

## Section 3.1 Employer Service

### Introduction

Since its inception, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board has followed a market-driven approach to serving both the employers and people of the region. We believe that an individual's job needs are best met by meeting employers' needs for a well-educated and well-trained workforce. As the source of jobs that people want, employers are the primary customer for Workforce Solutions.

In close cooperation with Board staff, Employer Service staff helps area employers with a variety of human resource needs – including sourcing talent for open jobs, providing professional advice and resources for talent development strategies, and offering reliable, current data on labor market conditions such as local wage rates and employment numbers by industry and occupation.

Workforce Solutions' Employer Service is driven primarily by economic rather than social-welfare considerations. It:

- Recognizes employers as the primary customers of the Gulf Coast workforce system
- Provides high-quality information and basic labor market information service for all employers
- Markets intensive labor market service to employers who will work closely with Workforce Solutions to develop workers to meet their current and expected future shortages
- Builds quality supplier/purchasing agent relationships with these employers based solely on the quality of service it provides
- Recognizes ongoing relationships based on trust as the most effective way to link public labor market service with employers needs and open avenues to jobs that would otherwise be unavailable to many area residents

Employer Service makes employers the lead partners in the design and delivery of long-term education and training for current and new workers. It provides employers with multiple points of contact, but gives them access to the same information and basic service regardless of where or how they contact Workforce Solutions. Employer Service reflects a climate of professionalism and quality.

Employer Service is also the primary arranger and provider of outplacement for employers who are experiencing lay-offs or downsizing.

## Current Operations

The approximately 65 current Employer Service staff members are housed in a central office (currently in Houston) and throughout the region in many of the local career offices. The staff includes:

- **Business Consultants** stationed in the central office and at career offices throughout the region are Workforce Solutions' sales force – marketing service to area employers and ensuring that service we promise to an employer is delivered.
  - ✓ Most consultants have geographic territories in which they maintain relationships with customers, economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, and employer associations.
  - ✓ Some consultants are specialists in key regional industries targeted by the Board and work directly with industry sector projects or industry associations to help employers in those industries or projects with their human resource needs.
  - ✓ Some consultants specialize in talent development strategies and assistance for employers, including funding talent development for specific employers with Workforce Solutions dollars.
- **Business Service Representatives** stationed in the central office take employer telephone, fax and email requests for service, answer questions about Workforce Solutions and general human resource and staffing issues, and provide information about labor laws. They data enter job posting information from businesses and help employers who prefer to data enter directly.
- **Other staff members** work with ongoing special projects to satisfy human resource needs of employers in the Gulf Coast region, including a special relationship with the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston and outplacement activities.
- The **Resources section of this proposal** lists the number of staff currently employed in Employer Service's central office, the number of Business Consultants, the offices they work in, the salary range and benefits allocated for a Business Consultant and the average workload.

# Expectations

## TREAT ME LIKE A CUSTOMER

- *Listen to me* so that you understand what I tell you that I need
- *Understand your system's capabilities* so you can suggest how you can meet my needs
- *Have a conversation with me* to check your understanding of my needs and set reasonable expectations for what you can deliver for me
- *Know your organization* - where and how to touch your system to make sure you deliver on your promised service
- *Keep in touch with me* so you know how I am doing
- *Be flexible* and adjust or change course if I am not satisfied or if my business needs change
- *Keep your own system informed* so I don't have to explain what I want or my concerns over and over to multiple different people

## GIVE ME A QUALIFIED CANDIDATE

- *Make sure I have a quality job posting* in WorkInTexas.com that will match to appropriate candidates for my jobs
- *Give me professional and helpful advice* about: availability of candidates with the skills I need; the usual salaries for people with those skills; how to attract good candidates; the best way to use your system to meet my specific needs; human resources issues like hiring and firing, reasonable accommodation, insurance
- *Inform me about the talent pool in the Gulf Coast area*, what skills are plentiful in our workforce and how you can help me locate people with the skills I need
- *Offer advice and help in developing new or current workers*. Provide me advice and suggest a plan when I express a need for training for my current employees or new employees – including finding ways to help me pay for the training.

Employer Service will:

- Sell and deliver Workforce Solutions service to businesses and following up to assure customer satisfaction and identify additional opportunities
- Establish solid relationships with area employers based on providing high-quality information and service that add value to the business
- Collaborate openly with career office staff to source, recruit and screen qualified candidates for employer's job openings by sharing information on employers' current needs for workers, labor market trends and feedback from employers
- Collaborate with Board staff to identify, design and deliver custom solutions for industry-wide skills shortages
- Collaborate with all system partners on projects and initiatives
- Identify and manage worksites for work-based learning, including but not limited to: paid and unpaid summer and year-round work experiences, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training opportunities.
- Operate a small internal service group to respond to employer requests including entering jobs into WorkInTexas.com.
- Assist the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston meet their human resource needs.

