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A Study to Determine if the Center for Workforce Development Provides Adequate and Affordable Training Programs for Employers in Lee, Wise, and Scott Counties and the City of Norton

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**A STUDY TO DETERMINE IF THE CENTER FOR
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES
ADEQUATE AND AFFORDABLE TRAINING
PROGRAMS FOR EMPLOYERS IN LEE, WISE,
AND SCOTT COUNTIES AND THE CITY OF
NORTON**

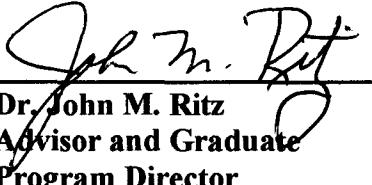
**A Research Project
Presented To
The Graduate Faculty Of The Department Of
Occupational And Technical Studies
Old Dominion University**

**In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the
Master of Science Degree**

**By
Mitzi M. Williams
August 2004**

APPROVAL PAGE

This research study was prepared by Mitzi M. Williams under the direction of Dr. John M. Ritz for OTED 636, Problems in Occupation and Technical Studies. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science Degree in Occupational and Technical Studies.

Approval By: 
Dr. John M. Ritz
Advisor and Graduate
Program Director

9-30-04
Date

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To my husband and two sons, many thanks for all your support and encouragement during this time. Your patience for the many hours I spent at the computer was greatly appreciated.

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Mitzi M. Williams

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval Page.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Table of Tables.....	v
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Research Goals.....	2
Background and Significance.....	3
Limitations.....	4
Assumptions.....	4
Procedures.....	5
Definition of Terms.....	5
Overview of Chapters.....	6
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	7
Goals of the Center.....	8
Certification and Re-Certification Training.....	8
Pre-Employment Training.....	10
Customized Training.....	11
Computer Training.....	11
Human Resource Training.....	12
Workforce Skills On-Line.....	13

	Partnerships.....	13
	Summary.....	14
III	METHODS AND PROCEDURES.....	15
	Population.....	15
	Instrument Design.....	15
	Methods of Data Collection.....	16
	Statistical Analysis.....	16
	Summary.....	17
IV	FINDINGS.....	18
	Survey Results.....	18
	Summary.....	30
V	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	31
	Summary.....	31
	Conclusions.....	32
	Recommendations.....	34
	REFERENCES.....	36
	APPENDICES	
	Appendix A, Center For Workforce Development Training Survey.....	38
	Appendix B, Cover Letter to Employers.....	42

TABLE OF TABLES

Table 1: Mine Training Programs.....	19
Table 2: Health Care Training Programs.....	20
Table 3: Computer Training Programs.....	21
Table 4: Human Resource Training Programs.....	22
Table 5: Employer Specific Training.....	23
Table 6: Workforce Skills On-Line.....	23
Table 7: Other Certification Training Programs.....	24

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1995, Mountain Empire Community College established the Center for Workforce Development to provide training programs and services to businesses, industries, and governmental agencies within the college's service region. The college's service region includes Lee County, Wise County, Scott County, and the city of Norton. The goals for the Center for Workforce Development are: prepare workers for new jobs moving into the region, provide the existing workforce with new and upgraded skills necessary to compete in the world marketplace, and promote economic development in the region. (CWD Operational Plan, 2003) Although the Center for Workforce Development has conducted numerous training programs and services for organizations within the Mountain Empire Community College's service region for the past eight years, several organizations have contracted with consultants or trainers outside the service region (or even the state) to provide them with training services.

In addition to maintaining its goals, the Center for Workforce Development is a self-supportive unit of MECC. State funds are not provided to operate the center, and only three of the five full-time positions are funded by the state. The Center is required to generate a specific amount of revenue each fiscal year and to maintain a profit of at least 30% on all expenses incurred.

In order to determine if the Center for Workforce Development is obtaining its goals, it is necessary to evaluate the current training programs and services to determine if they are adequate and meet the needs of the businesses, industries, and agencies in the MECC service region. The Center also needs to determine if employers contract with

others to provide training because the training is not provided by the Center. Also, it is important to determine if the training provided by the Center for Workforce Development to the workforce is affordable. If the training provided is not adequate and affordable, the Center will be unable to meet its goals and generate the budget required to operate.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to determine if the Center for Workforce Development provides adequate and affordable training programs for employers in Lee, Wise, and Scott Counties and the city of Norton.

RESEARCH GOALS

To solve this problem, the following research questions were established:

1. Does the Center for Workforce Development provide adequate training for the existing workforce?
2. Does the Center for Workforce Development provide affordable training for the existing workforce? Does the employer provide tuition reimbursement for job related training?
3. What areas of training are the most difficult to procure? Why?
4. What procedures are recommended to improve the training of employees in the Lee, Wise, and Scott counties and the city of Norton? What programs provide the most benefit to employers in the MECC service region? What programs provide little or no benefit to employers in the MECC service region?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Center for Workforce Development is dedicated to providing quality, state-of-the-art training programs to businesses, industries, and governmental agencies in the MECC service region. In order to provide this type of training to organizations, the Center for Workforce Development must maintain current, up-to-date equipment and software programs that are compatible with current business and industry trends throughout the MECC service region. Instructors/trainers must be extremely knowledgeable and competent in areas that pertain to the organization's training needs.

