



EDGE July 25, 2008 Meeting Recap

Global Trade

Proposals

- Formulate survey to be sent to businesses engaged in international business
- Create business model for international trade web site for the Peoria area

EDGE Feedback

Bruce Alkire commented that many smaller companies do not know how to get their arms around the global issue.

Dave Parkinson asked what type of information would be collected.

Answer: Are they currently exporting, percentage of business that is exported, which companies they export to, if they have overseas operations, if they import employees from overseas, what the outlook is for their business, education and training they desire.

Dave Parkinson suggested adding the questions: Do you think your business could begin to operate globally and what pieces are missing in order for your business to export?

Don White suggested adding: How do you do it?

Katie Kim suggested:

1. using the web program Zoomerang
2. going to a company that located in a different city and find out why
3. combining the global trade web site with another web site

Dan Daley suggesting asking a question re: international financing issues.

Michael Keck asked who will answer the questions/inquiries that come from the web site.

Vickie Clark stated the EDC is investigating integrating this webs site with the EDC's.

Marty Redshaw suggested contacting ADM in Decatur because of their exporting activities.

Marylean Abney and Chris Glynn will work to get a CAT committee member for the Global Trade strategy group.

EDGE Action

Bruce Alkire moved to send the proposal re: the survey to the EDC Board with the survey coming back to the EDGE board for approval. The motion was seconded by Dan Daly and passed unanimously.



Terry Kohlbus made a motion to go forward with the web site proposal including recommendations made in discussion. The motion was seconded by Michael Keck and passed unanimously.

Dave Parkinson asked the EDC perspective on strategy group web sites and their integration with the EDC web site. After discussion it was decided that the EDC needs to set a policy and bring it to EDGE for approval and dissemination to the strategy groups.

Specialized Manufacturing

Primary Challenge: Perception

- All too often the perception is that the heyday of US manufacturing is in the past, but nothing could be further from the truth.
- Truth is: North American manufacturers consider the United States the most desirable country for expansion over the next three years.

Solution #1 – Crafted a presentation template that allows businesses to deliver facts and information about careers in manufacturing. Manufacturers go to high schools to deliver presentations to targeted students.

Solution #2 – Developing a web site dedicated to careers within the manufacturing sector targeting youth, dislocated workers and parents

Other Efforts

- Applying for \$500,000 Department of Labor grant
- Aligning sector initiative with State and National manufacturing associations
- Recruiting more manufacturers to deliver presentations to surrounding high schools
- Planning career events at local manufacturers
- Developing a strategic plan for the sector's sustainability
- Benchmarking other training practices across the region

EDGE Feedback

Steve Jaeger noted that the strategy group had focused on work force issues and asked if they planned to talk about recruiting new manufacturers to the area.

The strategy group answered that companies at the table are interested in maintaining the manufacturing that is here currently and hope the web site will show other companies that this is a good place to locate.

Jeff Owens said the priority needs to be getting the work force solid and that trying to get new companies would get priorities out of order.

Jeff Owens commented the need is to market to the broad community of the advantages of manufacturing first then shore up the skills of the work force.



Carol Leach commented we need to tell kids what to do once we get them excited about the field...possibly by driving them to the web site.

Ray Lees said he was surprised that when local Jr. and Sr. high school students were asked what they did and did not like about the community, they were ignorant about what is available in the Peoria area.

Dave Parkinson suggested expanding to all high schools in the 3-county region.

Other questions/suggestions for further study:

How much money is needed to improve manufacturers' on-site training? What are the number of businesses, their needs and the amount of money they currently spend on training?

Identify how to most effectively prepare students/children/parent for this path – marketing and goal numbers.

What do businesses need and how do we make the training delivery system more efficient?

What are the major impediments for developing new skilled employees in this area (a list)?

Professional and Technical Services

Proposals

- Awareness campaign to promote the economic importance of the industry sector and the skills that are currently available in this region
- Retention and expansion strategies include conducting service provider company surveys to seek current and future growth needs

EDGE Feedback

Marylean Abney suggested the group look at the cyclical nature of the group since core businesses use them during certain times more so with upside of economy and less in an economic downturn.

Jim McConoughey described the "Red Carpet" team that the Chamber had in the past that would "host" professionals coming in to look at the Peoria region as a possible relocation site. He suggested the group investigate what sectors in the region need the most people.

Katie Kim mentioned asked if we can get behind the SkillsUSA organization (a partnership of students, teachers and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled work force)

Chris Glynn recently went to a SkillsUSA competition with Cameron Ferguson, Caterpillar Inc., Dr. Hershanna, District 150, Rachael Parker, Board Member, District 150 and stated there is a small chapter at ICC.



EDGE Action

While no formal action was taken, the inclination from EDGE was for the group to proceed with the proposed strategies.