## Performance and Production

Employer Service is primarily responsible for achieving annual targets for the Board's performance measures related to employers – market share and customer loyalty. For 2017, those targets are set at providing service to 22,000 employers and 60% of employers served in 2016.

Production requirements include reaching targets set for talent development activities and work-based learning.

For 2018, the Board will set targets for market share in certain key regional industries, although those targets are not available now.

Performance measures and expected production targets are shown in the Resources section of this Request.

## Combinations

Organizations or individuals that bid to operate Employer Service may not bid to operate Career Offices, the Financial Aid Support Office, or the Financial Aid Payment Office.

## Successful Bidders

We expect a successful bidder for this service to be equipped to understand the human resource needs of business and demonstrate substantial experience in business-to-business sales and service. We also expect a successful bidder to show us:

- The ability to work as a part of a system-wide team to satisfy customers
- The ability to establish good employer relationships by delivering high-quality service
- The ability to listen to and understand an employer's expressed needs, analyze how Workforce Solutions resources might fill the need, and suggest appropriate services.
- The ability to ensure our system delivers the service promised to customers
- The ability to represent Workforce Solutions to the business community as knowledgeable human resource professionals
- The ability to expertly manage staff, operations and money

## How to Submit a Proposal

Submit your proposal in the following order:

- 1.0 Proposal Cover Sheet
- 2.0 Information about your organization
- 3.0 Information about your bid
- 4.0 Budget and staffing summary
- 5.0 Assurances and certifications
- 6.0 Copy of organization's most recent audit and audited financial statements

### Information About Your Organization

Provide the following information for us in a narrative that is no more than 11 pages:

1. A description of the organizational structure and why it is structured this way. Is the organization for profit or non-profit? Explain how this organizational arrangement supports Workforce Solutions business model. (no more than 2 pages)
2. An organization chart that shows graphically how your organization operates. (no more than 1 page)
3. Information about any governing boards such as a board of directors or advisory boards. Provide the names and terms of Board members. Include information about affiliated organizations such as subsidiaries or parent companies, and specifically describe relationships. (no more than 2 pages)

4. A list of the key staff for your organization. Identify the principals and leadership and describe their responsibilities, experience and length of service with your organization. Which principals, if any, would be assigned to work on Workforce Solutions contract? Who controls the management of your organization? (no more than 2 pages)
5. A description of your organization's mission, vision, and values, if you have them. Describe who developed them and how they were developed. How does your organization communicate the vision, mission and core values? How are they expressed in the organization? (no more than 2 pages)
6. A description of how your organization's mission supports that of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board. Describe how you will ensure that your organization's mission, vision and values will not supplant or confuse the Workforce Board's mission in operation of the project. (no more than 1 pages)
7. A description of your financial stability and any comments you wish to make about your credit rating, your payment policies, and any recognition you may have received from accrediting or other bodies for organization or financial excellence. Has your organization experienced any financial difficulty in the past five years? (no more than 1 page)
8. Include references from at least three organizations that have contracted with your organization to provide services similar to those proposed (name of organization, contact person, telephone/email, amount of contract, service provided).
9. A description of your organization's policies and practices related to Equal Opportunity and persons with disabilities. How will you ensure that facilities you control are physically accessible and the service you provide is accessible to individuals with disabilities?

## **Information About Your Proposal**

Provide the following information for us in a narrative that is no more than 28 pages:

### **Sales**

1. How will your sales staff work with the career offices to assure that you are not selling service we cannot deliver? (no more than 3 pages)
2. A large hospital is one of your assigned accounts. You have called the personnel office several times, but have been unable to get an appointment. What would you do next? (no more than 1 page)
3. You hire a new Business Consultant to work in Brazoria County. The new Business Consultant has grown up and lives in Alvin. She has been involved in the community for years. What would you do to help her establish herself as a representative of Workforce Solutions? (no more than 1 page)

4. A large manufacturing company just announced they would open a new facility in the Gulf Coast area. They will need skilled craft people, engineers, managers and support staff. Who do you approach to offer our help, how do you determine which of our services will likely benefit the company, and how do you make sure you don't offer more than we can deliver? (no more than 1 page)
5. There is no charge for most of Workforce Solutions employer services. How do you know whether Workforce Solutions sales force is successful? (no more than 2 pages)

### **Problem Solving**

1. You work hard to see that Workforce Solutions sends the most qualified candidates to fill postings listed in WorkInTexas. The career offices in your territory show you a large bloc of workers who are looking for jobs but don't have a lot of experience or skills. How do you provide high quality employer service and help this group of customers find good employment? (no more than 2 pages)
2. A staffing agency has asked to come into several Workforce Solutions offices to interview welders for ABC Company. The agency is one of several organizations, including Workforce Solutions itself, that supplies welders to the company. The pay and benefits for the welders differ depending on who will be the employer of record – the company or one of several agencies. How do you work with the staffing agency on the request to use the Workforce Solutions facility to interview? What do you tell the agency representative? (no more than 1 page)
3. You know from the news that a large school district is laying off teachers and other staff. What can you do to help these employees apply for openings in the region? (no more than 1 page)
4. During a meeting, the manager of an auto parts store tells a business consultant that the store is part of a chain with 20 locations in a 17-county area along the Gulf Coast. The manager says that all the stores always need counter people who have good auto parts knowledge. What is your next step? (no more than 1 page)

