

Delaware Workforce Investment Board

Strategic Action Plan

**Submitted for Final Approval
October 28, 2008**

**Annotated
Comments in blue**

**Delaware Workforce Investment Board
Initial Strategic Action Plan
May 2008**

Vision and Mission Statements

Organizational Values

Strategic Goal Descriptions

Priority Objectives and Assignments

Board Member Input summary

- Role of Board
- Proposed Objectives and Related Measures
- Issues
- Strengths of the Board
- Changes Necessary for the Board Itself

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Vision

The Leader in Workforce Development

Mission

A private/public partnership committed to improving the employability of individuals to meet the current and future needs of Delaware employers.

NOTE: There was some discussion regarding changing the wording of the mission
– see below

A private/public partnership committed to improving the career prospects of individuals and to meet the current and future needs of Delaware employers.

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Organizational Values

- Help individuals, employers and the community, including the hardest to serve, by preparing individuals for current and future job opportunities.
- Improving the employability of Delaware citizens and ultimately developing a stronger labor force to meet the current and future needs of Delaware employers focusing on Delaware Economic Development Office initiatives and labor market demand, as projected by Delaware Department of Labor.
- Maximize leveraging of public and private employment training and educational programs that will prepare the participants to earn a sustainable wage.

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Strategic Goals
(Desired end states)

1. Understanding Needs

Goal: We have a clear and continually updated understanding of the needs of our target population (prospective students); employers (jobs/occupations); and what development is needed to enhance connecting students with jobs.

2. Delivery/Results/ROI/Measures

Goal: Innovative delivery systems enhance the short and long term employability providing sustainable wages for our target populations; meet employers' workforce needs; and meet required and other defined measures.

3. Marketing/Awareness

Goal: Key stakeholders are aware and effectively utilize the services provided through DWIB's efforts.

4. Infrastructure

Goal: All aspects of DWIB's infrastructure will contribute to the highly successful achievement of our Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives. (Board composition; Committees; By-laws; Governance; Staff (DWIB); Staff (DOL); Staff (One-Stops); Operations; Facilities).

5. Vision, Mission Goals, Objectives

Goal: Ensure annual objectives are in alignment with Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives within current Strategic Plan.

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Priority Objectives and Tasks

(As decided at the April 24, 2008 DWIB Planning session)

Understanding Needs

1. Objective: Identify employment trends and occupations where employers have the greatest hiring need. (Objective C)

Tasks

- a. Conduct a survey of employers regarding skill needs, projected hiring, training needed, and expectations regarding worker supply.
- b. Compare survey results with DEDO Cluster analysis (Auto and Associated Plastics, Bio and Tech, Health Science, Chemistry, Financial Services, Tourism.
- c. Develop on going method to update labor and economic information
- d. To the extent possible compare supply of workers with specific skills with hiring projections by occupation - accounting for growth and replacement needs
- e. Per DOL/ETA representative there is currently \$300K available in Delaware for specific Labor Market Information strategic Analysis and the potential of an additional \$400K

Assignment

Committee Chair: John McMahon & Staff

John McMahon to write the Secretary of Labor to elicit support of this initiative and other Board initiatives.

Staff: DOL-DET and DWIB staff

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Delivery/Results/ROI/Measures

2. Objective: Champion a key industry cluster in Delaware and convene partners and industry cluster leadership around the selected industry clusters.
(combination of Objectives I, J, and Q)

Tasks:

- a. Decide on the industry cluster to feature
 - o Most critical need
 - o Interest of industry
 - o Projected growth or shortages
 - o Lends itself to enhancing career prospects of entry, skilled and incumbent workers
- b. Create a soft skills/job readiness/ retention training so candidates meet employer expectations.
- c. Identify Business Leaders in selected cluster and seek a “champion” from the industry to lead cluster initiative.
- d. Identify current and future training and educational needs
- e. Develop training for new and incumbent workers
- f. To determine need seek to quantify worker supply (i.e. projected number of qualified individuals) with hiring projections.
- g. Assure that cluster strategy is aligned with current Blue Collar and WIA training investments.
- h. Engage DOL One Stop system in employer outreach, candidate recruitment and implementation of new training strategies.

