poor.

ISSUES AND PROBLEMS:

\* There is a need for vocational and technical training resources for adults and teenagers who have exited or graduated from high school.

\*\*\* The workforce lacks communication skills and literacy. This deficit includes native speakers of English and those for whom English is a second language. Data indicates that 21 to 30 percent of the workforce exhibits functional literacy problems.

\* The economic value of government subsidies and services to the poor may be higher to some recipients than the economic value that can be derived by working at a low wage job.

**Special Populations Learnings – Discussion July 24 2006 Raw data**

- Need more time to review the data & see additional data before prioritizing.
- Absence of data: Does utilization of temp agencies lead to permanent unemployment or permanent underemployment?
- Business community prefers GED applicants over HS Diploma applicants whereas some community perception sees have a GED as second-rate.
- GED is vital to employment and can translate to success for the individual if there are support systems such a transportation, daycare, tutors, accommodations for individuals with learning disabilities, accessibility, etc.
- Underutilization of DoL Services
- New immigrant populations need specialized support/services, DL issue, child care, immigrant status, kids abandoned at the house, , panic mode/confusion over new legislation