The Center also seeks to support economic development efforts throughout the service region by meeting with industry prospects to discuss training needs and the various types of services that can be provided to assist new industries in meeting workforce needs. In order to accomplish these goals, the Center for Workforce Development must know what the needs of the service region are, as well as the ability to maintain the equipment, software, and instructors to provide quality, state-of-the-art training. Without this information, organizations would not receive the training they need and industry prospects will hesitate to locate in an area where appropriate workforce training is unavailable.

Since the Center for Workforce Development was established, no formal research has been conducted to determine if the training programs offered are adequate and meet the needs of the workforce. The only information collected by the Center, so far, has been classroom evaluations, which measure the student's perspective on the effectiveness of the instructor and the material presented during training. A formal study of employers'

needs and attitudes of the training provided by the Center for Workforce Development would be a valuable tool in assisting the Center in determining what type of training programs should be available to meet the needs of the workforce. It will also be helpful in determining which training programs need to be updated or re-designed.

LIMITATIONS

This research study had the following limitations:

1. The information was obtained from different types of employers in the MECC service region, i.e., manufacturers, mining, health care, public school systems, governmental agencies, call centers, etc.
2. The information regarding existing training programs was limited to employers who had participated in a specific program in the past.
3. The information collected did not include every employer in the MECC service region.

ASSUMPTIONS

This research study was based on the following assumptions:

1. A select group of employers will be willing to participate in the study and provide information regarding their workforce training needs and costs.
2. The Center for Workforce Development will need to re-design some of the existing training programs, as well as adding new curriculum to the list of topics available.

PROCEDURES

Research data collected in this study came from employers in the MECC service region who were willing to participate in the study. Surveys were used for data collected and included questions regarding the quality of existing training programs. Questions were also asked to determine the need for new training programs, as well as the affordability of these programs.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms have been defined in order to provide clarification to the study:

- MECC – Mountain Empire Community College
- MECC service region – areas in Lee County, Scott County, Wise County, and the city of Norton
- Employers – the representatives of companies that participated in this research study
- Employees – individuals who are employed by businesses, industries, or governmental agencies that participated in the survey
- Instructor/trainer – an individual who provides specific information on a certain topic or assists in teaching a specific skill to employees in the workforce
- Training program – a collection of training topics or skills for which instruction is provided

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

This research study consists of five chapters. Chapter I provides background information into the establishment of the Center for Workforce Development and its goals. It defines the service region of Mountain Empire Community College and describes the guidelines under which the Center operates. Chapter I also discusses the significance of determining whether or not the Center is achieving its goals. The basis for this study is found in Chapter I, as well as the research goals established to solve this problem. The background and significance of this study is described in this chapter, and the reader is informed of the limitations surrounding the research. The researcher's assumptions are stated in Chapter I and the procedures for collecting the research data are described. A definition of terms is also provided in Chapter I to provide clarification to the study.

Chapter II is a review of the literature. This chapter presents information relevant to the Center for Workforce Development. Chapter III describes the methods and procedures used to gather information for the research. This chapter will explain the instruments used to collect data for the study. Chapter IV reports the data and findings of the research study. In Chapter V, the summary, conclusions and recommendations are reported. This will determine what changes the Center for Workforce Development will need to make regarding training programs and services.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The goals of this study were to determine if the Center for Workforce Development provided adequate training for the existing workforce; if the Center provided affordable training for the workforce; if the employer provided tuition reimbursement for job related training; what areas of training were the most difficult to procure and why; what improvements could be made to the training of employees in Lee, Wise, and Scott counties and the city of Norton; what programs provided the most benefit to employers in the MECC service region; and what programs provided little or no benefit to employers in the MECC service region.

The Center for Workforce Development was established in 1995 to focus specifically on the training needs of businesses, industries, and governmental agencies in the MECC service region. A review of literature was conducted in order to determine the types of training programs and services that are currently offered by the Center, as well as workforce training needs that have been identified nationally.

The existence of a well educated, highly skilled workforce is a tremendous asset in securing new industry into a community. Employers are looking for employees that are multi-skilled and can learn new skills with ease. More than that, they want a workforce with strong work ethics. Community colleges must stay abreast of the needs facing their economy in their service region in order to develop training programs that prepare employees to meet the needs required by employers. The inability to accomplish this task renders the community college ineffective in serving the training needs of the

community. This chapter reviews the current programs offered by the Center for Workforce Development to employees in the MECC service region.

GOALS OF THE CENTER

The Center for Workforce Development was established in 1995 to support the economic development efforts in the MECC service region. The goals of the Center are: provide the existing workforce with new and upgraded skills that will enable them to compete in the world marketplace; prepare the workforce for new jobs; and promote economic development in the region by meeting with new industry prospects to discuss their training needs and meeting with existing industries to determine if additional training or retraining is needed (CWD Operational Plan, 2003). The Center must stay abreast of current industry trends, as well as predictions of future trends in order to prepare training programs that will meet the needs of the workforce.