**Assignment: John McMahon & Jeff Bross
Executive Committee, Supplemented with Industry Cluster leaders,
stakeholders, community college representatives
Staff: DWIB**

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3. Objective: Enhance the pool of qualified workers for business and serve the full range of Delaware workers including the entry, skilled, incumbent and transitioning worker. (Objective E)

Tasks:

- a. With employer feedback develop longer term training.
Focus upon career ladders i.e. ‘chunks’ of training that provide key competencies and certifications in order to enhance career prospects.
 - Obtain results of employer survey (see second task under first objective under John McMahon’s assignment.)
- b. Create job search training
 - Research training programs currently available.
- c. Identify criteria that would justify direct investment in training. E.g. Factors such as wage, career prospects, benefits, employer commitment, and employer investment. Consider incorporating some or all of the criteria in training proposals RFP.
 - Identify key industries to illustrate potential benefits
 - Select criteria appropriate to these industries
 - Develop metrics associated with selected criteria
 - Develop projections
- d. Develop a resource map of resources available (WIA, Blue Collar, special population grants, TANF, employer contributions, incentive funds, support services available in the community, etc.)
 - Assign DOL staff the task of researching current resources
- e. Perform an analysis of workforce needs
(Contact John McMahon to move to his task list since he has a duplicate task)
- f. Explore apprenticeship models
(Committee should evaluate the importance or viability of this task)
- g. Use Cluster Initiative as a “marketing story” to educate employers about the value of the DE workforce system
(Contact Pat Creedon to discuss assigning this task to her committee)
- h. Identify best practices among state and local WIBs. Lessons learned, funding strategies, service mix, partnerships.
 - Identify areas of interest to the committee to provide focus

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- Use our consultant to provide best practices.
- i. Include DEDO in Rapid response events
(This appears to be an issue for DOL and DEDO to resolve)
- j. Create a capacity at the One Stop to reach out to business, perform preliminary assessment and share services offered by Delaware.
 - Identify current capabilities at One Stops
- k. Consider allowing employers to provide training internally
 - Review Maryland's efforts

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4. Objective: Promote small business development and entrepreneurship.
(Objective M)

Tasks:

- a. Connect with DEDO efforts
- b. Develop entrepreneurial training; engage Small Business Administration
- c. Create a small business incubator and/or better connect incubator to workforce/One Stop delivery system
- d. Provide training to Small Business employees (e.g. supervisory skills, labor law, human resource management, skill assessment, business leadership, accounting, marketing)
- e. Identify ways to infuse capital into promising ventures.
- f. With any approach assure that cultural competency is infused.
- g. Link Rapid response with DEDO efforts
- h. Identify palette of potential business services (for fresh entrepreneurs and for existing small businesses seeking to grow) and determine what is needed in Delaware.
- i. Conduct a resource review of what is currently available and add partners that are currently engaged in providing entrepreneurial services.
- j. Create business service capacity in workforce/One Stop delivery system.

Assignment:

Committee Chair: Judy McKinney-Cherry, Rob Lau, Ken Anderson
DE Economic Development Office - Judy McKinney-Cherry has identified DEDO Staff (Ken Anderson) to lead effort
Staff: DWIB

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Vision, Mission Goals, Objectives

5. Objective: Draft a transition report to the Governor and Governor Elect which includes a DWIB Vision/Strategy that outlines key objectives, challenges, partners and benefits. (Objectives: U, V, Y, Z)

Tasks:

- a. Create a strategic planning committee with the Executive Committee as its core and add key industry, educational and community stakeholders.
- b. Write plan that reflects current strengths, resources and strategic goals and specific program objectives that reflects the support of industry, the legislature and agency partners.
- c. Create timeline for necessary board actions so that a plan is available for presentation no later than 10/1/2008.
- d. Identify ground level staff to include as necessary
- e. Strengthen the connection between DE DOL/DET and DWIB
- f. Review platform of gubernatorial candidates to learn positions on workforce and align the plan with these broad objectives.

