Work and the Workforce System in 2023

WIOA's Challenge

- Align workforce development, education and economic development to meet current and future workforce needs

- Build a more comprehensive, high quality, workforce development sysytem which is more accesible for individuals with barriers to employment

- Empower the State and local workforce boards to convene and broker better workforce system partnerships

What's Changed?

- We went from 4% unemployment to 20% in March, 2020 - COVID!
- "Tech" changes radically accelerated, with big winners and losers
- The "hybrid workplace" may be here to stay
- The global supply chain broke
- Now ... we are back to 3.7% unemployment
- 10 million Americans have left the workforce. 4 million say they are never coming back
- Oh, and there's a war going on in Europe!

The Post-Pandemic Workforce System

- Centers shut, are now re-opened, but with many missing staff and partners

- We've gotten far better at delivering services using "tech"

- Customer flow in the Centers is off nationally by around 50%, is slowly rising, and varies greatly from Center to Center

- The people visting Centers have serious barriers to employment

- We are in the "people" business … needing both "high touch" and "high tech" service options, but the $ is limited

Changes in the Economy and the Workforce

- SPEED and TECH … Instant gratification has become a customer expectation. Can we speed up connecting customers to work and education?

- SHRINKING TALENT POOL … Business needs the workforce system more than ever and is asking for help

- A GLOBAL MARKETPLACE … Workplaces are more diverse and accepting of diversity than ever before

- WIOA CORE PRINCIPLES STILL MATTER … Expanded partnerships, leveraged resources, more collaboration, strong Workforce Board leadership

Workplace Disruption!

- Farming and manufacturing each employed a third of all US workers in 1900. Today each employ 3% of the workforce. We are looking at as large a change going forward compacted into a single generation.

- What will your job look like in fifteen years?

Social Disruption!

- Will technology grow new "good"jobs as quickly as it eliminates current jobs? The Scandanavian countries say "yes" and are changing their education/workforce systems to retool current and emerging workers. Most futurists say "no" and predict deepening social unrest. How will a couple million teamsters react to self-driving trucks?

- Economic analysis shows rapidly increasing income inequality in the US and worldwide. Contrast this with 1950-1980 when the middle class thrived.

Social Disruption!

- In 1985 it took an average US worker 35 weeks of work to provide housing, food, a home (!) and other basics for a family of four. Today it takes 53 weeks. It usually takes two bread winners to support a family.

- How do you see this unfolding where you live?

- What can we do to help our community's kids – the emerging workforce – thrive in 2035?

- What can your local workforce system do to help your community, current and emerging workers and businesses, adapt and thrive?

Changes We Usually Don't Like

- There is less one-on-one human interaction
- Public services do not move at the speed of business
- We often stuck with broken or incomprehensible technology
- As humans, the pace of change often outstrips our ability to cope
- Information systems are often designed to deliver information "up the ladder" rather than to customers and service delivery staff.

What Workforce Systems Customers Like Best

- 1x1 time with Center staff
- Career Labs with facilitated access to computers, workforce system information, community resources and job openings
- Center-based hiring events with a chance to interact with potential employers
- Conversations and advice from past and current Center customers … peers … who've gone through similar struggles

Examples: Top Choices!

- Create a "Lean Workforce System Process Team" to recommend ways to streamline our workforce services

- Reach out to current and potential customers … small businesses, the "gig economy", the underemployed … where we have a low market penetration rate

- Use input from these customers (HCD) to design better, more streamlined workforce system access

- Use pandemic relief funds to bring people back to work and education… childcare help, scholarships, what else?

The Challenge

- Your turn … all ideas welcome!
- What could the State and local Workforce Development Boards do to build a better workforce development system?
- What are some practical "next steps" to get the job done?