CERTIFICATION AND RE-CERTIFICATION TRAINING

The MECC service region contains a variety of business and industries that require various types of training programs in order to successfully compete in today's economy. Many businesses and industries must provide training to employees in order to meet state and federal training requirements or to keep certifications up-to-date. This is particularly true for the mining industry and the health care industry. Employees are required to complete certification training and retraining in order to be eligible to

maintain employment. The mining industry has strict state and federal requirements in relation to employee certification and training. The Center offers a wide variety of mine training so employees can meet regulatory guidelines and maintain their certification. Courses include: Surface and Underground New Miner; Surface Retraining; Underground Retraining; Electrical Retraining; Diesel Retraining; General Miner; Virginia State Laws; Mine Foreman Certification for Underground and Surface; Mine Foreman CEUs; First Aid; Emergency Medical Technician; Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation; Dust Standard; Refuse and Impoundment; and a variety of OSHA training (Whisman, 2003).

The health care industry is also required to meet certain training guidelines. The Center offers training that is designed for both the experienced and inexperienced healthcare provider. These classes aid practitioners in maintaining current skills, as well as developing new skills. Often, current students and recent graduates in the health care field will take advantage of classes offered by the Center in order to upgrade their skill level and increase their employment opportunities. Health care training offered by the Center includes: Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS); Cardiac Dysrhythmia Recognition; Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS); IV Infusion Therapy; Emergency Medical Technician - First Responder; CPR (Basic Life Support); First Aid (American Red Cross); Lab Interpretation; Phlebotomy CEU Course; and AHA Basic Life Support Instructor (Dorton, 2003).

Other re-certification training offered by the Center includes Firearms Re-certification; Security Guard In-Service; Private Investigator In-service; Real Estate

CEUs; and Insurance CEUs (Collier, 2003).

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

In today's society, a highly skilled, trained workforce is a driving force in a strong competitive economy. It is also a key to acquiring new businesses and industries into the region. When new industry prospects know the existing workforce has the skills they are looking for, or can receive the appropriate quality training needed, they are more likely to move into that area. Pre-employment training can provide the existing workforce with the skills necessary for employment in a particular industry before they are hired. The Center has worked with companies such as Tempur Production USA, Inc., Sykes Enterprises, Inc., Gilbert-Lumber Inc., and Super Sack Manufacturing Inc. to provide pre-employment training to potential employees. The benefit of pre-employment training is tremendous to the company and the individual. It gives both a chance to see what the other has to offer without making a commitment of any kind. During pre-employment training, a company is under no obligation to hire a participant, nor is the participant under any obligation to accept employment if it is offered to them. Generally, funds are provided by the Virginia Department of Business Assistance to cover the majority of the training costs for companies that qualify. Therefore, the company does not have the high cost of training a large number of new employees and the participant is not required to pay anything to participate in the training. It works out to be a win/win situation for both parties (Collier, 2003).

CUSTOMIZED TRAINING

A successful workforce training program is designed to address the needs of the industry for which training is being provided, hence customized training. This allows a company to have a workforce training program that covers all of their training needs, without having employees sit through training they do not need. The Center works closely with businesses and industries to design customized training that will address the needs of their individual workplace. Employers can assist in the customization of their training program by selecting from a wide variety of training topics that can be tailored to their specific organization or an entirely new curriculum can be developed to meet their needs (Collier, 2003).

COMPUTER TRAINING

The CWD offers training in a variety of computer topics. Most of these courses are taught on Saturdays as one credit hour courses each semester. This gives employees the opportunity to update their computer skills on a regular basis as individual needs arise. However, occasionally a company will have several employees who need computer training at the same time due to the purchase of a new software package or replacing old technology with new technology. The Center can then schedule computer training for that particular company, and it can be done on-site, if preferred. This allows the instructor to customize the program somewhat for the employees by taking sample documents that must be produced on the job and incorporating them into the training program. The benefit of this is the employees get to use the new knowledge to

immediately impact the work they will do on the job. It makes it easier to transfer the new skill learned to the workplace. Training can be done including Basic Keyboarding; Introduction to Personal Computers; Microsoft Windows; Microsoft Office (including Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint); Internet; QuickBooks; Web Page Design and Maintenance; Multimedia Functions and Techniques; Corel WordPerfect; Using a Digital Camera; Using a Palm Pilot; and PC Architecture and Troubleshooting, just to name a few. A company can select the topic or topics for which training is needed or a program can be customized to fit their needs. MECC is also an authorized Prometric testing site and MOUS information technology certification testing site (Collier, 2003).

HUMAN RESOURCE TRAINING

For companies who want to improve their organizational performance, the Center provides training for improving individual employee performance. This type of training can increase improvement in employee performance, workplace communication, work ethics, team effectiveness, and employee attitudes. Topics included in this area of training are Supervisory Skills; Workplace Diversity; Dealing with Difficult People; Effective Communication; Facilitator Training; Workplace Ethics; Conflict Resolution; Customer Service; Effective Work Teams; Time Management; Dynamic Leadership; Adventures In Attitudes; Personal Performax; and the Myers-Briggs Assessment. Employers can select the topic or topics that best suit their needs or a program can be designed specifically for them (Rhoton, 2003).