Assignment:

Committee Chair: Sandy Johnson

Board Development & Strategic Planning Committee

Staff: DWIB

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The following objective was not selected for action by the Board but received 6 votes and was mentioned a number of times. Promoting the DWIB and the Delaware workforce system would support the plan's acceptance by the Governor.

6. Objective: Substantially increase community/business awareness of the DWIB and its initiatives.

Tasks:

- a. Create and publish and post on website services offered by the DE workforce system. (include DEDO and workforce services and Blue Collar program)
- b. Create goals and mission and present to all One Stop staff
- c. Create generic PowerPoint and present workforce services to staff of other client agencies and business organizations (e.g. social services, aging, state and local chambers, industry and trade associations.
- d. Share success stories on the website of DEDO and DWIB participants that benefited from training. Feature an employer that benefited from the services.

Assignment:

Committee Chair: Pat Creedon

Public Relations & Outreach Committee

Staff: DWIB

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Delaware Workforce Investment Board

BOARD MEMBER INPUT SUMMARY

Delaware Workforce Investment Board
Board Member Input Summary
April 2008

Background: The Board responded to a series of questions about the Delaware Workforce Investment Board. The information on the following pages reflects that input.

1. In general what do you think is the primary role of the Delaware Workforce Investment Board?

- The Workforce investment board's primary role is to help build a better workforce for Delaware by partnering with schools, training programs, employers, etc to develop and implement workforce training and re-training. The DWIB's role also includes assisting in funding these efforts.
- To oversee the allocation of funding, the evaluation of performance measures for each organization that receives funding and to promote the mission of the Board.
- To provide a focal point to facilitate the delivery of coordinated and integrated employment, training, education, and economic development activities and services in order to maximize the impact of scarce resources for the benefit of the citizens of Delaware.
- To ensure that Delaware citizens who are in need of improved job skills are afforded the best training possible at the least cost and have an opportunity to increase their wages.
- To serve the hardest to serve, link businesses to the job-training available and as a source of employees.
- The primary role of the Delaware Workforce Investment Board is to meet the employment needs of Delawareans, and to enhance the performance, productivity and competitiveness of local business and industry by providing services, support and occupational skills training for the unemployed, underemployed, and dislocated workers in the State.
- To oversee Workforce Investment Act activities and leverage with partners around training and workforce development opportunities
- In collaboration with State agencies (DOL, DOE, DEDO) and business leaders, facilitate job/economic growth within the state by supporting job training programs and educational opportunities geared toward the target populations under WIA.
- Mission of the board is to work in furtherance of the employment of the citizens of DE, in alignment with those priorities of government and private sector industries.

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- Improve the quality of the Delaware workforce and enhance the living conditions of Delaware's workers and potential workers.

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Board Member Input Summary
April 2008**

2. List one or more objectives that you think the Delaware Workforce Investment Board should be focused upon in the next year.
3. For each objective listed above state how (a measure, observed outcome, etc.) the Board and community will know the objective has been achieved.

Objectives as stated by the members are aligned with the Delaware WIB Strategic Goals

Number in red equals number of members that considered the objective one of their top three

1). Understanding Needs

Goal: We have a clear and continually updated understanding of the needs of our target population (prospective students); employers (jobs/occupations); and what development is needed to enhance connecting students with jobs.

- A. Providing transparency as to the effectiveness of the programs by posting the objectives and achievements of funded entities. **0**

Measure: Create a website that would contain a list of all those who applied for funding, who received funding (and how much) and update the success measures of each of these programs as they continue.

- B. To actively seek out businesses to tap into the resources available and train the workforce for the jobs that are need. **4**

Measure: A listing of all the businesses that either hire from the DWIB or initiate training would be highlighted in the newsletter and/or the brochure.

- C. Identify employment trends and occupations where employers have the greatest hiring need. **6**

Measure: Survey results - Survey employers to determine employment trends and occupations, and report results to training and education providers so that needed job training programs can be developed and readily available to address the workforce needs of employers.

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- Invest in youth training programs to assist them in acquiring the skills necessary to become a productive citizen. 0

Measure: TBD

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Board Member Input Summary**

Objectives and Measures continued

2). Delivery/Results/ROI/Measures

Goal: Innovative delivery systems enhance the short and long term employability providing sustainable wages for our target populations; meet employers' workforce needs; and meet required and other defined measures.

