

**St. Charles County
Workforce Development Board**

Soft Skills Task Force Meeting

Mission Statement

The St. Charles Country Soft Skills Task Force, a sub-committee of the St. Charles County Workforce Development Board, is focused on creating more awareness about the soft skills gap in today's labor force, promoting the importance of soft skills training and recognizing soft skills success stories.

Committee: Soft Skills Task Force (July 22, 2020)

Attending WDB Members:

Ben Abbott, Emma Jane Fox, Erin Williams, Jeff Cartnal, Jessica Bloch, Michael Hurlbert, and Tim Lewin

Attending Task Force Members:

Kathy Lambert, Connections to Success
Mandy Rose, St. Charles Community College
Rich Waligurski, St. Charles Community College
Sandy Keyser, Mo Dept of Mental Health

Staff: Lori Myers, Jenny Warren and Sharon Sontag

I. **Welcome/Introductions/Comments** – Erin Williams, Workforce Development Board Secretary

II. **Review of Minutes from January 20, 2020**

Ben Abbott made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Jessica Bloch seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

III. **Discussion of what safety protocols have been implemented and how that translates to retention of employees and the “trust factor”.**

- New entry level positions are currently hard to fill.
- People are staying at their current jobs.
- Once the additional Unemployment Programs end more people may start looking actively for jobs.
- The number of qualified candidates applying for jobs is down.
- There are issues with childcare, and the uncertainty of school going back to a classroom setting or the need to home school.
- Some employees can use FMLA to stay home with their children, but that typically is not available to new employees due to a waiting period for benefits.
- Right now, when filling positions, soft skills are not the priority in hiring candidates. The challenge is finding qualified candidates.
- The safety protocols put in place at work sites seem to work the best when there is open transparent communication.
- There are also procedures employers are putting in place that help take the stress off employees like wearing masks, limiting access to break rooms, closing the use of

conference rooms, working different shifts, adding touch screen kiosks, setting up plexiglass windows, completing new hire orientation virtually, holding training sessions virtually and allowing work from home.

- When safety protocols are published, and enforced employees feel more comfortable to come into work. They also feel safe to look and accept new jobs when safety protocols are enforced or positions that can be done virtually.

IV. Member Updates

- One of the positive things they have seen at Connections to Success is participation has increased by holding their trainings virtually. Once they can go back to face to face training, they will continue to hold trainings virtually as well as face to face.
- The Fort Zumwalt school district was able to allow staff to work from home due to the efforts of the technology team there.
- The St. Peters Job Center has seen an increase of daily visitors. The majority of the visitors and callers are looking for Unemployment assistance instead of job assistance, so it is challenging.

V. Adjournment

The next meeting will be on October 28, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. All meetings will be virtual through the end of the year.