WORKFORCE SKILLS ON-LINE

A variety of skills training can be accessed on-line. The Center offers a variety of on-line training in the areas of Personal Enrichment; Business Administration; Health Care Professionals; Computer Skills; Paralegal; and College Prep. This type of training can be invaluable to employees who cannot attend regular classes due to fluctuating work schedules. This type of training is provided in conjunction with the Continuing and Distance Education Department at MECC (Collier, 2003).

PARTNERSHIPS

The strength of any workforce training initiative lies in the development of effective partnerships throughout the community. The Center partners with a variety of state and local agencies in an effort to build a strong workforce in the MECC service region. Partners include the local Chambers of Commerce, the Industrial Development Authorities, the Virginia Department of Business Assistance, the Virginian Employment Commission, LENOWISCO (regional planning office), Coalfield Economic Development Authority, National Safety Council, the Mine Safety and Health Administration, the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, and the Employers Advisory Council. The Center works closely with all of these agencies in an effort to stay abreast of current and future training needs, and if possible, to secure funding for training to help offset the cost of the training to the company (Collier, 2003).

SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed the goals of the Center for Workforce Development. It included the various types of training programs offered to the businesses, industries, and agencies in the MECC service region. Each category of training was discussed in relation to the type of industry need it was designed to benefit. A list of training topics was included for each training category. It also discussed the existing partnerships the CWD has established with other key agencies. Chapter III will include the methods and procedures used to collect the data for the survey.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the population included in this study, the type of instrument used to collect the data for the survey, the statistical analysis used to tabulate the results of the data collected, and the summary. The information provided in this chapter will give the reader insight into the procedures used to collect the data and the process used to analyze the data.

POPULATION

The population of this study included a selected group of employers throughout the MECC service region. The employers in this group included representatives from the mining industry, the health care industry, the public school systems, the call center industry, the Department of Corrections, manufacturing, and the Department of Transportation. The population consisted of 35 employers from the group selected for the study.

A diverse group of employers from the MECC service region was chosen to provide a fair representation of employers in the area. The diversity in employers also provides the Center with a better understanding of the various types of training that should be available to the existing workforce.

INSTRUMENT DESIGN

The instrument used to collect the data for this study was a survey. The survey

consisted of both open-ended and closed-ended questions pertaining to training programs available through the Center. The closed-ended questions pertained to the specific types of training programs available, including topics covered, materials used in training, and instructional design and techniques.

Open-ended questions were included to give employers the opportunity to make comments or suggestions regarding training programs available through the Center. The survey is included in Appendix A.

Questions were designed to determine the overall effectiveness and benefits of the current training programs offered by the Center. Responses will indicate areas where new programs need to be developed.

A cover letter was attached to the survey to explain the purpose of the research study. A copy of the cover letter is included in Appendix B.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Employers who were selected and who agreed to participate in the research study received the survey along with a cover letter, which explained the purpose of the study and how to complete the survey. The information collected from the survey will be tabulated and the responses will be analyzed and used to revise current training programs, as well as the development of new training curriculum.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data collected from the employers will be tabulated and separated according

to the type of industry the employer represents. Responses to closed-ended statements will be ranked according to the level of importance indicated by the respondent. Information provided in open-ended questions will be used to improve existing training programs and to aid in the development of new training curriculum.

SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the methods and procedures used to gather data for this research study. The population was discussed in this chapter providing a description of the various types of industry represented by the employers in this group. A description of the cover letter and the survey used to collect the data was included in the section on instrument design. Next, the chapter describes the methods used for data collection and how the data will be categorized according to the industry represented by the respondent. Finally, the chapter discussed how the data will be analyzed and gives the reader information on how the data will be used. Chapter IV will present the findings of this research study.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to report the findings of this research study. The purpose of this study was to determine if the Center for Workforce Development provides adequate and affordable training programs to employers in Lee, Scott, and Wise Counties and the city of Norton.

The data for this study was collected by means of a survey. The survey included rating the following areas of training:

- Mine Training Programs
- Health Care Training Programs
- Computer Training Programs
- Human Resource Training Programs
- Employer Specific Training
- Workforce Skills On-Line
- Other Certification Training Programs

Also included in the survey were open-ended questions regarding the affordability of the training; areas of training that are difficult to procure; and training programs that provide the most benefit to employers.

SURVEY RESULTS

Forty surveys were sent to a random selection of employers in Lee, Wise, and Scott counties and the city of Norton. Of that number, twenty-nine surveys were

returned. This indicated a 73% return rate on the surveys sent to the employers in the service region.

The results of the survey will be indicated by tables. An explanation of the results will precede each table.

Mine Training Programs

Those employers participating in the Mine Training Program were very satisfied with the training they received. Only one respondent indicated a fair rating in this category: DMME Advanced First Aid. This same program also received three ratings of excellent. The remaining responses of those participating indicated a rating of excellent for the remaining training programs in Mine Training. See Table 1.