D. Look to add more new programs to the funding stream so the money is not given to the same providers. **0**

Measure: Compare percentage of funding to new programs vs. the total and vs. the previous year.

E. Find ways to serve not just the neediest workers but those that could benefit most from the training from the perspective of overall benefit to Delaware and Delawareans. For example: provide training to a worker who is currently earning well above the poverty line in a field that may attract new higher paying employers. **7**

Measure: A percentage of funds are made available for higher levels of worker training.

F. Create new jobs with livable wages by encouraging existing industry to stay in Delaware and expand. **0**

Measure: Statistical data - Increase in the number of new jobs created within existing industries.

G. Improve the employment potential of the non-English speaking unemployed and underemployed by supporting programs that teach individuals to speak, read and write in the English language. **1**

Measure: Statistical data & survey (Employee and Employer) - Increase in the number of English as a Second Language unemployed and underemployed individuals that secured and retained employment or increased earnings through job advancement, as a result of learning to speak, read and/or write in the English language.

H. Improve the employment potential of the unemployed and underemployed by supporting programs that teach individuals basic skills, including basic reading and math. **0**

Measure: Statistical data & survey (Employee and Employer) - Increase in the number of unemployed and underemployed individuals that secured and

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retained employment or increased earnings through job advancement, as a result of learning to read and understand basic math.

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Objectives and Measures continued

2). Delivery/Results/ROI/Measures (continued)

I. Champion one or two industry clusters in Delaware in addition to WIA activities. **10**

Measure: When we are connecting with business to provide jobs and training in the cluster(s) we have identified.

J. Convene partners around the selected industry clusters **(Combined with I)**

Measure: When we are connecting with business to provide jobs and training in the cluster(s) we have identified.

K. Improve training provider performance. **0**

Measure: All providers meet 90 day placement goals.

L. Investigate how the economy is impacting our performance measurements and be proactive in staving off such: **0**

Measure: Focus on group(s) of employment opportunities and create program (s) to support stronger employment, healthcare, dislocated workers.

- Re-train the Chrysler workers and others who have lost their jobs due to plant closings, etc., so that they can maintain a productive life. **0**

Measure: Outcome can be measured by a follow-up study to ascertain the well-being of the displaced worker and the satisfaction of the new employer.

3). Marketing/Awareness

Goal: Key stakeholders are aware and effectively utilize the services provided through DWIB's efforts.

M. Promote small business development and entrepreneurship. **9**

Measure: Statistical data - Increase in the number of new jobs created within existing industries.

N. Be more competitive in attracting new industry and business to Delaware, especially companies that require a trained/skilled workforce. **0**

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Measure: Statistical data - Increase in the number of industries and businesses that are new to the State.

Delaware Workforce Investment Board Board Member Input Summary

Objectives and Measures continued

O. Substantially increase community/business awareness of the DWIB and its initiatives. **6**

Measure – Increased volume of inquires to the DWIB staff about the DWIB’s work, primarily from employers.

P. Understanding the strategic goals of the Economic Development Office, including the One Campaign in the Governor's Initiative and how to connect to the goals of DWIB. **0**

Measure: Alignment among the partnerships, private sector industry and Economic Dev. Office. Survey of members regarding what they might need to create strong partnerships, partner with Univ. of DE office of Entrepreneurship for partnership on its goals.

Q. Look to innovative ways to further employment priorities of industry and government. **0**

Measure: TBD

4).Infrastructure

Goal: All aspects of DWIB’s infrastructure will contribute to the highly successful achievement of our Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives. (Board composition; Committees; By-laws; Governance; Staff (DWIB); Staff (DOL); Staff (One-Stops); Operations; Facilities).

R. More participation by Board members at meetings and funding presentations. **0**

Measure: Tracking attendance and participation of board members at events.

S. Strengthen and reinvigorate the uniqueness of the co-administrative entity structure by increasing the interaction and joint planning between DWIB and DOL/DET staff. **0**

Measure: Regular staff meetings, joint agendas for Board meetings, joint planning, joint problem resolutions, joint understanding and appreciation for USDOL program requirements, and joint understanding and adoption of Board priorities.