### **Management**

1. How do managers in Employer Service know that companies in the region are getting what they want and need from Workforce Solutions? (no more than 1 page)
2. How do you know if your business consultants are doing good work? How do you work with a consultant when you identify a weakness? (no more than 1 page)
3. As the economy improves, we are receiving more postings from area employers. Information about job openings comes to you by telephone, fax and email. You find that

you are unable to enter the postings into WorkInTexas within 24 hours as expected.  
What do you do? (no more than 1 page)

4. What attributes make a good business consultant? Why? (no more than 1 page)

### **Getting It Done Without Doing It All Yourself**

1. The Workforce Board expects Employer Service to serve 22,000 employers across the region. Explain how Employer Service and the Career Offices will work together to deliver results. (no more than one page).
2. A commercial construction company needs workers skilled in all the trades, helpers in the same trades, and engineers. Our applicant data files contain many helpers, some skilled trade workers, and few engineers. Consider all the resources in our system and tell us the most efficient way to fill this employer's needs. (no more than 1 page).
3. A small manufacturer tells you that it needs to upskill 10 current employees to work on a new product – and that it is having difficulty locating entry level machinists who can operate the machines the company uses. In addition, the current employees are limited English speakers and the company's supervisors have difficulty communicating with the employees. Describe your proposal to help this company with its needs. (no more than 2 pages).
4. Describe how you let staff throughout the Workforce Solutions system know what Employer Service is currently hearing from customers about their needs for skilled workers – what jobs are going unfilled, what skills most applicants lack, what issues customers are having with referrals from Workforce Solutions. (no more than 1 page).

### **Relationships with the Board**

1. Board staff includes liaisons and account executives who work directly with business-led committees in key regional industries, focusing on long term workforce strategies. Describe how Employer Service and the business consultant role effectively supports the liaisons and the industry sector committees (no more than 1 page).
2. Board staff brings to your attention a business consultant who is not working effectively with employers in the community. Describe your next steps (no more than 1 page).
3. Each Workforce Solutions contractor contributes one or more staff to the regional quality assurance monitoring team. How will you identify the appropriate person from Employer Service to work on the regional team? (no more than one page)



## Budget and Staffing

Use the Budget forms provided for Employer Service bidders and provide a narrative back-up which describes in detail your budget line items. Read the General Budget Requirements page in the Resources section before preparing a budget. Also provide us the following:

1. A completed staffing table. A form for the staffing table is in the Resources section of this request, labeled III.1. *Employer Service Staffing Tables*

If you will use funds from this proposal to pay for salaries of personnel not listed in the tables, list those positions in a separate summary, give the name of the current occupant of the position (if filled), and the amount and percent of the salary you will charge to this proposal.

2. Complete a budget, with a narrative back-up for each line item in the budget.

Career office contractors pay the facility costs for Employer Service staff working in a Career Office. UTMB does not charge facility costs for the special projects staff located at UTMB .

Direct services staff salaries and associated expenses include managers and supervisors at the office manager level and below.

Salaries and associated costs for managers above the level of office manager - usually managers who manage managers – are considered M&G costs.

If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs of any type, include the entire amount in the management & general/central administration budget.

Do not break out from management & general that portion of costs you expect to allocate to “administration” cost categories of federal or state funds.

3. The resources section of this RFP provides information about the following:
  - a. The current Employer Service office lease obligations will transfer to the organization awarded a contract to operate the office – Costs associated with this lease can be found in *Resources IV.1. Employer Service lease and communication information*
  - b. The current communications costs are listed with lease information.
  - c. The number of computers at the central office is provided for your information. You may assume that the office has a sufficient number of computers for staff use. Approximately 25% of the computers are refreshed each year.
  - d. Offices are fully furnished. The furniture will remain in the office regardless of the organization awarded a contract to operate the office.
  - e. Workforce Solutions franchise requirements specify that the Employer Service will staff five required positions. Their job descriptions include providing services

directly to our business customers. Current staffing by position is in *Resources IV.2*. Each operator must fill the required positions but may propose staffing levels you believe are sufficient to meet the Board's performance expectations.

*Note: A portion of the Employer Service staffing consists of individuals who are merit-staff Employment Service employees. Current salaries and benefits for these individuals are paid by the state.*

## **Assurances and Certifications**

Use the forms provided in this request. Be sure to include all required forms (certifications for debarment, lobbying, and drug-free workplace; Texas franchise tax; Texas state assessments; the general assurances and certifications; and the conflict of interest questionnaire), and be sure that all are properly signed by an authorized representative of your organization.

## **Audit and Financial Statements**

Attach a copy of your organization's most recent organization audit as well as audited financial statements.