RATINGS	3-Excellent	2-Fair	1-Inadequate	NA-Not Applicable
Mine Training Programs:				
New Miner	6			23
Underground Retraining	2			27
Surface Retraining	5			24
Electrical Retraining	4			25
Diesel Retraining	3			26
Mine Foreman CEUs	4			25
Supervisor Training	5			24
First Responder	4			25
Refuse & Impoundment	1			28
DMME Advanced First Aid	3	1		25

Table 1– Mine Training Programs

Health Care Training Programs

Employers participating in the Health Care Training Programs felt the training was fair to

excellent. One respondent in each of the following programs, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Cardiac Dysrhythmia Recognition, Basic Trauma Life Support and Understanding 12-Lead EKGs, felt the training received was fair. The remaining training programs in the Health Care field were given one rating of excellent each, except First Aid, which received two ratings of excellent. See Table 2.

RATINGS	3-Excellent	2-Fair	1-Inadequate	NA-Not Applicable
Health Care Training Programs:				
First Aid	2			27
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	1	1		27
Advanced Cardiac Life Support		1		28
Cardiac Dysrhythmia Recognition		1		28
Pediatric Advanced Life Support	1			28
Basic Trauma Life Support		1		28
IV Infusion Therapy	1			28
Understanding 12-Lead EKGs		1		28
Emergency Medical Technician	1			28
Phlebotomy CEUs	1			28
Lab Interpretation	1			28
AHA BLS Instructor	1			28

Table 2 – Health Care Training Programs

Computer Training Programs

The employers participating in the Computer Training Programs felt the training was fair to excellent. Two respondents gave a fair rating to training for the Internet, and one

respondent gave the training for QuickBooks and Web Page Design/Maintenance a fair rating. Three other respondents also gave Internet and Web Page Design/Maintenance a rating of excellence, and one other respondent gave an excellent rating to QuickBooks. The remaining training programs in this category were given excellent ratings. See Table 3.

Table 3 – Computer Training Programs

RATINGS	3-Excellent	2-Fair	1-Inadequate	NA-Not Applicable
Computer Training Programs:				
Basic Keyboarding	5			24
Introduction to Personal Computers	5			24
Microsoft Windows	4			25
Microsoft Word	4			25
Microsoft Excel	4			25
Microsoft PowerPoint	3			26
Microsoft Access	3			26
Internet	3	2		24
QuickBooks	1	1		27
Web Page Design/Maintenance	3	1		25
Multimedia Functions and Techniques	2			27
Corel WordPerfect	1			28
Using a Digital Camera	3			26
Using a Palm Pilot	1			28
PC Architecture & Troubleshooting	2			27
MOUS Certification	2			27

Human Resource Training Programs

The employers participating in Human Resource Training Programs felt that most of the training was fair to excellent. Only two programs received all excellent ratings:

Customer Service and Work Styles Assessment. Workplace Diversity and Setting Priorities each received more fair ratings than excellent ratings. The remaining programs in this category received more excellent ratings than fair ratings. See Table 4.

Table 4 – Human Resource Training Programs

RATINGS	3-Excellent	2-Fair	1-Inadequate	NA-Not Applicable
Human Resource Training Programs:				
Supervisory Skills	5	2		22
Workplace Diversity	2	3		24
Dealing With Difficult People	4	2		23
Effective Communication	5	2		22
Facilitator Training	3	2		24
Workplace Ethics	4	1		24
Conflict Resolution	5	1		23
Customer Service	6			23
Effective Work Teams	5	1		23
Time Management	3	1		25
Dynamic Leadership	1	1		27
Adventures In Attitudes	5	1		23
Work Styles Assessment	3			26
Projecting A Positive Image	5	1		23
Setting Priorities	1	2		26
Stress Management	5	2		22

Employer Specific Training

The employers participating in Employer Specific Training were very satisfied with the training they received. Both Customized Training and Pre-Employment Training received excellent ratings. See Table 5.

Table 5 – Employer Specific Training

RATINGS	3-Excellent	2-Fair	1-Inadequate	NA-Not Applicable
Employer Specific Training				
Customized Training	7			22
Pre-Employment Training	1			28

Workforce Skills On-Line

The employers participating in Workforce Skills On-Line training programs were very satisfied with the training they received. All programs in this category received ratings of excellent. See Table 6.

Table 6 – Workforce Skills On-Line

RATINGS	3-Excellent	2-Fair	1-Inadequate	NA-Not Applicable
Workforce Skill On-Line				
Personal Enrichment Courses	2			27
Business Administration Courses	2			27
Health Care Professionals	1			28
Computer Skills Training	2			27
Paralegal Courses	1			28
College Prep Courses	2			27

Other Certification Training Programs

The employers participating in Firearms Recertification, Security Guard In-Service, and Private Investigator Recertification were very satisfied with the training they received.

Those programs received an excellent rating. Survey respondents indicated no participation in the training programs for OSHA Certification, Real Estate CEUs, and Insurance CEUs. See Table 7.