T. Improve the participation of board members especially during the proposal review. **0**

Measure: Each proposal review committee has at least five participants.

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Board Member Input Summary
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Objectives and Measures continued

U. Form a strategic planning committee consisting of training and education providers, the Workforce Investment Board, Delaware Economic Development Office and the Department of Labor, to support the timely development of new educational programs that will enhance the quality of Delaware's workforce and attract new businesses, as well as expand existing businesses in the State. **7**

Measure: Statistical data - Increase in the number of new training and education programs that were developed to meet the job training needs of employers; increase in the number of new businesses; increase in the number of expanded businesses.

V. Succession planning for the Board (transition to new Governor/administration in 2009)**3**

Measure: Execute a seamless transition between the current DWIB and new members (e.g., no total "start over" efforts by new members, nor a loss of momentum on worthy initiatives in place or planned in the near future).

W. Improve the level of participation in the DWIB by employer representatives.

Measure: Increased attendance at the DWIIB quarterly meetings, coupled with increased levels of active participation on the various DWIB committees. **1**

X. Board Development and interest (orientation and recruitment of new members to fill open slots). Have a discussion regarding industry and how DWIB might support the industry with its programs. **0**

Measure: Within 30-60 days of appointment to board, have orientation. Assign them to committee work.

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Objectives and Measures continued

5). Vision, Mission Goals, Objectives

Goal: Ensure annual objectives are in alignment with Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives within current Strategic Plan.

Y. Stand ready to present DWIB Vision/Strategy to new administration (request the opportunity to do so)

Measure: Workforce development has been written into the governor's priorities for Delaware.

Z. In light of the worsening economic and financial environment, evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, future challenges, and strategic goals of the Delaware workforce development system in order to position the DWIB in front of the incoming governor.

Measure: Production of a DWIB white paper detailing the state of workforce development in Delaware with recommendations for future actions to present to the incoming governor.

ZZ Distribute Transition Report to Governor Elect.

Measure: Report Distributed

Objectives were combined and had **10 votes**

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4. From your perspective list the significant current workforce and economic issues that Delaware is facing. (E.g. employer participation, funding, service mix and needs, etc.)
- Delaware is transitioning from a 20th century economy to a 21st century economy. How do we ensure the DWIB is assisting this transition?
 - Employer participation has been low. Improvement is needed
 - Population served is challenging
 - Delaware government is facing a shortfall over next 2 years
 - Maintenance of effort with reduced funding. Need to prioritize services and new initiatives – can't be everything to everybody and be successful.
 - Lack of regular, timely, targeted, and longitudinal labor market information and analysis.
 - Lack of a mix of training opportunities to meet current job seeker and employer needs.
 - Lack of understanding of the range and inter-relationships of the programs and services provided by the Delaware one-stop system.
 - Real estate values are still declining or have not reached bottom.
 - Some manufacturing jobs will continue to be lost particularly in the auto industry.
 - Employers are requiring more technically proficient workers.
 - It is difficult for many workers who have lost their jobs particularly in blue collar positions to transition to jobs that pay similar wages.
 - The state budget problems do not help us address the issues above.
 - Training funds are limited.
 - Employer participation is still weak. Funding is always an issue. Performance levels from the Fed are unrealistic for our mission of hardest to serve. We need to encourage new providers to apply for the grants and have a goal of at least one or two new service providers a year.
 - The economic setback that individuals and businesses suffer as a result of businesses leaving the State, sustained escalating energy costs, and State budget cuts.
 - Shrinking resources that limit access to occupational skills training programs for financially at-risk unemployed and underemployed Delawareans.
 - The growing need for health care workers, coupled with severely limited capital funding from the State, limits the community college's capacity to educate potential students.

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- The need to provide skilled workers for the emerging field of energy management.

