



Business Relations Specialist

Reports to the Director of Business Relations and Economic Development

Job Summary:

Under the direction of the Director of Business Relations and Economic Development, assists in facilitating/implementing strategic job placement and layoff aversion initiatives such as On The Job Training (OJT), Customized or Incumbent Worker Training, Paid Work Experience, Job Development, Re-Entry, and Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) in underserved or underemployed areas. Coordinates and participates in workforce development events such as job fairs and resource fairs and serves as a liaison to the regional business community. Develops and maintains information regarding business and industry trends including employment opportunities and workforce training needs in Cook County.

Key Responsibilities and Duties:

Serves as primary administrator of employer/business services for the region's high growth, high demand industries, currently manufacturing, healthcare, transportation, distribution and logistics (IDL), hospitality, retail, information technology and business and professional services, as may be amended and updated from time to time. Responsible for the development and coordination of strategic, industry-focused initiatives that meet employers' evolving workforce needs.

Responsible for engaging local businesses and securing employment opportunities for The Partnership's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) delegate agencies and other clients.

Provides information to the general public, local governments and outside agencies explaining program policies and the provisions of business services tools such as OJT, Customized or Incumbent Worker Training and WARN.

May conduct overall workshop coordination and responsibilities for company layoff aversion and layoff events in response to WARN notices

Ability to manage a project from concept through implementation and wrap up , utilizing data, leveraging existing resources and/or developing innovative solutions.

Ability to collaborate with, and delegate to, others.

Assists in the development and distribution of materials notifying participants of hiring events.

Develops recommendations on the feasibility of projects aligned with the agency's workforce initiatives and/or the promotion of economic development and improvement to the communities served.

May serve as a liaison to regional bureaus of economic development (City or County) as well as local chambers of commerce and other business community organizations.

May research Labor Market Information for trends in high growth and demand industries.

Coordinates with program staff engaged in the duty of providing assistance to workforce development agencies and/or employers.

Assists The Partnership's executive staff in meeting reporting requirements with state, federal or local entities as directed.

Makes presentations; conducts or facilitates employer workshops and meets with employers individually to provide information on a variety of topics including, but not limited to: labor market information, local and/or state tax credits or incentive programs, and business regulatory requirements.

Explains and delivers specific programs and business services available to employers as part of WIOA and/or other programs, where appropriate.

Develops and implements services that are based upon the various identified needs of businesses such as: job posting and candidate outreach, specialized recruitment, applicant screening and assessment, job fairs, large scale interviewing.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree in Business, Public Administration or Social Services; OR, four (4) years full-time work experience in creating and managing projects in the field of Employment Training and Job Development OR equivalent combination of professional work experience, training and education.
- Minimum of one (1) year of professional experience in administering grant funded public programs is required; three years performing these job duties is preferred.
- Possession of a valid Driver's License and an automobile and current insurance or reliable transportation.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Characteristics:

Significant knowledge and experience engaging with business communities, high level executives, owners of small, medium and large sized businesses in the Business and Professional Services sector. Significant knowledge and experience with one or more of the following special populations and/or programs, i.e., Veteran's, Youth, Long-Term Unemployed and OJT programs.

Ability to coordinate workshops in specific workforce areas (including special populations such as youth, ex-offenders and veterans) by contacting employers and team members, gathering materials and providing information and serving as a moderator.

Ability to collect, track, and organize performance metrics, reports, and other available materials, and compile information with respect to economic development initiatives with a focus in Chicago and Cook County.

Manage a portfolio of short- and long-term projects and activities with minimal supervision, including compilation of information and materials, writing reports, and maintaining a timeline of activities; Significant knowledge and experience in project management.

Knowledge and ability to provide guidance and advice to businesses, community groups and organizations regarding training programs and job development.

Strong communication skills, both verbal and written form; ability to interact with others in person or by telephone.

Excellent critical thinking skills.

Good organization/time management skills.

Ability to provide technical assistance to service providers and/or employers.

Ability to interact with the general public, local governments and outside agencies explaining program policies and the provisions of the programs.

Ability to cultivate and maintain relationships both internally and externally with the workforce community.

Ability to identify errors, irregularities and illegal acts and take appropriate action.

Ability to work in a fast-paced, deadline driven, results oriented environment.

Ability to demonstrate tact and diplomacy in dealing with employee issues in a wide range of diverse situations.

Ability to institute problem solving techniques in diverse and sometimes emotional situations.

The duties listed are not set forth for purposes of limiting the assignment of work. They are not to be construed as a complete list of the many duties normally to be performed under a job title or those to be performed temporarily outside an employee's normal line of work.