Table 7 – Other Certification Training Programs

RATINGS	3-Excellent	2-Fair	1-Inadequate	NA-Not Applicable
Other Certification Training Programs				
Firearms Recertification	1			28
Security Guard In-Service	1			28
Private Investigator Recertification	1			28
OSHA Certification				29
Real Estate CEUs				29
Insurance CEUs				29

Responses to Open-Ended Questions:

Question #1: Did you feel the training your company’s employees received was affordable? Only one respondent indicated training was not affordable because the classroom did not have sufficient workstations to make the training cost effective.

Question #2: Do you provide tuition reimbursement for job related training? Only four of the twenty-eight respondents indicated that they did not provide tuition reimbursement for training for their employees. Of those four, one employer indicated that they were looking into providing tuition reimbursement in the future.

Question #3: What areas of training are the most difficult for your company to procure? Responses were:

- Varies
- Not Applicable – We need short workshops.
- Any training our company has needed is available.
- Leadership/Management
- Sales Training
- Machine Work – No training in our area.
- We use in-house employees to conduct our training where ever possible.
Since we are a state agency, we also take advantage of all related classes offered by the state (i.e., supervisor/management).
- None

Question #4: What training programs offered through the Center for Workforce Development do you feel provide the most benefit to employers throughout the service region? Responses were as follows:

- Computer Training
- Human Resource Training Programs for Supervisors – Relationship with their immediate supervisor is the #1 reason employees stay with or leave from a job; therefore, supervisory training is essential for all companies.
- Management Training
- Electrical Training for Miners – Need to train new electricians and the community college is best suited to provide this training.
- Customer Satisfaction
- HR-PC-Business Administration

- Not Applicable
- Supervisory Skills – As we grow our employers into supervisors, we must educate them so they can grow into leaders.
- Great resource available totally.
- Employers say soft skills is the problem.
- Supervisory Programs. All programs. The mine training program certainly is beneficial to the industry we serve. We have excellent results from the courses taught by Gary Whisman. As an MECC Advisory Committee member, I feel the employer specific training is very valuable to our surrounding area.
- MSHA training and retraining and OSHA training – The classes are on-going so it is very easy to have new employees trained in a short amount of time.
- It relates to specific tasks.
- Personality test – It gives individuals an idea of their personality type and how to work with others.
- Miner training and Retraining; Computer Skills – Due to the current demand for mining skills; basic computer skills; also changing needs with computer programs/skills.
- Technology areas – A growing field/many new companies require technology skills of their employees.

Question #5: What training programs offered through the Center for Workforce Development do you feel provide little or no benefit to employers throughout the service region? Responses were:

- Not Applicable
- I'm not sure that any training is offered that has little or no benefit to employees. Each company in the service region has different training needs and I'm not familiar with all of the companies to know what their needs are.
- Unaware of any
- All training is beneficial.
- None
- None to my knowledge.

Question #6: What procedures would you recommend in order to improve the training of employees in Lee, Wise, and Scott counties and the city of Norton?

Responses were as follows:

- No recommendations
- Employment Skills
- More time in businesses to determine training needs.
- Not applicable
- Work Ethics – We need to train workers on the importance of work ethics.
- More staff to do training – Expand offerings with more staff.
- None
- Continuation of advisory groups from business people within the service

region.

- Stay current (which you do) with new technology – also continuous contact with employers for needs assessment.
- Offer more online classes; enlist the best instructors you can locate.

Question #7: Do you have any additional comments, suggestions for the Center for Workforce Development or suggestions for additional training programs that can be provided by the Center? Responses were as follows:

- No
- Schedule of upcoming courses on-line.
- Not applicable
- Mine training programs for our organization are as good as any I've seen.
- Excellent resource – we are fortunate to have the Center for Workforce Development.
- Everyone was very helpful and we really appreciate it.
- None
- Provide excellent service; timely; efficient, effective training.

Question #8: What other areas of training does your organization need that are not available through the Center for Workforce Development? Responses were:

- Maybe a workshop to teach cashier skills.
- Medical CEUs – Nursing

Question #9: What are the reasons you chose not to use the Center for Workforce Development to provide training for your organization? Responses

were:

- Specialized industry – training not available for our industry through Workforce Development.
- No current needs.
- Not applicable
- Our company has its own in-house methods and training delivery staff – we have our own training specialist and the Alliance Program.
- Need small group training or one-on-one management, human resources, leadership training - our company has very specific individual training needs – scheduling is tough for us too, since everyone here works nights, days, and weekends each month.
- We have just recently started training sessions with the Center – so far the training has been excellent and I cannot foresee any reason why we would not use the Center in the future.
- One main reason was trying to free up our supervisors to participate – we may be interested in the First Aid and CPR programs in the future.
- We do lots of programs in-house.
- Use of our own instructors.
- Lack of clients to justify a class – I would love to go in with other agencies to form classes.
- Some specialty areas cannot be provided by MECC. For example; certain specialized teacher education programs.