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Question 4 (workforce and economic issues) Continued

- The need to leverage the shrinking workforce against the growing population of retirees by providing skills-based training and incentives in order to fill job vacancies.
- Connectedness to Business. Knowing what they need and being flexible to manage to their needs (funding not flexible)
- Examine alternative funding sources to augment the federal (WIA) and State (Blue Collar) funding streams (e.g. foundations, etc.)
- To help DE continue to be an attractive location for employers to establish work sites, pursue actions that will support alignment between employer needs for skilled labor and the training/educational programs available to individuals in the labor pool. The labor force must possess the requisite credentials/competencies to meet employer-staffing requirements.
- Addressing H.S. dropout issues through aggressive prevention programs, and where unsuccessful, channeling youth to alternative education programs and/or job training programs.
- Due to a downturn in the economy and the looming lay-offs, we should give greater concentration on those companies that have reported closures and/or downsizing and the number of people affected. This should be in concert with Economic Dev. Office. One great concern with people is foreclosures. We can address that by special partnerships with housing counselors, The Delaware Mortgage Assistance Program (DSHA), and making sure the public is aware of available solutions.
- The biggest problem in Delaware today is the loss of employment opportunities.

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5. Regarding the Board itself list the strengths of the current Board and its functions.

- The board has broad participation from a number of sectors and is professionally managed.
- The diversity of the Board with representation of all areas (Government , business and education
- Overseeing and conducting the budgeting and selection process for contracted services – WIA youth services and State Blue Collar adult and youth services.
- Board members are fairly diverse and are very experienced and knowledgeable.
- The proposal review process seems to work well and is fair.
- The board has a good working relationship with the department of labor staff.
- The executive director, Gwen Jones is the best person we have had in that position since I have become involved with the board. Her staff is also very capable too. All are very dedicated to the DWIB's mission and goals.
- DE is lucky to have one board for the entire State. We have decision makers and good, highly qualified Executive Members as well as Board Members.
- All of the individuals who serve on the Delaware Workforce Investment Board are genuinely interested in helping Delaware's unemployed and underemployed to secure gainful employment at a competitive wage in order to support themselves and their families.
- Very strong committee involvement and commitment
- Being a small state with one WIB Board
- Competent, motivated DWIB staff (e.g., Exec Director, Deputy Director & Admin Assistant),
- Support provided by dedicated, highly knowledgeable DOL DET staff,
- Core group (albeit small) of veteran DWIB members who understand the political, economic and community issues of the state
- We have Strong committee Chairs. Performance measurements should be achieved in the majority of indicators/groups. Dedicated and talented staff support.
- The greatest strength of the current Board is its diversity. Because I am a new member, it's really difficult to assess.

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6. Regarding the Board itself list one thing that you think needs to change or improve so the Board is better able to meet its mission and fulfill its objectives.

- More participation from high-tech/bio-tech entities.
- The Board needs to become more actively engaged. Only a few are doing all the work.
- Delaware is unique in that the responsibilities for administering workforce development programs is shared by a co-administrative entity comprised of the Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training and the DWIB. Because Delaware is a small state with limited administrative staff resources, and because, as with most volunteer boards, it is the staff that makes things happen; it is critical that there is a strong working relationship between the DOL/DET and DWIB staff. We need to strengthen and reinvigorate the co-administrative entity structure by increasing the interaction and joint planning between DWIB and DOL/DET staff.
- More recognition from the business community, the Governor and both houses that what the DWIB does is important to the state.
- We need more Board Members to visit One-Stops, businesses, and really all the players to show their commitment. If the goal is to have more business participation, putting a Board Member from business in front of them shows our commitment and gives them a resource for questions and comments.
- That the Board insists our service delivery agent make the effort to understand the board's goals and objectives
- Improved participation and interest in DWIB activities by all appointed members of the Board – both private industry and public agency representatives.
- Board members need to be able to suggest how we can do things in different ways, allowing results that are very connected to alignment of partnerships with Government and private industries.
- It's imperative that the members understand what the Workforce Act enables the DWIB to do, while also maintaining a firm understanding of the activities and infrastructure of the DWIB and how it connects to employment with DOL.
- Assuring that the DE Dept. of Labor, DWIB fiscal agent, is accountable to DWIB in the operational matters and in opportunities that support grants for innovation and such.

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- Often, when I tell people that I've been appointed to the WIB, there are blank stares. The fact that such a panel exists and that the function and mission of the panel is strange to the public is puzzling. In other words, advertise.