

**Suggestion: Community-Based Skills Profile
Meeting of 26 June, 1998,
OEDC Boardroom
350 Albert Street, Suite 1720, Ottawa**

Minutes

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1. ATTENDANCE:

Organization	Name	Telephone Number
Investment Partnerships Canada (IPC)	Butler, Don	(613) 954-5490
	Foley, Mark	946-2182
	Woods, George	952-6352
Paquette Consulting/IPC	Paquette, Philémon	749-8503
Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC)		
- Ottawa HRCC	Brock, Pearl	998-0541
- Eastern Ontario Regional Office	Piccin, Franca	443-3321
Ontario Ministry of Education & Training (MET)	Kravis, Jeva	(416) 327-1767
Ontario Ministry of Economic Development Trade and Tourism (MEDTT)	Waddell, Anne	241-3841 x 226
Regional Municipality of Ottawa Carleton (RMOC)	Cross, Ian	560-6058 x 1595
	McCallum, Rob	560-6058 x 1710
Ottawa Economic Development Corporation (OEDC)	Kelly, Steve	236-3500 x 235
Ottawa Centre for Research & Innovation (OCRI)	Fillmore, Peter	592-8160 x 255
Ottawa-Carleton Training Board	Wall, Lynn	727-4723 x 5719
Biotechnology HR Council	Mohr, Heather	235-1402
Sectoral Skills Council/Electric & Electronic Mfg	Murtagh, Gregg	567-3036
Software HR Council (SHRC)	Swinwood, Paul D.	237-8551 x 133
Absent:		
CAMAQ, the aerospace HR Council	Tremblay, Serge	(514) 596-3311
Statistics Canada (STC)		
Workplace & Employee Survey	Tulloch, Paul	951-4044
Ottawa Life Sciences Centre	Lawless, Ken	592-8163

2. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND INTRODUCTIONS

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The proposed agenda was reviewed. Those present introduced themselves and their organizations

3. IPC PRESENTATION

IPC made a presentation on the nature of the problem and a possible solution (see attached document)

The nature of the problem highlighted that multinational investors considering Canadian locations want to know:

- a) About the community: Demographic, Employment and Education Information
- b) About the skills capacity: Numbers of individuals with specific levels of skills for specific sectors of the economy; the occupations within those sectors; and related wage and benefit rates.
- c) The problem: HRDC NOC and STC SOC are not up-to-date with current skills requirements of fast changing industries, thus historic data will not be able to yield any sense of the skills base which is out there, nor could it be used to project future needs.

The possible solution suggested was that:

- a) A community-based skills profile be developed
- b) A model for such a profile be piloted in the Ottawa Area over the Summer-Fall of 1998.

4. HIGHLIGHTS OF DISCUSSION

1. The Software HR Council has recently developed 21 occupational profiles which provide the detail necessary to track human resources requirements and to develop educational standards. It is now seeking a way to obtain data on how many people qualify in each.

Action: Paul Swinwood to provide details/clarification on the 21 profiles.

2. Sectoral Skills Council/Electric & Electronic Mfg concurred that a community-based approach would be most effective, as it has had some success with community

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involvement in establishing their skills profiles and offered their experience as a model for this pilot. It was also suggested that the Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists (CCTT) should be drawn on for a range of skills profiles or standards.

Action: Bring in the CCTT as appropriate for skill standards.

3. The Biotechnology Human Resources Council stated that they had not yet developed their skills profiles, albeit they know they have shortages in a number of specialties and are working on establishing profiles or standards.
4. The general understanding is that Statistics Canada and HRDC are both best at producing timely data at the national and provincial level, but that local or community data providing details on skills is difficult to come by, other than through the Census, which becomes dated quickly in rapid growth areas.
5. The contention is that for the investment decision, detailed skills data are needed. In addition, such data have to be transformed into intelligence to be used through analysis by those familiar with the local community and the sector.
6. Information on skills profiles of the employed, unemployed, and underemployed would be beneficial for each of the community partners; that is, for those soliciting investments, for those identifying education/training needs, for those managing income support programs (SA and EI), and for those tracking local sectoral needs.
7. The issue of forecasting skills requirements for planning purposes was raised. It was noted that the focus is on describing the existing workforce; that skill-needs forecasts have a shelf life of no more than twelve months; and, nevertheless, it is appreciated that longer term forecasts are desirable for educational and community planning.
8. Employers are constantly being asked to fill out surveys, and response rates are often poor. This observation highlighted the importance of employer involvement, and that whatever is done it will require a significant marketing effort to convince employers to participate. As well, it suggested that a community-based survey could be approached as a service to the employers; e.g., as they could direct all other requests for data to the administrator of this survey.

5. POINTS OF AGREEMENT

- ◆ There is currently a lack of data on human resource skills at the community level.
- ◆ Such data would be valuable for investors, educational institutions and economic

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development.