SUMMARY

Chapter IV reported the results of the survey of training programs provided by the Center for Workforce Development. Tables were used to support the reporting of the data collected for each training program in each category of training. Surveys were collected from 29 employers in the MECC service region, representing a 73% return rate for the forty surveys mailed. Conclusions and recommendations for this study will be made in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary, conclusions, and recommendations for this study. The data collected in this study will provide answers to the research goals.

SUMMARY

The problem of this study was to determine if the Center for Workforce Development provides adequate and affordable training programs for employers in Lee, Wise, and Scott Counties and the city of Norton. The results of the data collected will answer the following research goals:

1. Does the Center for Workforce Development provide adequate training for the existing workforce?
2. Does the Center for Workforce Development provide affordable training for the existing workforce? Does the employer provide tuition reimbursement for job related training?
3. What areas of training are the most difficult to procure? Why?
4. What procedures are recommended to improve the training of employees in the Lee, Wise, and Scott counties and the city of Norton? What programs provide the most benefit to employers in the MECC service region? What programs provide little or no benefit to employers in the MECC service region?

In order to answer these goals, forty employers were asked to complete a survey consisting of rating the quality of the training received through the Center for Workforce Development, as well as open-ended questions pertaining to training programs for employees. Of the forty surveys mailed out, twenty-nine surveys were completed and returned, representing a return rate of 73%.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data collected from the surveys, the following conclusions can be drawn in relation to the goals of this study:

Does the Center for Workforce Development provide adequate training for the existing workforce?

The training provided by the Center was rated fair to excellent by the 73% responding to the survey. No respondents rated any of the training received as inadequate. However, some employers listed a need for training in supervisory skills, leadership skills, work ethics, and sales training. These training programs are available through the Center, but some employers seemed to be unaware of these programs. Also, the Center does not currently offer machine work training – an area of training mentioned by one of the respondents.

Does the Center for Workforce Development provide affordable training for the existing workforce? Does the employer provide tuition reimbursement for job related training?

Only one respondent indicated training provided by the Center was not affordable

due to the fact that the class room did not have sufficient workstations to make the training cost effective per person. Ninety-nine percent of the respondents said the training they had received through the Center was affordable. Four out of twenty-nine employers, 14%, indicated they did not provide tuition reimbursement for employees. One of the four employers not currently providing tuition reimbursement is looking into the possibility of providing it in the future.

What areas of training are the most difficult to procure? Why?

According to the data collected, employers indicated the areas of training most difficult to procure were:

- Leadership/Management
- Sales Training
- Machine Work

The reasons given for why these areas of training were difficult to procure were due to lack of available training in the area and the need for shorter workshops.

What procedures are recommended to improve the training of employees in the Lee, Wise, and Scott counties and the city of Norton? What programs provide the most benefit to employers in the MECC service region? What programs provide little or no benefit to employers in the MECC service region?

Recommendations for the Center to improve the training of employees in the service region included:

- More time in business/industry to determine training needs.
- Employment Skills.

- Work Ethics training.
- More staff to do training.
- Continuation of advisory groups with business people in the service area.
- The programs mentioned as providing the most benefit to employers include:

Computer Training

Human Resource Training

Management Training

Electrical Training for Miners

Customer Satisfaction

Business Administration

Supervisory Skills

No programs were mentioned as providing no benefit to employers in the service region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the data collected for this study, the recommendations for the Center for Workforce Development are as follows:

- Determine what areas may need to be strengthened or updated in existing programs.
- Increase business and industry awareness of all training programs available through the Center for Workforce Development through one-on-one visits, mail outs, advertisements and press releases, and providing information at business and community events .
- Increase marketing efforts within the service region in order to inform the business

- and industry community of the programs and services available through the Center.
- Devote more time to visiting businesses and industries to determine training needs.
 - Identify areas of specialization and avenues to develop training programs to address these needs.
 - Explore the feasibility of offering more short workshops.
 - Increase the pool of trainers and identify trainers with specialized skills and/or certifications.
 - Seek additional avenues for funding unique training opportunities to provide to businesses and industries in the service region.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Center for Workforce Development Training Survey.....38

Appendix B: Cover Letter to Employers.....42

**CENTER FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
TRAINING SURVEY**

The purpose of this survey is to assess the training programs and services of the Center for Workforce Development at Mountain Empire Community College. Information gathered in this survey is confidential and will be used to improve existing training programs and services, as well as the development of new programs and services, if needed.

Circle the number after each sentence that you feel best describes that statement.
Excellent-3 Fair-2 Inadequate-1 NA-Not applicable

Please rate the training your organization or individual employees have received through the Center for Workforce Development. Circle NA for training you have not received through the Center. Select only the groups of training your organization has used.

