



Business Matters

Encouraging Diversity in the Workplace • Promoting a Positive Environment for Business Growth

Winter 2000

Note from the Editor...

Welcome to the introductory issue of *Business Matters*—DRS' newsletter for employers, organizations, and members of the community who value the importance of diversity in the workplace and promote a positive environment for business growth. Each issue of *Business Matters* aims to provide you with useful, up-to-date information that will keep you abreast of the latest trends and issues influencing the business world today: workforce development, technology, disability awareness, and other employment-related issues. More importantly, *Business Matters* connects our readers to valuable networking resources, informs you of upcoming events, and provides practical tips that help strengthen business development across the Commonwealth.



Make the Connection!

Visit our new
Business Services Website at:
www.vdrs.org

Employment Networks WORK!!!

Are you tired of spending advertising dollars in search of qualified job candidates to fill that job vacancy? Save time and money.... present your recruitment needs at an *Employment Network* meeting!

The Employment Network is designed to provide a "one-stop-shop" for employers to present the specific hiring needs and job opportunities available at their company. Participation in the Employment Network also provides a direct, no-cost mechanism for employers to reach a large number of potential job candidates in a particular area. The Network meetings have been particularly valuable for companies who are either newly established in the state or are expanding, and, as a result, are involved in large scale hiring activities.

The Employment Networks meet on a monthly basis and are held in areas throughout the state. To find out more information about presenting at one of the Network meetings, please call 1-800-552-5019 and ask to speak with a Marketing Specialist in your area.

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: Does your company need *Diversity and*
: *Disability Awareness Training??* DRS can come to your
: business and provide training at no cost!
: Call (804) 662-7069.
:

Benefit from DIVERSITY!

Workforce diversity is increasingly becoming one of business' top management strategies. With the challenges of keeping up with today's changing workforce, businesses benefit more from hiring from a diverse labor pool. Diversity increases companies' competitive advantage by enabling them to broaden their consumer base, successfully compete in the global marketplace, and hire from an expanded labor pool.

The Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) helps companies build their workforce diversity by connecting them to a virtually untapped resource found in hiring persons with disabilities -- the most underutilized, yet highly skilled and talented labor pool in this country.

The Marketing team at DRS understands that companies today are facing an increasing shortage of qualified workers. Businesses must now turn to alternative sources of manpower to meet their job requirements and be prepared to untap this new resource. This is why the core of the agency's Marketing program has been, and continues to be, a strong focus on developing partnerships with employers and workforce development professionals.

With help from DRS, at no cost, employers with specific labor and hiring needs can gain access to prescreened and pre-tested applicants; receive workplace accessibility analysis; find out about financial incentives; and enhance employee relations through disability training and awareness programs. More importantly, DRS connects businesses to networking resources. Among them include the *Employment Networks* and the *Business Leadership Network*.

This year, programs including the Metro Richmond Employment Network, sponsored by the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce, and the DRS/SunTrust Bank "Put Ability to Work" program, have gained local as well as national recognition for its success and effectiveness in meeting the recruitment needs of Central Virginia's business. In fact, these Richmond-based employment models have been so successful and well-received by the business community that replication of these partnerships are being pursued across the state and in other parts of the country. The outcomes of these two programs have truly positioned Virginia in the lead toward advancing today's workforce and providing economic growth throughout its communities.

Hiring a diverse workforce just makes good business sense. See how DRS can serve as a valuable resource for companies in a partnership that works!

All Aboard the *TECHNOTRAIN*



WORKFORCE ONE of the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce, and J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College have partnered for the promotion

and delivery of workforce development that can be "taken to the people" via a mobile training unit called the *TECHNOTRAIN*.

This state-of-the-art mobile technology center will serve as a link with area employers and the local workforce. It is capable of providing information on careers and jobs along with the education and training requirements; skills and competencies assessments; pre-employment assessment and basic skills training; information technology training for potential workers and retraining for upgrading skills of the current workforce.

TECHNOTRAIN is equipped to allow the community to increase the number of trained workers for the vast number of unfilled jobs in the technology industry as well as the many companies and organizations for whom basic technology mastery is required of all employees. This initiative promises to be a vital resource in meeting business's needs in expanding and upgrading the technical skills of today's workforce.

To schedule the *TECHNOTRAIN*, contact James Hickman, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College Corporate and Professional Development, at (804)371-3894.

As a Matter of Fact

Most job accommodations for employees with disabilities cost lower than employers expect. Most costs generally fall between \$0 to \$500.

(source: Job Accommodations Network, www.jan.wvu.edu)

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