- ◆ The solution is obtain this data at the community level.
- ◆ If the development of a community-based skills profile is undertaken it must be:
 - a) On a continuing basis, e.g. annually
 - b) Contain a feedback loop of some kind to permit continuous improvement
 - c) Be based on national standards e.g. those of the National Sector Councils to permit:
 - Rolling up into provincial and national systems
 - Comparability with other communities
- ◆ There were two fundamental challenges which must be addressed in proceeding:
 - Defining the content of the data base
 - Identifying efficient data collection methods
- ◆ The data base should be designed so that each of the participating partners could derive what data they need from it.

6. POINTS WHERE AGREEMENT IS YET TO BE ACHIEVED

- ◆ The range of people who should be included in the profile, i.e. the employed (and which sectors), the unemployed, the underemployed and students.
- ◆ The range of sectors which should be included.
- ◆ People want one template for the knowledge and skills of individuals in the workforce, but do not know what that template should include (i.e. one template is desirable for simplicity, but Software alone has 21 profiles, or groupings. How can a simple template be created out of the multiple profiles? or, how can a survey of all those in all profiles be carried out simply?)

7. OPTIONS

There are many good data sources, including the Census, the Labour Force Survey, sectoral studies, media monitoring, etc. However, almost all suffer drawbacks of some kind, such as timeliness, level of detail and range of coverage. These valuable data can be made more useful through local processing on a regular basis to generate meaningful

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intelligence on the community's human resource skills.

Boiling things down, it is anticipated that there are two basis options:

A) 1996 Census Data:

Wait for the community level occupational data from the 1996 Census to be available for local level analysis. The data should be provided by STC by the fall and the analyzed data should be in use for 1999.

Currently, the Census data, supplemented by the monthly Labour Force Survey and other information, is the most current labour market information. In 1998, the 1991 Census data are used to generate community profiles. The 1996 Census data would be used for community profiles to 2003.

Advantage: The Census data are reliable, based upon Standard Occupational Classification, and may be considered sufficiently timely for relatively stable industries.

Disadvantage: Even if the local level occupational data for the 1996 Census were made available sooner, they would be too out-of-date to reflect the impact of fast growing industries.

Management: The analysis and development of the profiles could be done by local provincial officials (e.g., economic development and trade), local federal officials (e.g., human resources development), municipal/regional government officials and/or members of the local economic development group.

B) Community Level Data:

Develop the on-going capacity at the community level to supplement the nationally provided Census data with locally generated data on industry sectors undergoing rapid growth.

The Census data can be supplemented by timely, locally developed data on fast growing industries. To do so the community would identify which of its local industries are experiencing rapid growth and the skills needed to support projected growth.

For fast growing industries, annual updates would be important and the data, as well as the information/intelligence from analyzing it, would need to be maintained by the community.

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Advantages: Communities have distinct industrial structures and the intelligence on their own growth areas. Further, as investment decisions involve location selection, it is very advantageous that the community skills profile be developed and maintained by the community.

Disadvantage: The establishment of a new community level data gathering capacity raises leadership, management and funding challenges.

Management: Bring together the key players for the identifying the platform for the community-based skills profile and overseeing the data research, collection and maintenance include:

- community economic developers
- local labour market analysts
- employers/employer or industry associations

These three would have the *raison d'être*, mandate, local level intelligence and skills and the access to the source of information to develop and maintain the community-based skills profile. The other users of the information, such as educators/trainers and municipal planners, may also represent champions for having the data developed.

8. FEED BACK

Meeting participants are asked to provide comment on the minutes and the options, which Investment Partnerships Canada was asked to further develop.

With respect to the options, participants are asked to answer the following:

- a) Do you agree with the need for timely, detailed information on occupational skills at the community level?
- b) Do you agree that this need to not currently being met?
- c) Do you agree that the development of community-based data (similar to the outline provided in the previous section) would meet the need?

- ◆ It would be very much appreciated if your comments and answers were provided to Philémon Paquette (Paquette Consulting), 729 Morin Street, Ottawa, Ont. K1K 3G8; internet: philemon@netcom.ca; fax: (613) 749-8622. And may be telephoned at (613) 749-8503.

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9. QUESTIONS/SOURCES OF INFORMATION

1. In 1993 the Ottawa-Carleton Industrial Training Committee produced a survey conducted by EKOS Research which might serve as a model of a for a community-based survey, Franca Piccin is to obtain a copy for circulation to the group.
2. It was suggested that the Statistics Canada *Employment Earnings and Hours (72-002)* might serve as a useful source of data as special tabulations on small areas can be produced; in the same line special tabulations can be produced from the Statistics Canada *Business Register* providing profiles of the firms on a community basis. In both cases the specifics of what is wanted would have to be provided to Statistics Canada by fax (613) 951-0581, and they would advise in response to what extent they could fill the request, and the cost of doing so – albeit Industry Canada probably has access to this data base.
3. To address the targeted sectors, the Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists (CCTT) should be included as a source of occupational skills profiles, in addition to the Software Human Resource Council, the Biotechnology Human Resource Council, and the Sectoral Skills Council
4. Statistics Canada and HRDC's NOC may not be sufficiently accurate to be used, but to have continuity and comparability we must define terminology used, such as "intellectual environment", "knowledge base", "platforms", "frameworks", "templates", etc.

Submitted by:

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