Mine Training Programs:

New Miner	3	2	1	NA
Underground Retraining	3	2	1	NA
Surface Retraining	3	2	1	NA
Electrical Retraining	3	2	1	NA
Diesel Retraining	3	2	1	NA
Mine Foreman CEUs	3	2	1	NA
Supervisor Training	3	2	1	NA
First Responder	3	2	1	NA
Refuse & Impoundment	3	2	1	NA
DMME Advanced First Aid	3	2	1	NA

Health Care Training Programs:

First Aid	3	2	1	NA
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	3	2	1	NA
Adv. Cardiac Life Support	3	2	1	NA
Cardiac Dysrhythmia Recognition	3	2	1	NA
Pediatric Advanced Life Support	3	2	1	NA
Basic Trauma Life Support	3	2	1	NA
IV Infusion Therapy	3	2	1	NA
Understanding 12-Lead EKGs	3	2	1	NA
Emergency Medical Technician	3	2	1	NA
Phlebotomy CEUs	3	2	1	NA
Lab Interpretation	3	2	1	NA
AHA BLS Instructor	3	2	1	NA

Circle the number after each sentence that you feel best describes that statement.
 Excellent-3 Fair-2 Inadequate-1 NA-Not applicable

Computer Training Programs:

Basic Keyboarding	3	2	1	NA
Intro to Personal Computers	3	2	1	NA
Microsoft Windows	3	2	1	NA
Microsoft Word	3	2	1	NA
Microsoft Excel	3	2	1	NA
Microsoft PowerPoint	3	2	1	NA
Microsoft Access	3	2	1	NA
Internet	3	2	1	NA
QuickBooks	3	2	1	NA
Web Page Design/Maintenance	3	2	1	NA
Multimedia Functions and Techniques	3	2	1	NA
Corel WordPerfect	3	2	1	NA
Using a Digital Camera	3	2	1	NA
Using a Palm Pilot	3	2	1	NA
PC Architecture & Troubleshooting	3	2	1	NA
MOUS Certification	3	2	1	NA

Human Resource Training Programs:

Supervisory Skills	3	2	1	NA
Workplace Diversity	3	2	1	NA
Dealing With Difficult People	3	2	1	NA
Effective Communication	3	2	1	NA
Facilitator Training	3	2	1	NA
Workplace Ethics	3	2	1	NA
Conflict Resolution	3	2	1	NA
Customer Service	3	2	1	NA
Effective Work Teams	3	2	1	NA
Time Management	3	2	1	NA
Dynamic Leadership	3	2	1	NA
Adventures In Attitudes	3	2	1	NA
Work Styles Assessment	3	2	1	NA
Projecting A Positive Image	3	2	1	NA
Setting Priorities	3	2	1	NA
Stress Management	3	2	1	NA

Circle the number after each sentence that you feel best describes that statement.
 Excellent-3 Fair-2 Inadequate-1 NA-Not applicable

Employer Specific Training:

Customized Training	3	2	1	NA
Pre-Employment Training	3	2	1	NA

Workforce Skills On-Line:

Personal Enrichment Courses	3	2	1	NA
Business Administration Courses	3	2	1	NA
Health Care Professionals	3	2	1	NA
Computer Skills Training	3	2	1	NA
Paralegal Courses	3	2	1	NA
College Prep Courses	3	2	1	NA

Other Certification Training Programs:

Firearms Recertification	3	2	1	NA
Security Guard In-Service	3	2	1	NA
Private Investigator Recertification	3	2	1	NA
OSHA Certification	3	2	1	NA
Real Estate CEUs	3	2	1	NA
Insurance CEUs	3	2	1	NA

Please answer the following questions applicable to only those training programs your organization has participated in. Be as specific as possible when giving explanations.

1. Did you feel the training your company's employees received was affordable? Yes ___ No ___
 If no, why? _____

2. Do you provide tuition reimbursement for job related training? Yes _____ No _____
 If no, why? _____

3. What areas of training are the most difficult for your company to procure? _____

 Why? _____

4. What training programs offered through the Center for Workforce Development do you feel provide the most benefit to employers throughout the service region? _____

 Why? _____

5. What training programs offered through the Center for Workforce Development do you feel provide little or no benefit to employers throughout the service region? _____

Why? _____

6. What procedures would you recommend in order to improve the training of employees in Lee, Wise, and Scott counties and the city of Norton? _____

Why? _____

7. Do you have any additional comments, suggestions for the Center for Workforce Development or suggestions for additional training programs that can be provided by the Center? _____

8. What other areas of training does your organization need that are not available through the Center for Workforce Development? _____

9. What are the reasons you chose not to use the Center for Workforce Development to provide training for your organization? _____

June 7, 2004

[Employer]
[Employer's Address]

[Employers Name:]

The Center for Workforce Development at Mountain Empire Community College is conducting a survey to determine how well our training programs and services meet the needs of your organization. We also want to determine what areas of training are not addressed through our department that would be beneficial to your organization.

The information obtained by the survey will assist us in planning for future programs and services, and it will be beneficial in updating existing programs and materials. Your participation is greatly appreciated. All responses are kept confidential. Code numbers are used for follow-up purposes only.

Enclosed is the survey and a self-addressed stamped envelope. Thank you so much for your time and assistance with this project. If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact me at (276) 523-2400 ext. 372.

Sincerely,

Mitzi Williams, Coordinator
Center for Workforce Development
Mountain Empire Community College
3441 Mountain Empire Road
Big Stone Gap, VA 24219